

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Salford Church of England Primary School

Claverton Road, Salford, BS31 3DW

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Diocese

Bath and Wells

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Date of academy conversion

September 2016

Name of multi-academy trust

Wellsway Multi Academy Trust

Date/s of inspection

2 November 2017

Date of last inspection

9 November 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Academy 143083

Headteacher

Dawn Elliott

Inspector's name and number

Tracey Khodabandehloo 879

School context

Salford, a larger than average primary school situated just outside of Bath, caters for pupils from Reception to Year 6. There is a separately managed nursery on site. The headteacher was appointed to the permanent post in March 2015. Having increased in size, the school now has fourteen single year group classes. Six are housed in a new block opened in September 2017. The proportion of pupils who have special educational or disability needs is above average. The percentage with an education healthcare plan is below average. The proportion for whom the school receives the pupil premium allowance is well below average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Salford as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The partnership with the local church and the support it provides have a significant impact on the Christian character of the school and the wellbeing of pupils.
- Religious education makes a substantial contribution to the Christian character of the school and to the high level of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. They are excited and challenged by religious education.
- Distinctively Christian vision and values are deeply embedded in the life of the school and have a marked impact on the excellent behaviour, attitudes, wellbeing and achievements of pupils.
- Affirmative relationships, inclusivity and respect for diversity are hallmarks of the school community. These are based on Christian values linked to Biblical teaching.

Areas to improve

- Increase opportunities for personal prayer and/or reflection throughout the school in order to maximise learning and spiritual development.
- Continue the collaborative work between the school and church community in order to further enhance the impact of Christian values on the daily lives of learners.

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

The vision for Saltford is: 'A vibrant, caring and supportive church school, inspiring and serving the whole community'. This vision is successfully lived out. Core values of kindness, respect and honesty permeate the work of the school and these are promoted and articulated within a distinctively Christian context. For example, kindness is expressed not only as a shared human value but as one lived out in the life and person of Jesus. Children explain core values in Christian terms with reference to Bible stories such as the Good Samaritan when describing kindness or the calling and commitment of the twelve disciples to illustrate respect and trust. Core Christian values contribute to the school's distinctively Christian character and are embedded in all aspects of school life from classroom to playground. The Christian character of the school has a significant impact on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, children of all faiths and none are given numerous opportunities to reflect on and discuss belief and values. This leads to an environment where excellent behaviour is based on mutual respect and an appreciation for each individual. Pupils listen sympathetically to the opinions of others and are thoughtful and perceptive when discussing faith. They are able to put forward their own ideas and opinions reflectively. Relationships between all members of the school community are strong and based on respect for all. There are many opportunities for children to serve others and this they do with commitment and pride. Children act as playground buddies and as monitors for milk and fruit. Older children relish opportunities to help younger ones. The Christian character of the school also contributes effectively to the excellent achievement of all pupils including those with special education needs. Attendance levels are high. This is because children enjoy coming to school where all feel safe and valued. This is acknowledged by parents who comment, 'this school is all about the children and the staff care for each individual child'. There are symbols around the school serving as a visual reminder of the Christian foundation. Pupils talk about these symbols with depth and understanding. They are able to explain, for example, how the leaves on the school oak tree logo symbolise the Christian values, the link with the church and the relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The school council holds the core values of the school at the centre of its work and because of this, is highly effective in making a positive contribution to the school community, charities and social projects. Religious education has a high profile in the curriculum and has an extremely positive impact on the Christian character of the school. Children engage fully and are thoughtful and reflective in lessons. They speak of their enjoyment of and interest in the subject and talk knowledgeably about Bible stories. In a religious education lesson based on the beatitudes, older children engaged perceptively in role play when exploring the life of Mother Teresa. They were able to thoughtfully link the teachings of Jesus to the life choices made by Mother Teresa. In a lesson on baptism, younger children engaged enthusiastically with the topic and showed a high level of understanding and reflection. Links between religious education and the core values of the school are explicit and understood by the children. Pupils have a very good knowledge of Christianity as a world faith and are appreciative of diversity within the Christian church and of other faiths. They exhibit respect for diversity, knowledgeably explaining a variety of Christian artefacts from around the world and explaining their relevance to those communities. The importance of religious education is encapsulated by a pupil who says 'religious education helps you understand different people and what they believe and that means you can get along with everybody'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is an important and central part of the life of the school. Children animatedly explain how collective worship has an impact on their everyday lives enabling them to 'think and pray about things that are important'. Pupils engage with collective worship very well and show exemplary behaviour and focus. A rich and varied experience of collective worship is offered by staff and the church community and collective worship is inspirational and inclusive. Collective worship is a time when the core values of the school are explored. Biblical materials and Christian teaching linked to these values enable children to apply the Christian stories they have heard to their everyday lives. For example, children are able to talk with confidence about the attributes shown by the Old Testament character of Ruth and how her actions demonstrated kindness and loyalty. Children engage in a rich experience of worship through the leadership of outside speakers, school staff and pupils. There is an interesting and varied worship programme that offers children opportunities for a high level of spiritual and moral reflection. They also develop an understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The collective worship programme is very well supported by members of the parish church including the rector and volunteers from the church community. Children talk with excitement about the regular visits from the Open the Book team commenting on how 'the Open the Book team make Bible stories interesting and real'. Children are highly capable and confident in planning and leading collective worship and they have a true sense of contribution and participation. This includes planned worship, prepared by them in advance and more spontaneous contributions. Pupils experience a range of creative opportunities in collective worship such as drama, singing and presenting. Inspirational prayer workshops led by the rector and members of the parish church have a significant impact on the pupils' experience of prayer. Children enjoy the workshops which enable them to experience prayer at a personal level. Prayers at collective worship and at other times are often created and developed by the children. This includes a school prayer book.

