

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Wickersley St. Alban's CE Primary

Morthen Road, Wickersley, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S66 1EU

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese / Methodist District [delete as appropriate]	Sheffield
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority / Date of academy conversion	2013
Name of multi-academy trust	Diocese of Sheffield Trust
Date/s of inspection	3 October 2017
Date of last inspection	14 November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 141455
Executive Principal / Head of School	Alison Adair/Amy Gurner
Inspector's name and number	David Shannon 617

School context

Wickersley St Alban's Primary School is an average sized academy, serving Wickersley and its surrounding villages. It is an over-subscribed school, rated outstanding in its last Ofsted report. The percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals is low (4%) as is the number of pupils with English as an additional language (1%). The percentage of pupils with special educational provision is 7%. The executive headteacher is a National Leader in Education, and has a role in three primary schools. St Alban's is part of the Diocese of Sheffield Trust and has National Support School status. The headteacher has been Executive Head since September 2013.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Alban's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian ethos is evident in all aspects of school life, promoting values based on the life of Jesus
- Relationships at all levels focus on trust, so that all who work at the school feel valued, supported and affirmed

Areas to improve

- Develop the work of the Worship Team further to enhance worship, so that pupils are trained in Christian leadership roles
- Further links with the Parish Church, so that pupils, staff, parents and friends may develop the spiritual life of the school community together
- Develop the 'Understanding Christianity' course, enabling each child to understand the distinctiveness of their church school

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

St Alban's is committed to the aim that every child reaches their full potential, as made in the image of God. Standards of attainment for all learners, regardless of background, are excellent compared with all national data. The school's core purpose is imparted to children through an emphasis on distinctive Christian values. These are resilience, hope, faith, truth, courage and perseverance. Relationships throughout the school reflect the weight put upon these qualities, so that squabbles are quickly ended and bullying of all forms unknown, since pupils treat each

other as of infinite worth. Older pupils assume leadership roles, both within houses and as playground buddies, so that their God given talents are used strategically. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are integrated within a lively and well taught curriculum, which equips St Alban's pupils well for their future lives. Their understanding of Christian perspectives is enhanced by theme days focussing on Christian festivals, National Book Day, forgiveness and poetry writing. The school house system attaches annually a value to each house, which they enthusiastically promote throughout their year in worship and special events. Hence all pupils can describe how their house value has improved their attitudes and behaviour, and helped them to emulate the life of Jesus. St Alban's pupils welcome opportunities to learn of people from a range of cultures, backgrounds and beliefs, and pupils from minority cultures contribute fully to the life of the school. The current religious education (RE) curriculum is being enhanced by the introduction of 'Understanding Christianity', but effective learning already occurs about all the major world religions. RE has a clear impact upon all pupils, and fosters a strong emphasis on making good choices. Pupils know all the major religious festivals, and reflect each year on those of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, so that learners are well prepared for life in a pluralist society. Pupils in both key stages had a good grasp of the significance of harvest, advent, Christmas, and Easter. Pupils in Y4-Y6 have opportunities for residential visits, which build leadership qualities, and in the case of the Oakes Christian centre, bring new insights into spirituality. St Alban's is an outstanding school because it has a clear set of core values, and nurtures these to ensure no child is left behind, but that each fulfils their Christian potential as a child of God.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

