



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary Academy

The Rosary,  
Royal Wootton Bassett  
Swindon  
SN4 8AZ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding**  
**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**  
**Diocese: Salisbury**

Local authority: N/A  
Dates of inspection: 21 January 2016  
Date of last inspection: 31 March 2011  
School's unique reference number: 126373  
Headteacher: Tony Cook  
Inspector's name and number: Marianne Phillips 586

#### School context

This is a larger than average primary school, where numbers are steadily rising. There are 331 pupils on roll 83 of whom are on the special needs register. The number of pupils supported through pupil premium funding is in line with the national average. The headteacher and deputy have been in post since September 2015. The school converted to an academy under the Diocese of Salisbury Multi Academy Trust (DSAT) on 1 September 2014. The school is currently waiting for the appointment of a new vicar the previous vicar having left in December 2015.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Bartholomew's Academy as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The sense of 'community', where Christian teaching unites each individual.
- The effective partnership of the headteacher and deputy, shaping a strong leadership team, building systems that support and direct the vision of the school.
- The very strong links with the church, sustained during the interregnum by the commitment of church members, retired ministers and foundation governors.
- The quality of daily worship where pupils and staff are encouraged to grow spiritually through guided prayer and reflection.

#### Areas to improve

- Improve pupil involvement to drive the Christian distinctiveness with more opportunities to develop their leadership skills, especially in worship.
- Formalise existing monitoring and evaluation systems, related to distinctiveness, to inform school improvement planning as a church school.

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

This is an outstanding church school where pupils, of all abilities, thrive. On entry, the beautiful crucifix, vision and value statements proclaim the clear Christian foundations that unite the individual members of the school community. The teachings of Jesus, studied through religious education (RE) and worship, guide every aspect of daily life to nurture and support, through warm, loving relationships underpinned by explicit Christian values. As pupils explained, 'we all get along here, we are like a family of friends; we care for each other'. They confidently add that, 'Jesus is the Christ, a very important person. He is the Son of God'. Parents confirm Christian values help and support pupils in their daily choices. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils say that they feel safe in school with rigorous systems ensuring that any sign of bullying is dealt with immediately and effectively. Prayer is important to the pupils and the reflection areas, RE studies and 'many peaceful places we can use' support this daily part of life. Pupils from all year groups behave responsibly and like those on the school council are confident they make a difference. Pupils from all groups, displaying a range of abilities and needs, are supported effectively by the interventions which support their learning. As a result they do well in their learning. The vicar left at Christmas, but the links with the church are strong, sustained through the very active commitment of foundation governors and members of the church community. Pupils from other cultures and their families are encouraged to share their heritage and beliefs. This widens the children's understanding of cultural diversity and multi-faith approaches. Visits and visitors further enrich the quality of learning. Pupils are caring and kind, regularly fund raising to support others. Through dance, singing and sport they have forged strong partnerships with the Rotary Club, other local schools and churches. In these ways, this church school, through its Christian distinctiveness influences and improves the spiritual dimension of the lives of their pupils and families. They build 'life skills' that help to develop the pupils into young citizens of the future.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

An outstanding act of worship observed during the inspection, led by the headteacher, created a sense of peace and tranquillity. Sound effects of the sea, a fishing rod and other artefacts set the scene for the story of 'the feeding of the 5000'. This miracle of Jesus was shared to encourage the pupils to 'put themselves in the place of the young boy, who gave his meal of loaves and fish'. They were asked to think whether they would 'give up their sandwiches for Christ?' This thought provoking question, together with the many opportunities to participate, engaged those present, encouraging them to respond to the Biblical teaching. The Christian values of care and compassion exemplified by Jesus were made 'real'. The lighting of the candle and responses evidenced the Anglican traditions, which also centred strongly in the 'Open the Book' and two 'Candle Time' sessions observed. These acts of worship, where pupils and staff come together as a spiritual family provide wonderful opportunities for individuals to grow their faith and belief. Prayer and reflection are guided and encouraged. Pupils regularly lead class worship and are responsible for aspects of whole school worship. The school plans to further encourage this, which is good idea. The use of St Bartholomew's church, visits and visitors contribute effectively to the rich worship experiences. Parents enthusiastically share how much they enjoy church and school services. The Eucharist and 'Starfish' services are favourites. Worship and RE are informally, but rigorously monitored by the foundation governors, as members of the 'Local Advisory Board' (LAB). Formalising these approaches is a focus for further development, which is good idea. The high quality worship is outstanding in the ways it supports the spiritual development of the pupils.

**The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

By the time pupils leave the school at the end of year Six achievement in RE is good. Pupils' attainment is in line with expectations and progress often above national expectations. This is

confirmed by the very detailed tracking and assessment systems. Teaching, over time is consistently good to outstanding. The school follows the 'Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus' and 'Discovery RE'. Lessons are creative and exciting. Year Six pupils share how they 'really enjoy RE when we can use drama or Art and talk about religion to share our opinions'. They study Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism. There are also outstanding examples of how RE links to worship and is used to develop pupils' understanding of religion and belief. In one reception class, 'God the Creator' was explored by reflecting on photographs of their frosty walk the day before. The teacher skilfully guided these young children's understanding, through a 'forest school' approach to appreciate the wonderful creation we live in. Applying this learning, children were able to explain how they 'should be thankful to God for making our world and for our lives, homes and houses'. A powerful sense of awe and wonder was experienced as these very young children enthusiastically joined hands and said 'hand in hand we learn together' confirming the vision statement of the school. In a Year Two class, pupils showed clear evidence of their understanding of the story of Zacchaeus and how they had applied their learning of Jesus showing care and compassion to the tax collector to promise to 'try to be caring and compassionate by forgiving someone today'. The RE coordinator monitors the quality of planning, teaching and learning termly, sharing the findings with the teachers to ensure the quality of RE is high. She is supported by close links with the Diocese and attends regular meetings across the Local Authority.

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

The headteacher provides outstanding Christian witness. He has only been in post for a term, but his sensitivity and honesty are appreciated. Parents confirm that 'he has introduced changes, but they have been for the good to build consistency and purpose'. He is strongly supported by the new deputy. Their effective partnership drives the vision of the school through strong leadership and curriculum teams. They have united staff, foundation governors and other leaders visiting the school, living out the Christian values they share. There have been many significant changes over the past two years. One was triggered by the decision of the governors to become an academy in September 2014. This was to strengthen the distinctiveness of the school and facilitate support through the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust (DSAT). This has been achieved. They are rigorously supported through meetings with the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust, the 'Project Board', the LAB and key personnel such as the 'School Improvement Advisor'. They have also retained supportive links with the Local Authority occasionally accessing training. Systems underpinning school improvement ensure clarity of direction. Leaders monitor progress in achievement half termly, involving the whole staff, to target next steps to improve. They know their school, their pupils and the families they serve. The ethos of love and care nurtures each individual. Curriculum and enrichment activities are challenging and fun. Attendance is good. Staff and governors train and network through the support offered by the Diocese. The developmental points from the previous inspection have been met. Links between the church, school and community are very strong. Consequently, the school is highly respected and appreciated by those it serves. The school meets the requirements for RE and collective worship.

SIAMS report January 2016, St Bartholomew's Primary Academy, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 8AZ