

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

William Alvey Church of England Primary School

East Road
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 7EA

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Lincoln
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	11 October 2011
Name of single academy trust	The William Alvey School Trust
Date of inspection	8 November 2017
Date of last inspection	11 October 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 137565
Headteacher	Stephen Tapley
Inspector's name and number	Anne Platt 807

School context

William Alvey Church of England Primary School is larger than the average primary school. The 637 pupils come from a range of social backgrounds and live within or near the town of Sleaford. The number of pupils with English as a second language has increased since the previous inspection in this predominantly White British school. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is below national average. The school converted to an academy in October 2011.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of William Alvey as a Church of England school are good

- The Christian character of the school makes a good contribution to the positive relationships between all members of the school community.
- The church and the wider community contribute to the life of the school in a way that benefits learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The high quality of religious education (RE) provides opportunities for children to explore their understanding of faith and belief.
- Collective worship provides important times in the school day for pupils to be reflective and still and children are becoming more involved in its planning and leadership.

Areas to improve

- Increase pupil' experiences in planning and leading worship to enable them to have a sense of ownership in this key area of church school life.
- Ensure robust monitoring and evaluation of church school distinctiveness and collective worship, which involves the whole school community, is an integral part of school improvement planning.

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

The Christian character is good because pupils articulate how values such as respect and forgiveness are important to them as part of the school community. Teachers are excellent role models for pupils and display patience and care for each individual. Parents praise the positive relationships within the school community epitomised by a culture of kindness to all. One parent said, 'We chose this school for its Christian values, you can feel them everywhere.' Pupils can explain how values are taught through collective worship and religious education and help them to, 'live as God wants us to.' Adults and pupils have a good understanding of how the core values make a difference to their personal development.

The excellent relationships and emphasis on kindness helps to create an environment in which pupils feel safe and secure. They enjoy coming to this happy Christian school where there have been few exclusions and attendance is good. The pupils' positive attitudes in and out of the classroom enable them to make good progress academically and attain standards above national expectations at the end of year 6.

Pupils have a well-developed appreciation of the moral and social responsibility to help others both locally and further afield. Through their charitable work, pupils feel they benefit socially, culturally and morally as, 'Jesus wanted us to share with the poor.' Across the curriculum good experiences are being identified which enable learners to explore spirituality and develop their confidence in expressing their thoughts in increasing depth.

Pupils know that it is important to learn about Christianity and other religions and that what they learn gives meaning to their everyday life. They clearly enjoy religious education in which they demonstrate respect for other faith traditions and an understanding of Christianity. Parents value the respect all pupils show for people of other faiths and the opportunities utilised from the local community to learn about similarities and differences between religions. Excellent links with St Denys Church have enabled pupils to deepen their knowledge of the apostles through a Reredos project. The information produced by the children has been made into a powerpoint presentation for display in the church. Pupils are proud of their parish church and spoke with confidence about the life of St Denys. This demonstrates the important contribution the church community makes to school life.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is good because acts of worship are carefully planned to reflect Anglican traditions through singing, Christian teaching, reflection and prayer. This makes them distinctively special times in the school day. Careful planning incorporates not only the seven core values of the school but also reflects local, national and international events. This has strengthened the spiritual development of pupils. Bible stories are a regular part of worship and stories focusing on the life of Jesus, are central to planning. One pupil said, 'Sometimes we are told Bible stories with a hidden message and it helps us with the right choices to make in life.' This focus on Bible stories has enabled pupils to develop their understanding of Christian life and the centrality of Jesus to worship.

The variety of visitors who contribute to collective worship includes representatives from a wide range of Christian communities. Their contribution is valued by parents, pupils and staff as it enriches pupils' understanding of different Christian traditions. When services are held at the local churches, parents say these are well attended which reflects the important place worship holds in the hearts of the school community. However, the impact of collective worship is not strategically evaluated by a range of stakeholders as an integral part of school improvement and therefore challenging areas for further improvements are not identified.

Pupils demonstrate a well-developed appreciation of the purpose and meaning of prayer. Class prayer collections are a focal point in classrooms and are used daily for lunchtime and end of the day reflection. The Bishops' visitor is a weekly presence who supports and guides pupils in the use of prayer walks and prayer spaces. Pupils value her input and described prayer as an opportunity to reflect on life and speak to God. The spiritual development of pupils has been strengthened as a consequence.

Collective worship makes a good contribution to the life of the school through its promotion of Christian values and the opportunity it gives for pupils and adults to reflect and pray. Pupils' attitude to collective worship reflects the good quality of daily worship and its impact on their spiritual and moral development. Pupils' appreciation of the nature of the Trinity has been developed through religious education, reflection and prayer which they can discuss with some understanding. Although pupils enjoy contributing to worship and some year groups have planned and led class services, pupils lack of regular involvement limits their impact on exploring themes and thereby developing a greater sense of ownership.

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

The headteacher and school leaders have ensured that the Christian ethos is moving forward so that it meets the current expectations of what makes a good church school. The promotion of the school values is evident in the school environment and the weekly newsletter. The impact of the Christian ethos on the pupils' personal development and achievement are well established.

The school has made some progress towards addressing the development area identified at the previous inspection. Through engagement in diocesan training, new appointments to the board of governors are developing their knowledge of the school's current good performance as a church school. They are increasingly aware of strategies needed to continue improvement. However school leaders, including governors, have yet to develop a robust strategic programme to monitor and evaluate the impact of actions taken in church school development.

Partnerships with the wider community are a significant strength of the school and enhance the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. For example, Project 72 is a community based pupil research aimed at tracking down the names of the 72 children who attended William Alvey School and then went on to fight and tragically die for their country in World War One. Grants for the project have been received from local companies, the British legion and Lincoln diocese. Pupils have thoroughly enjoyed being part of this research which has strengthened their awareness of service to others. The school's relationship with the parish church forms a strong bond that makes a significant contribution to the local community. Parents are confident in the school and the way through its positive modelling and ethos, it gives their children an excellent start in their educational journey.

Leadership of religious education is good and has a high profile in the curriculum. The coordinator is committed to her subject and has an understanding of the current position of religious education and how to continue to improve its effectiveness. The collective worship programme ensures that church seasons are linked to theological themes, values and charities. The school meets statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education.

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