There is a rich and exciting programme of collective worship, which effectively projects the Christian values of the school. Pupils respond actively in worship by answering questions and posing 'hard questions' of their own. A selection of these questions are prominently displayed and prompt much reflection and discussion by pupils. Reflection time in worship picks up on these 'hard questions', although pupils recognise that sometimes 'we simply do not know' is an acceptable answer! The programme is carefully recorded and evaluated by leaders and governors, and thus worship is kept fresh and contemporary. The programme is distinctively Christian, but draws on world religions also, so that pupils are being prepared for a multi-cultural world. This year house Jordan are leading worship, and feedback through governors to develop the worship plan. A worship team across all houses then works alongside school leaders in promoting, conducting and evaluating the worship programme, so that pupils have a sense of shared ownership. All children understand the concepts of liturgy, prayer, reverence and they can recite key parts of the apostle's creed, the Lord's Prayer and school prayer. Thus they testify to being active in prayer throughout the day. There are places of prayer in each classroom, and a 'help desk' in the main corridor as a source of encouragement or prayer requests. Collective worship uses a range of prayers, including a circular prayer in which worshippers turn to all parts of the hall, to remind themselves that God is surrounding them with His love. Pupils can name a favourite song from a wide repertoire and explain how it helps them, so that worship effectively empowers their daily lives. The focus on the apostle's creed has imparted a clear view of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so that children were clear that God's Spirit was with them at work and play. Children respond with excitement to the 'open the book' worship led by a team from St Alban's church, and providing Bible teaching through drama and song. Learners of all ages could testify how themes addressed in worship had changed their attitudes, with one pupil finding courage to engage in a sporting challenge and others feeling that homelessness should be adopted as a priority for the school's charitable giving this year. Pupils attend St Alban's church for Remembrance, Christingle, Lent, Easter and leavers' services. They expressed a wish to be co-workers with the rector and his congregation, acting out in the community the values they aspire to in school.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Delivery of RE is cross-curricular, promoting stimulating and reflective writing in work-folders. It is conscientiously delivered by all staff with an infectious enthusiasm, which thus is shared by the learners. The head of school has taken responsibility for the subject, and has brought to it both clarity of assessment and a new vision for its content. The 'Understanding Christianity' course is being introduced, which will impact both on pupils' knowledge and comprehension of their heritage, giving them a strong foundation for life. Standards in RE are high, with pupils writing reflectively about 'heaven', 'God and creation', and 'forgiveness'. Y2 study the martyrdom of St Alban, placing themselves as a participant in the story. Hence questions of decision making are introduced through the study of a saint, so that pupils' own development is furthered by St Alban's example. Older pupils have good knowledge of Biblical characters, showing empathy with their stories, taking the events of Elijah's life as an invitation to be strong, even if alone. Lessons revolve around debate, questioning, reflecting and recording, so that learners realise that some answers are theories, and that their own thought out views are welcomed and valued. Pupils RE work is carefully displayed around the school, with key memory verses framed, reminding all pupils of the key values. Pupils explain lucidly how RE has widened their minds and challenged their pre-conceptions, improving their ability to accept and understand views differing from their own. Y2 pupils had worked with St Alban's church to

provide for parents and the community a guide to key parts of the church building, with many then taking family around the church as impromptu guides. An annual Bible quiz was re-introduced last year, with a special Pycroft Bible presented to the winner, in memory of a much loved former governor, at a service in St Alban's church. The Bible is a central pillar of this school's RE work.

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

Outstanding leadership, led by the executive headteacher, has helped to promote high attainment, with outcomes in the top 2% nationally. All leaders strive for excellence as an outworking of their Christian service, so that the school's ethos is explicit in all they do. Pupils are leaders too in school improvement. The four houses adopted values are carried forward into an action plan for each house, driven by the house captains, so that pupil's ideas are incorporated in the whole school development plan. Areas of focus are as diverse as 'developing spirituality' through to 'improving spelling'. This results in pupils having a strong voice, ownership of and involvement in making Christian teaching change their lives for the better. The senior leaders effectively lead a team of teachers who model themselves on Christ's pedagogy; teach simply and challenge with love. Teachers are aspiring to become leaders of education both within St Alban's and beyond, so that St Alban's strengths can be shared and exported elsewhere. Governance is a strength of the school, with governors both supporting and challenging effectively, clear that their goal is to enable all to reach their God-given potential. Foundation governors are very capable of analysing data, so that they contribute expertly to analysis of the performance of sub-groups of pupils; they see the correct use of school resources as part of their Christian service. The points of action raised in the last SIAS inspection, and a more recent diocesan health check, have been addressed so that the resulting strategies will develop excellence. This school has effective links with the adjacent St Alban's church, whose worshippers contribute greatly to the wider life of the school. The rector is active on the governing body, and seeks to develop youth work with St Alban's current and past pupils, so that their teenage years are also supported by the links made by their membership of the school. Parents are fully supportive of all the school does, and recognise that teachers and other adults have a clear Christian motivation, which enhances every aspect of the local community. All statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met. This is an outstanding school which is not resting on its laurels but striving to ensure that each new cohort is as valued and nurtured as those who came before.

SIAMS report October 2017 Wickersley St Alban's CE Primary Academy Morthen Rd, Rotherham S66 1EU