

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Edward's Church of England Academy Cheddleton			
Address	Hollow Lane, Cheddleton, Leek, Staffordshire. ST13 7HP		
Date of inspection	23 January 2020	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled First Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT)
Diocese	Lichfield	URN	143805

Overall Judgement	Grade	Excellent
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgement		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent

<p>School context</p> <p>St Edward's is a first school academy with 214 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is slightly below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is marginally below national averages. St Edward's Church is currently without a parish priest in post.</p>
<p>The school's Christian vision</p> <p>Learning and caring together</p> <p>"They will flourish in the courts of our God." (Psalm 92:13)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Key findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders of exceptional calibre at all levels live and breathe a passion for the Christian vision of this academy where their purpose is fixed upon the flourishing of all in the presence of God. • Whilst transformational and creative leaders at all levels make a positive impact within the academy, their contribution to developing leadership and innovation with other diocesan schools is more limited. • Outstanding pastoral care attends to the mental health and spiritual and social needs of pupils and adults as an expression of God's unconditional love. This results in a close-knit staff team and a deeply valued sense of family for pupils where everyone is caring and learning together. • Excellent religious education (RE) and collective worship are central to the whole curriculum plan. Highly effective practice equips pupils with the motivation, compassion, wisdom and skills to take active roles in a diverse society.
<p style="text-align: center;">Area for development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the impact of leadership at all levels to the wider family of Church schools in a variety of innovative, creative and transformational projects. This is to demonstrably expand Church school leadership potential and skills within and beyond the academy. • Extend the impact of assessment in RE by ensuring pupils across the school understand and respond to next steps in their learning in a variety of ways.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Passion and purpose flood from exceptional calibre leaders at all levels of St Edward's Academy. Dedication and drive to realise the academy's Christian vision is paramount. Leaders, be they senior ones, child champions or pupils themselves, inspire all to flourish as children of God.

The principal is immensely well-respected by colleagues and parents because of her strong determination to ensure that everyone learns and cares together. She enables this through a motivational leadership approach where everyone sees their part as important. The principal has engendered a deeper understanding of what it means to be a Church school. Strong relationships, professional development opportunities and support by others, all contribute to adults living well together as a close-knit team. One staff member said, 'This is a team infused with laughter.'

The academy has skilfully built upon strengths recorded at the last inspection. Leaders have responded creatively to the development points. With an urgency and dedication in the last two years they have embedded the theologically based vision making a substantial difference. The Christian Council involves a wide range of people, including parents, who monitor and evaluate. They are passionate in guaranteeing the church school dimension not only underpins academy life but flourishes and grows. The academy makes and nurtures effective links with the diocese, the MAT, the community and other schools to maximise development. Through quality evaluation, the academy appreciates excellent is not perfect and consistently works hard to improve still further. All leaders make a hugely positive difference to this academy. Despite some school-to-school support, however, leaders are not sufficiently utilised across the MAT to share and develop their expertise. Local academy governors are highly skilled and committed. Utilising effective self-review they skilfully direct resourcing and expertise to bring about the Christian vision.

The MAT makes a positive difference to St Edward's through challenge and support. This includes as a Church school. Consequently, pupil progress and attainment are usually in line and sometimes better than national expectations. Where cohorts need additional support, the MAT and academy work well to raise standards rapidly. The curriculum is creative and engaging, inspiring pupils to ask big questions and explore their world. The creative arts make a distinctive contribution to pupils flourishing and widening opportunity to extend talents. Tremendous energy, deeply embedded in the vision, ensures that pupils become rounded individuals.

Firmly at the heart of the curriculum is pupils' spiritual development. Differing sacred pathways offer pupils wide experiences to learn about themselves, about others, to be attuned to awe and wonder and to value silence and faith. Forest schools work contributes significantly to developing pupils' appreciation of God's world. Everyone is considered a leader at this academy and taught well to exercise courage, perseverance and responsibility. Opportunities to develop leadership and responsibility include the academy's eco club and being ambassadors in Year 4. Pupils have an age appropriate understanding of their own spiritual journey, usually expressed through the academy's 'windows, mirrors and doors' approach. This enables pupils to reflect upon themselves to a degree impressive in a first school.

Support for learning and social and emotional needs is exceptional. The appointment of dedicated child champions and a highly skilled personal development officer means any pupil that needs additional care is identified swiftly and well supported. Through them an impressive range of interventions, such as Lego therapy and Draw and Talk therapies, are offered. Pupils rapidly reach an emotional level where they are ready to learn. Pupils with additional needs progress well because the care of the staff is lavishly and

unconditionally offered. These staff are also at the forefront of the academy's insightful approach to ensuring mental wellbeing in pupils and staff so that everyone flourishes.

The whole academy faithfully lives out its distinctive Christian vision in positive relationships, encouraging each other. Behaviour at the academy is usually exemplary and rooted in Christian values of forgiveness and respect. Anti-bullying and safeguarding practices are proactive and highly effective. They are a shining example of the Church of England's guidance on best practice, 'Valuing All God's Children'. The academy actively challenges stereotypes resulting in a highly inclusive academy. Each person is treated with dignity, care and respect. This creates a sense of family at the academy where everyone cares for each other. Pupils are proactive in caring beyond the academy, such as the local gully cleaning projects in caring for the environment. Charitable endeavours, for example, supporting Leek foodbank, deepens empathy.

Inspirational, inclusive collective worship is widely seen as the 'beating heart' of the academy, generating for everyone an invitation to enter the courts of God. Pupils and adults speak with enthusiasm about how worship significantly influences their lives, both in and out of school. Profoundly shaped by the academy's vision and values during collective worship, pupils and staff alike are passionate about making the world a better place. They see prayer as positively impacting the world and engage in it in a variety of thoughtful ways. Many pupils are confident to undertake extemporary prayer weaving together the themes and values of the worship. Well regarded prayer spaces are used by pupils as an effective support mechanism. Pupils interact positively with a range of biblical accounts. This is helping them greatly to apply scriptural perspectives to decision making and Christian values. Visits from motivational speakers, such as globetrotter Paul Sturgess, significantly builds a sense of hope and aspiration, encouraging all to aspire to excellence. Pupils and staff develop spiritually through experiences of inspiring music, Anglican traditions and festival, prayer, stillness and reflection. Strong links with St Edward's Church and St Andrew's Methodist church broadens pupils' Christian worship experience.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. In reflecting the principles of the academy's vision, RE has become a 'cornerstone' to pupils' growing understanding of their place in today's society. RE makes a hugely significant impact upon pupils' respect for diversity of faith, culture and gender. This is enhanced by positive links with a multi-cultural school in Stoke. Pupils are enthused and inspired by RE because teaching is consistently good or better. Since the last inspection the academy has successfully developed the RE assessment system so that lessons are well pitched and progress is clearly recorded. However sometimes pupils are not fully aware of next steps in learning. The academy has an excellent RE leader. She attends quality professional development which impacts the practice of teachers she supports. RE has a high profile, demonstrating its importance.

Highly effective practice across the whole work of the academy equips pupils with the motivation, compassion, wisdom and skills to take active roles in a diverse society.

Headteacher	Sue Machin
Inspector's name and number	The Revd Dr Jason Phillips (598)