**National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report**

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| **Southbroom St James Academy**  Nursteed Road  Devizes  Wiltshire SN10 3AF  **Previous SIAMS grade: Not previously inspected as an academy**  **Current SIAMS grade: Satisfactory**  **Diocese: Salisbury**  Local authority: Not applicable  Date of inspection: 26 April 2016  Date of last inspection: not applicable  School’s unique reference number: 140352  Headteacher: Nigel Andrews  Inspector’s name and number: Andrew Rickett 201 |
| **School context**  Southbroom St James is slightly larger than the average size junior school with 214 children on roll. They are arranged into eight classes some of which have mixed year groups. The large majority of children are of a white British heritage and reflect a broad range of social and economic backgrounds. The number of children with learning needs and/or disabilities is above the national average as is the number entitled to receive pupil premium. Overall attendance is broadly in line with the national average. The school became an academy on 1 December 2013 as part of the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust (DSAT). |
| **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Southbroom St James as a Church of England school are satisfactory**   * Children are growing in their ability to articulate how Christian values have meaning and purpose in their lives. * A greater focus on values in acts of worship is giving them clearer links to biblical teaching. * The leadership and management are developing their understanding of the purpose of being a church school and what this means for children and adults in the school community. |
| **Areas to improve**   * Revisit the school’s values so that there is an understanding of the explicit Christian root of a core set of values shared by all members of the school community. * Create a shared understanding of spirituality that provides high quality opportunities to develop children’s perceptions through challenging questioning. * Develop the skills of the leadership and management, including governors, to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of the distinctive Christian ethos on the children’s learning and personal development. |
| **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is satisfactory at meeting the needs of all learners**  The school has agreed five values and attributes that were devised to meet the needs of the children at the time they were chosen. Happy, engage, achieve, respect and treating other as you would wish to be treated create the HEART mnemonic that is used by the school to support the drive to raise standards and improve behaviour. HEART has been effective in creating more positive attitudes towards learning and improving expectations of the behaviour of children. Children’s academic progress has been accelerated with more achieving age related expectations although this still varies for different groups of children. The introduction of the Roots and Fruits programme to support collective worship has introduced a further set of twelve values that have more explicit roots in Christian teaching. These values are beginning to be used to support children’s learning but are at an early stage as opportunities to embed values such as friendship, and therefore enhance the quality of learning, are currently being missed. The link between HEART and the twelve core values are not clear and members of the school community find them difficult to articulate. Which of them underpin the school’s Christian ethos is hard to explain. Children are able to talk about the Roots and Fruits values. They give examples of how they help them in their relationships but are less clear about how, for example, friendship or courage supports them in their learning. Children talk with confidence about their school as a church school and openly discuss matters of faith and belief with each other in an environment of trust and respect for the views of others. Children have some opportunities to reflect on their learning and through class worship. There are fewer opportunities for children to reflect in the school day because there is no agreed understanding of how reflection contributes to the development of the children’s personal spirituality. The introduction of a new scheme of work in religious education (RE) has raised the profile of the subject and given greater confidence to teachers in its delivery. Its potential to develop an enquiry approach to learning is still being developed as teachers acquire the skills to use questioning more effectively. |
| **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**  The introduction of a new collective worship resource in October 2015 has improved the delivery of acts of worship. Worship planning is now more focused on explicit values delivered through biblical teaching. At present, five of the twelve values have begun to be explored. These values, referred to as core values, are known to the children who can give examples of how they are lived out within the school community. The awarding of badges to children, and adults, who display the current core value, has helped to raise their profile among the school community, including parents who say that their children value them. There is a growing awareness of how these values have roots in Bible teaching and link to the school’s Christian ethos. Acts of worship have distinct elements that ensure they are times when the school comes together to hear Bible stories, pray and reflect on how the messages heard can make a difference to the children’s own lives. Children have a good understanding of the significance of the lighting of a candle to begin their worship. They articulate how Jesus represents the ‘light of the world’ which ‘guides’ them on the ‘right path to do good things’. Some children explain with considerable maturity that ‘maybe we need to have some dark paths’ so that we can ‘better appreciate the good things’. Class based worship gives children opportunities to explore messages in greater depth but these are still at quite an early stage of being introduced. Children talk with confidence about prayer and its meaning and purpose. They understand that prayer isn’t asking for wishes or dreams but a way to communicate with God to share with Him their worries and concerns and give thanks for the good things in their lives. Older children in particular appreciate that prayers are not always answered and have the confidence to admit that they are not sure why God would do this. Similarly, children know that the Trinity consists of three aspects and are growing in their appreciation that it is a mystery that they cannot answer. Children have some involvement in preparing acts of worship and participation in them. There are fewer opportunities for them to plan and lead acts of worship on a regular basis. The deputy headteacher has ensured that provision for collective worship has improved and has a higher profile within the life of the school. Systems for its monitoring and evaluation are at an early stage. |
| **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are satisfactory**  Since September 2015 the school has been developing its Christian ethos in a more earnest way with a greater commitment to establish an ethos more firmly rooted in Christian values. A number of new initiatives have therefore been introduced which are in the process of being implemented. These are still at an early stage and evidence of their impact has not yet filtered through to the children’s learning. Some of these initiatives, such as more explicit core values, have made a positive difference to the quality of behaviour in the school and are increasingly being used to support positive relationships throughout the school community. The role of the deputy headteacher in taking the Christian ethos forward has been the key factor in these developments. She has created a detailed action plan that has identified specific areas for development most of which are being addressed. The headteacher and members of the governing body express their support for the work of the deputy headteacher and recognise her achievements. The extent to which the wider leadership and management, including governors, engage in monitoring and evaluating the Christian ethos is beginning to develop but they have yet to acquire the skills and understanding to challenge the school at an appropriate level. Trustees of the academy are committed to the journey of seeing greater progress as a church school alongside the progress being made in the children’s academic achievements. The school has received useful support from the diocese which has helped them to identify priorities for development as a church school and is now keen to explore how they can build closer supportive links with the other DSAT academy in the town. The vicar has recently been appointed and is developing his relationship with the school. He has committed time each week to support the school in a pastoral role and is keen to be involved in the life of the school. Links with the local church remain strong through the involvement of members of the church community such as the commitment of the families’ worker in supporting collective worship and running after-school clubs. Parents feel that the school has struck the right balance between promoting an ethos that is distinctively Christian and being inclusive at the same time. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship. |

SIAMS report April 2016 Southbroom St James Academy Devizes SN10 3AF