There are regular opportunities for prayer in collective worship and children respond well at these times. Responsive prayers, the lighting of a candle, time for reflection and meaningful corporate responses all contribute to a calm respectful environment for prayer within collective worship. Pupils sing hymns with enthusiasm creating an uplifting and joyful sound which contributes to a sense of reverence. Children know and understand the Lord's Prayer and are able to relate this to their own experience. However, there are more limited opportunities for personal prayer generally around the school and grounds. The school has begun to consider the use of the attractive reflective garden as a space for personal prayer and outdoor collective worship. Collective worship is well planned and reviewed by staff and pupils and because of this, children experience variety, are engaged, and have a very positive and affirming experience of collective worship.

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

School leaders promote and develop the Christian character of the school highly effectively. Leaders and governors have worked collaboratively to formulate and articulate values for the school that reflect the Christian vision of being a vibrant and caring church school, inspiring and serving the whole community. This work has involved training through the diocese and the highlighting of the Christian and Biblical underpinning of the school values. There is a commitment articulated by leaders to 'life in all its fullness' from John 10:10. This impacts positively on behaviour and achievement and helps to create an environment where all children thrive. Governors evaluate the impact of the Christian vision of the school well. They do this through a working party including church representatives who drive forward aspects of church school improvement. Plans for promoting the Christian ethos of the school are included in school improvement plans. Developments are monitored effectively by the governing body through feedback from foundation governors. The Christian character has a strong impact on achievement across the school community. This is because the church school vision and values are interwoven into the daily life of the school. Partnerships between parents, the local church and the community are excellent. School leaders and parents work in partnership and parents enthusiastically support the work of the school. Parents speak warmly of its Christian character and the way in which this positively influences their children's wellbeing. A parent prayer group meets regularly in the school in order to pray for the school and community. Parents raise significant funds to support school development. This includes projects to enhance the Christian character of the school such as the funding of an outside garden for reflection and prayer. Parents appreciate the inclusive nature of the school and this is attributed to a strong Christian ethos where all are valued. This inclusivity is encapsulated by the following comment: 'whatever their ability or background, the school is very good at getting children to be the best that they can be'. Links with the church have a significant impact on the wellbeing of pupils and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The work of the rector, particularly in the development of prayer in the school, is very effective. Shared activity enables school, church and the wider community to mutually benefit from the strong links. One example of this is the annual Ascension Day walk to Kelston Hill which is considered by many as a highlight of the school calendar. The presentation of a Bible to pupils in Year 3 and a Christian based resource to help children with transfer to secondary school, further enhance links between the school and church community. Religious education is given a high priority. Because of this, the coordinator for religious education is well supported and leads and monitors the subject highly effectively. School leadership supports the coordinator in hosting and attending SACRE meetings at the school. This enables participants from Christian and other faiths to share good practice in religious education thus being mutually beneficial. The school also contributes to wider developments in religious education by leading and managing the on-site RE education resource centre for the local authority. As a result, children benefit substantially in their development and understanding of global communities, through regularly interacting with a wide range of artefacts and resources from around the world. The arrangements for religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements.