



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

**National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report**

**Saint Edward's Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School**

Hollow Lane  
Cheddleton  
Leek  
Staffordshire  
ST13 7HP

**Diocese: Lichfield**

**Previous SIAMS Grade: Outstanding**

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: 24 March 2015

Date of last inspection: 30 March 2010

School's unique reference number: 124241

Headteacher: Tracy Jackson- Ward

Inspector's name and number: Revd Alison M. Morris 759

**School context**

St Edwards Church of England First School is a popular average sized school with 255 pupils. The one form entry school serves Cheddleton village and the surrounding areas. Pupils come from mainly white British heritages. It has close links with both the wider community of Leek and St. Edwards's parish. St. Edwards School is the hub of the village community. The head teacher is a Local Leader in Education. In September 2013 the school was judged 'good' from OFSTED. In the last twelve months the school has experienced significant difficult pastoral situations.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Edwards First School as a Church of England school are outstanding**

- An inspirational Christian leadership team, whose vision drives forward successfully the Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness within the school community.
- Christian values are embedded particularly in the exemplary pastoral care and excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).
- A rich and dynamic Christian environment and ethos where Christian values, illustrated in all relationships enable learning and achievement to flourish to a very high standard.

**Areas to improve**

- Consolidate and strengthen the already established links with St. Edwards Parish church, its foundation governors and its new clergy through more purposeful and focussed involvement in specific areas, such as governance, of this church school.
- Implement procedures for parents and governors to participate in the formal monitoring and evaluating of collective worship.

### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners**

The distinctive Christian character and ethos in the school, which is immediately apparent, underpins and permeates all aspects of the school's life. Pupils are equally valued as individuals who benefit from a family community based on Christian values and Biblical principles promoting tolerance, hope, forgiveness and love. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted, nourished, and challenged by core Christian values which have a high priority in the school development plan. Hard working, enthusiastic and committed staff model core Christian values which are reflected in the harmonious staff team relationships that optimise learning for all pupils. Values are also rooted in the exemplary pastoral care and excellent attention to SMSC development. Pupils' progress is excellent and pupils achieve well with very good standards of attainment in academic work, well above local and national levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and Early Years Foundation Stage. These are maintained into Key Stage 2. This is the result of a total commitment to enable all pupils to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes to be all that God intends them to be and to build fulfilling lives for the future. Pupils are happy, keen and enjoy school. They have very good attitudes to learning. Attendance is excellent as pupils are motivated through an 'assertive mentoring' programme. Pupils make the link from values and school practices to Christian teaching in the bible and understand what it means to be a pupil at a church school. Excellent safeguarding procedures ensure that pupils feel safe and valued within this fully inclusive Christian environment. Parents value the school's 'aspirational' approach and praise the many achievements gained such as Artsmark Gold. Pupils participate in the mission of the wider community and worldwide church through fundraising for example, for New Life and MacMillan. Religious Education (RE) makes a very significant contribution to the pupils' SMSC development, as belief matters in this school. Regular activities are provided for pupils to have spiritual experiences through cross-curricular subjects. 'Stilling' exercises and reflective journals which use the 'window, mirror and door' framework enable pupils to explore themselves, beliefs and the world. Pupils' self esteem, self-belief and self-worth are very high. They communicate the Christian story well. Understanding and knowledge of other faiths and cultures is enhanced through RE teaching, the Methodist Club and multi-cultural experiences. Prayer stations, focussed RE and worship displays in classrooms plus artefacts in the foyer visually express the school's Christian distinctiveness. An effective school council allows pupils to contribute to decision making. Pupils understand their role to be responsible citizens through posts of responsibility within the Eco Club Standards of behaviour and management are exemplary due to child friendly accessible school rules and a strong culture of praise and reward which are clearly underpinned by Christian values. Addressing a focus for development from the last inspection, provision for outdoor Christian foci has improved so pupils' spirituality and reflection skills have developed. One pupil spoke of using 'Jack's Tree'; 'Here I speak to God about things, God can help us'. The school's calm and purposeful learning environment promotes an excellent learning climate for all pupils to progress.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Worship has a strong focus on biblical material, Christian teaching and the person of Jesus Christ, with Trinitarian elements included. It is integral to school life, is inclusive, accessible, affirming and spiritual. Pupils' beliefs, attitudes and behaviour are influenced by the Christian distinctiveness of worship through the explanation of Christ's teachings. Worship is well planned, recorded and evaluated which has a positive impact on its high quality. Attitudes to worship are very good because it provides rich, meaningful experiences rooted in Christian beliefs and festivals, but which are appropriate and significant to the pupils' needs, age, development and interests. It is also linked to the cycle of Christian values and social and emotional literacy (SEAL) themes within a liturgical approach. This is facilitated by both staff and clergy ensuring that worship is cohesive, relevant and influential. Key Christian festivals are always celebrated in St. Edward's church which reinforces the spiritual link between the church and school community. Pupils are enthusiastic and look forward to leading this form of Christian worship in church. They also respond well to writing prayers and are enthusiastic and reverent when engaged in prayer. They show understanding of the purpose and impact of prayer on their lives. One pupil said, 'I like to close my eyes and talk to God.' Use of lighted candles and visual imagery encourage awe and wonder. Pupils pray formally and informally with allocated time for prayers at the start and end of the school day. Worship enables pupils to think deeper, reflect on their own actions and their impact upon people around them. A wide range of approaches to worship enables all pupils to engage in some Anglican traditions and practices. Links with new clergy, the

parish and foundation governors continue to deepen and facilitate worship opportunities, which make a distinctive Christian difference to this Christian school. Additional activities such as 'Messy Church' style and visits to Lichfield cathedral offer a rich experience of worship and enhance pupil understanding of their relationship within the diocesan community. Substantial evaluation of worship through staff and pupils' interviews and questionnaires provides feedback for development. Evaluation of worship by parents is in an embryonic stage and is to be further developed, as is the formal evaluation and monitoring on Christian distinctiveness and the impact of worship by governors.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding**

Aspirational school leaders and governors are committed to develop and achieve an explicit Christian vision which pervades the school community. School improvement plans fully reflect at every level this progress, also taking into account the Anglican foundation. All stakeholders understand and ensure that the distinctive Christian values and ethos pervade, and are vital to, the school's vision. Purposeful, rigorous and effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's impact on pupil achievement are also in place through the Learning and Progress Committee who act as critical friends to the leadership team and play a vital role in strategic planning and all aspects of school improvement. The chair of governors is particularly supportive of the strategic drive to improve academic progress, well-being and to develop the Christian distinctiveness. Experienced leadership by the head teacher has contributed significantly to the success of this school through identified strategic professional development and succession planning which strengthens the capacity to plan for future development. All staff and specific governors have a clear understanding of any future developmental needs of this school and of church school education more widely. Training opportunities have been taken up by staff and some governors through diocesan courses. Through the developing work of the foundation governors a distinctive Christian difference is made to this school. RE teaching, learning and evaluation is very well managed across the school with very good practice in measuring progress. Highly effective, meaningful and healthy partnerships exist with parents, multi-agencies and the wider community. The high level of interaction with the Leek Education Partnership has enhanced the reputation and status of this church school. Parents say that the school is welcoming and supportive to their requests: issues are dealt with efficiently and quickly. One parent said; '*The school does what it says.. 'Learning and Caring Together'*'. Parents believe pupils' needs are being met and progress is additionally enhanced through extra-curricular activities and specific links with St. Edwards, the local Methodist chapel and the local community. The school makes an overwhelming commitment to care for the whole family, with considerable emphasis on pastoral support. Pupils have a sense of Christian identity, but creating further planned opportunities to meet people of other faiths is important to promote community cohesion. Activities and reflection time have been developed to allow pupils to think on global links through exploration of other cultures and beliefs. Pupils are culturally aware of their wider responsibilities within a multi-faith and multi-cultural society through effective strategies which include the Erasmus Project with the LEP, the British Council Comenius project and links with Botswana.

SIAMS report March 2015 St. Edward CE (VC) First School Cheddleton Leek ST13 7HP