



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Augustine's Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Pipehay Lane
Draycott-in-the-Clay
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
DE6 5BY

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: 27 November 2014

Date of last inspection: 25 November 2009

School's unique reference number: 124247

Headteacher: Sarah Robson

Inspector's name and number: Susan Taylor 688

School context

St Augustine's Church of England VC First School is a small school which serves the village of Draycott-in-the-Clay and the surrounding area. There are 50 pupils on roll aged 3-9 years. Pupils transfer at the end of Year 4 to the middle school in Uttoxeter. The headteacher is also currently acting executive head at St Peter's CE(A) First School, Alton and All Saint's CE(C) First School, Denstone who form the Churnet Valley Federation. The pupils are mainly from a White-British background and the proportion on free-school meals is low.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Augustine's Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- Positive relationships at every level ensures that pupils achieve well both academically and in their personal development.
- The caring, nurturing environment fosters an ethos of self-belief and high expectations.
- Pupils plan and deliver collective worship with enthusiasm.
- Pupils speak confidently about the Christian values of their school and how they affect their own lives.

Areas to improve

- Make the school's motto and mission statement explicitly Christian so that the school's church status is more obvious to parents and the wider community.
- Enable governors to more formally monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school as a church school.

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

The school's Christian character has a very significant impact upon pupil relationships and learning. Achievement of all pupils, including the most vulnerable, is very good; so they are well-prepared for the next stage of their education. These standards have been achieved through an ethos where children feel safe and happy. Pupils are well-supported by a team of adults who encourage each individual to believe in themselves, so that they fulfil their potential. Pupils and staff are valued as individuals and this leads to them valuing and supporting each other. The school is an excellent example of a loving family. As one child said '*we are the church in school*'. Children develop their spirituality both inside and outside school by using the quiet area in the playground and the prayer boxes in the classrooms. These areas have enabled pupils to become more reflective. Children talk positively and enthusiastically about their learning in religious education (RE) and understand that belief matters. Children link their relationships, both at home and school, to the school's core values of believe, love and respect. These are deeply embedded in the life of the school. Children explain how these values relate to their school motto of '*Enjoy and Achieve Together*' and how they are based upon the teachings of Jesus, giving many relevant examples from the Bible. Behaviour, both in classrooms and in the playground, is exemplary and children are well-aware of the systems and procedures in place. Although children relate good behaviour to their core values of love and respect and Jesus' teachings, this focus is not evident within the written behaviour policy. Pupils' learning in RE and across the wider curriculum develops their understanding of difference and diversity. The links with schools and communities locally and globally enable pupils to put their core value of respect into practice. The school council are very involved in organising events in school and take on their role seriously. This has helped them to develop an idea of committee structures, discussion and listening to the ideas of others. These examples show how the impact of these SMSC opportunities is outstanding for children.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central to the life of St Augustine's. Children enjoy collective worship and can talk confidently about its value to both the school and themselves. The weekly pattern of collective worship involves a mixture of styles and leaders within a consistent framework. This gives the children a range of experiences which helps them to begin to worship and reflect for themselves. Pupils plan and deliver worship weekly. These collective worships are enjoyed and well-remembered by pupils who not only can retell the story but also the message. An example of this is a child retelling the story of Paul's conversion and how that means everyone can change. The ability of children to make links with their own lives from the message of the worship has had a significant impact on moving collective worship to outstanding. The usual framework of the worship is based upon prayer, praise and reflection. Through these pupils' talk about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Understanding of the Trinity is appropriate to their age. Children explain that the lighting of the candle at the start of worship signifies '*Jesus as the light of the world*' and blowing it out at the end represents that they are the light of the world and this should affect the way they behave towards others. The minister or lay reader leads worship weekly based upon the lectionary theme and this, together with church visits, develops pupils understanding of Anglican traditions. At Easter the whole school have a day at Hanbury Church with a range of activities concluding with worship for pupils and parents. This day has made children very secure in their understanding of the Easter story. Prayer boxes in all classrooms and the hall are used by pupils and staff and give them an opportunity to bring their thoughts to God anonymously. These prayers are then collated and said by an adult in worship. Prayers are also said at lunchtime and the end of the school day. Children value these times of praying for the needs of each other and this develops their spirituality. Collective worship is planned by the worship and RE leader in conjunction with all staff and the

foundation governors. Planning constitutes a working document that is continuously reviewed. An evaluation booklet is completed daily, but currently this is more a record of music/themes/Bible passages, than an evaluation document recording the impact of the worship on children. This is an area for future development. It is identified by the school that more evidence of pupil comments is required to make evaluation more rigorous.

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

Worship and RE are led by an enthusiastic, strong and reflective leader and this leads to highly effective practice. Her commitment to these areas ensures that they are consistent with the school's Christian vision and give pupils opportunities to grow spiritually. The headteacher, and deputy in her absence, lead a united staff team who share the vision for the school and strive to provide the best possible all-round education for the children. The school has strong and supportive links with the local churches of St Augustine's, Draycott-in-the-Clay and St Werburgh's, Hanbury and this provides a mutual benefit to the pupils, families and congregations. The school has rightly stated that it needs to develop its web-site so as to ensure that the school's Christian status is clear and values and mission statement are explicit. The school has many links to the church and community, but the website does not reflect these strengths. A foundation governor, who is also a lay-reader, spends a great deal of time in school and staff value this support. The school has a number of regular voluntary helpers, some of whom have come for many years, which shows the high esteem in which the community, church, current and past parents hold the school. Many governors give a great deal of time and commitment to the school and are involved in the daily life of the school. They know that the children are happy, well-behaved and achieve well academically. However to move leadership and management to outstanding governors need to be more involved in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Christian effectiveness of the school. As a result of the previous SIAS report opportunities for some pupils to experience the Eucharist has been introduced. Parents are very supportive of the school and describe it as "*one big, happy family*". They feel that the school not only does its best for the pupils but also the parents and the community and that staff are always prepared to listen. Those parents with older children stress how the foundations laid by St Augustine's have enabled their children to thrive in their next school.

SIAMS report November 2014 St Augustine'sCE(VC) First School, Draycott-in-the-Clay, DE6 5BY