



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St. Chad's Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Gladstone Street
Winsford
CW7 4AT

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Cheshire West and Chester

Dates of inspection: 21 January 2016

Date of last inspection: September 2010

School's unique reference number: 111262

Headteacher: Natalie Tomlinson

Inspector's name and number: Jean Forward (625)

School context

St. Chad's is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Most children are of White British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs is above the national average as is the proportion of children known to be eligible for the pupil premium. The school received the Centre of Excellence for Inclusion award in July 2015. The headteacher was appointed in January 2014. The school came out of Ofsted special measures in June 2015.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Chad's as a Church of England school is outstanding

- The extremely strong Christian leadership of the headteacher and her vision for the development of the school ensure that the school's Christian ethos is paramount
- The school is extremely successful in creating a loving, caring and inclusive Christian environment which has a direct influence on children's well-being and academic success.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is excellent and is rooted in the school's Christian ethos and its approach to prayer, reflection and inclusivity. Children become increasingly confident and self-assured in their social skills, understanding of faith and appreciation of the diversity of the world around them.
- The commitment of the governing body to the development of the school's Christian ethos provides highly effective support and challenge for the work of the senior leadership team.

Areas to improve

- Review the evaluation of collective worship to involve all members of the school community to inform planning for the enrichment of children's worship experiences.
- Extend planning for collective worship to include a wider range of Christian saints' days and festivals so that children have a better understanding of the pattern of the Christian year.

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

A strong commitment to its Christian ethos and the development of the whole child underpin the school's work. All members of the community know they are valued and the ethos of trust and respect is clearly evident. Children talk confidently about the importance of the school's Christian values in their daily life. They understand that Jesus shows them how to live through these values. Positive relationships across the community are a key element in the school's success and are rooted in a Christ-centred approach. Children's SMSC development is excellent as a result of the focused Christian ethos and the emphasis on nurturing and meeting the needs of every individual. Consequently, children demonstrate high levels of self-esteem, awareness of others and the need to persevere. They feel safe and their behaviour is very good. Children are extremely courteous, friendly and responsible. They enjoy being play leaders, members of the school council and worship committee. They see this involvement as a way of contributing to the school community and supporting their peers. Children are able to share concerns with their teachers knowing that these will be addressed in a sensitive and caring way. Parents comment that their children are happy and enthusiastic about learning and school life. They say that staff, governors and members of the church work together for the children. The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship, supporting a range of charities including St. Luke's Hospice, Children in Need and MacMillan. Children speak of the importance of showing generosity and compassion for those in need. Displays and Christian symbols emphasise the school's distinctiveness and support the children's spiritual development extremely well. Reflection areas are a feature of every classroom. Children value the classroom worship spaces and say that they help them to think and pray. The school provides highly effective teaching about faiths other than Christianity through religious education (RE). This contributes well to children's cultural knowledge and positive attitudes to the diverse nature of society. Data for 2015 shows that attainment and progress in reading and writing are broadly in line with the national average for children at the end of Y6. A dip in mathematics is clearly being addressed. Children make good progress from starting points as a result of interventions and Christian care. Attendance is close to the national average. The school's Christian ethos shapes the management of attendance and behaviour in order to secure these positive results.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The act of collective worship is central to the life of the school. Planning incorporates themes based on the school's core Christian values, the Bible and major Christian festivals. As a result, children are constantly reminded of the ways in which they can lead a life rooted in Jesus. The school places Christ at the centre of all it does and collective worship enables children of all ages to understand how the teaching of Jesus guides Christians in their daily lives. The children enjoy class worship and engage well with questions which explore values and beliefs. A structured approach to planning ensures that class worship is clearly linked to the school's Christian values. Children enjoy times of silence and reflection which are an important part of the school's approach to prayer. A Year 5 child said, 'In class worship we light a candle and reflect on God'. Another child said, 'I enjoy discovering about Jesus'. Children become familiar with Anglican practice through the use of traditional prayers and responses. As a result, they understand that worship plays a key part in the life of faith which the school and the church foster. The clergy and congregation of St. Chad's church play an important role in the worship of the school and the children's understanding through Open the Book. The school worships in the parish church for major festivals and this enables children and their families to feel part of the wider worshipping community. Visits to the church make a positive contribution to children's spiritual development and to their understanding of key Christian celebrations. Children have a developing understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and they are reminded of this when candles are lit at the beginning of whole school worship. The school has some systems in place to monitor and evaluate worship. Children on the recently appointed worship committee have started to evaluate whole school worship. However, not all members of the school community contribute to the process.

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

The headteacher has a clear and strong vision for the school based on Christian principles and values. The school has made rapid and sustained improvement under her excellent leadership and the strong support of the governing body. She takes every opportunity to promote the school's distinctive Christian character through prayer and reflection. This has contributed to the school's remarkable journey of improvement and the removal of barriers to learning for all children. Staff and governors are committed to fostering all aspects of children's development and well-being through Christian care and love. In doing so, they recognise the importance of the school's Christian character in creating an ethos which supports effective learning and the promotion of equal opportunities. The strong senior leadership team is highly effective in identifying clear priorities for the development of the school's Christian vision. The headteacher attributes children's successful learning and personal development to the Christ-centred qualities of the school. The school knows its children and their families extremely well and meets individual needs through a culture of Christian nurturing and support. Parents recognise the distinctive Christian qualities of the school and speak highly of the respect with which they and their children are treated. Foundation governors are knowledgeable and experienced. They have a clear understanding of their role. As a result, they support the school in a variety of ways and provide a high level of challenge. Action plans for RE and worship are included in the school's improvement plan. This ensures that aspects of church school distinctiveness continue to contribute to the development of the school's Christian foundation. The clergy from St. Chad's church provide a strong pastoral presence in the school and present a positive image of the church for the children and their families. The school is outward looking and contributes to the work of the diocese, supporting other church schools in matters of inclusion. The school's strong partnership with the diocese has supported the relentless determination to succeed. The diocese provides opportunities for discussion and training which support the development of church school ethos and distinctiveness. The school fulfils statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report January 2016 St. Chad's C of E Primary School, Winsford CW7 4AT