

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>St John's Church of England Foundation Middle School Academy</b>	
Watts Close, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire. B61 7DH	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Worcester</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	February 2013
Name of multi-academy trust	Standalone academy
Date of inspection	30 June 2017
Date of last inspection	23 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Foundation 139286
Headteacher	Geraint Roberts
Inspector's name and number	Stephanie Boulter 785

### School context

St. John's is a large Church of England Middle School located in the centre of Bromsgrove. It became a converter academy in February 2013. There are 657 pupils on roll, with the school being heavily over-subscribed. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils with special educational needs is 21% which is around the national average. The present headteacher has been in post since 2015.

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

- Exemplary leadership and good governance in this church school results in a clear Christian vision firmly rooted in distinctively Christian values which underpin every area of school life.
- A supportive environment in which all pupils make outstanding progress. As a result of the school's inclusive ethos pupils are confident, articulate and have exemplary behaviour using the school's Christian values of love, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- The quality of relationships is a strength of the school at all levels and is a direct result of the school's Christian vision of an inclusive, caring and nurturing community.
- The exemplary and effective partnership with the parish church and the work of the vicar, which contributes greatly to the life of the school.

### Areas to improve

- Establish meaningful global links so that pupils are more aware that Christianity is a multi-cultural world faith and can experience the cultural practices of a wider range of societies.
- Develop a cycle of formal monitoring and evaluation by the governors of the distinctive Christian character of St John's to enable the school to continue to grow as an effective church school.

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

The Christian character of St John's Middle School provides a firm foundation for life because it is highly committed to the development of the whole child. The school's Christian values of love, forgiveness, justice, faith, integrity, peace, reconciliation and prayer are firmly rooted in the Bible and are demonstrated in everyday life. This results in confident, caring pupils who strive to be 'the best they can be'. Academic attainment for all pupils is well above the national average. This is because the school's distinctive Christian environment creates a culture in which all pupils feel secure and are encouraged to be confident learners. Christian values have been at the forefront of the school's mission statement, helping the community to work together and live out the school's vision and ethos. Distinctive Christian values contribute significantly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all pupils. These values are used to underpin all documentation, policies, teaching and learning and the way in which staff work with all children. This results in pupils who want to give of their best and have an 'I can' attitude to every aspect of school life. One parent described how her child has developed more empathy and care for others and can relate Bible stories to major catastrophes both locally, nationally and globally. The school is an inclusive community where provision for disadvantaged and vulnerable students is outstanding. This results in attendance well above the national average and pupils who want to attend school and do well. The school has a highly developed interpretation of spirituality which has been embedded into planning, teaching and learning. This gives pupils' regular, quality experiences to develop their own personal spirituality. Pupils are enthusiastic about religious education (RE) because of the varied and interesting approaches adopted in lessons. Pupils also know that they can express their own opinions in a caring and supportive environment. As a result of quality RE teaching and the school's work in ensuring all are loved as unique children of God, pupils demonstrate a strong respect for difference and diversity. Pupils have some understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith but this is not yet fully developed. The provision for students' SMSC development is excellent. This is fostered through the curriculum, especially in RE, collective worship and extra-curricular provision. Activities such as enrichment days, children's university, sport, music and trips help pupils to develop independence and self-worth. Initiatives such as charity work and 'twinning the toilets' in Africa are examples of the values of love and compassion being worked out in action. Through a broad and rich curriculum, pupils can relate the school's distinctive Christian values to their own lives, helping them in their work and relationships with their peers and staff. Pupils have time to reflect throughout the day both in lessons as well as worship. Pupils say that leaders and teachers listen to their views and respect them. This is because the school's actions to improve pupils' chances are so strongly rooted in distinctive Christian values, ensuring each pupil is known, valued and encouraged to succeed. Parents, too, say they feel part of a family community and this encourages them to be proactive with the school. One parent described the school's inclusive approach as, 'They make pupils better human beings with a genuine sense of care for all.'

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

Collective worship is at the heart of the school. Pupils value the time they have together during worship, and have time to reflect and listen to different worship leaders, including the vicar and their peers. Collective worship is carefully planned and its content incorporates the school's values along with other themes that follow the liturgical year. These themes enable pupils to relate their Christian values to biblical teachings and to their own actions at school and at home. Staff and pupils use the messages delivered in worship to strengthen relationships and resolve differences. They use the value of justice taken from Matthew 7:12, 'Treat others as you want them to treat you', as their moral compass. Students experience a variety of forms of worship throughout the week, from class, key stage and whole school worship. As a result, pupils deepen their understanding of the teachings of Jesus. They are acquiring a strong theological understanding of worship, including that of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Pupils lead and contribute to worship, enjoying the responsibility they have to plan worship both in school and in church services throughout the year. Each class has a worship or reflection wall, which are appropriate to the different age ranges, where pupils can nurture their personal spirituality. Prayer is given a high profile in worship and pupils participate fully in public and private prayer in school. Pupils understand how prayer is used to communicate with God and how it can guide them in their personal lives. They often write their own

prayers, especially after challenging world-wide events. Without forcing a point of view on individuals, all are encouraged to learn, explore and to consider what prayer means to people of faith. As a result, pupils show great spiritual depth and empathy towards one another. There are strong beneficial links with the local vicar and the parish church. The vicar is a visible presence in school, providing mentoring and care for both pupils and staff. Pupils talk enthusiastically about his involvement and how this relationship is appreciated and further enhances the strong sense of Christian community within the school.

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

All leaders articulate a very clear vision which is the education of the whole child within a supportive, caring Christian community. This results in an excellent shared understanding of Christian distinctiveness across the school community. The headteacher, through his exceptional leadership, models the behaviours which he wants all young people to gain. He passionately articulates the view that the school must be an inclusive Christian family and lives this out in his work. As a result of this pupils show self-belief and self-worth. Staff strive to find out what motivates pupils to be the best they can be. A strong Christian vision and ethos lies at the heart of the school and its strategic planning. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and accurate which results in outstanding outcomes for all groups of pupils. Professional development on spirituality has provided support for the staff and helped to develop their understanding of what it means to be a teacher in a church school. This role is made very clear to potential staff at interview. The governors provide excellent support for the school. They hold it to account for its work and are highly committed to ensure that all pupils succeed. However, they have not developed a formal approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the school's Christian distinctiveness, worship and RE to ensure the school continues to grow as an outstanding church school. The school has addressed the points for development from the previous inspection very thoroughly. RE and collective worship are led with commitment and a genuine desire to improve still further. Leaders are committed to the professional development for teachers, including succession planning for the school's future leadership. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and worship. The strong partnerships between the vicar, church and local community are fundamental to the success of the school as a church school. Through these partnerships pupils' understanding of justice and integrity manifest in different ways. For example, they raise funds for the disadvantaged and produce art work for the town's newest care home. Love of others pervades all aspects of school life. The school has strong links with the diocese, with governors and staff attending diocesan training. Parents speak passionately about St John's as a nurturing school which lives out its distinctive Christian values and provides young people with the education and support they need for the future. Parents appreciate the dedicated work of staff in supporting their children's personal and spiritual development as well as their academic success. As a result of outstanding leadership at St John's everyone is encouraged to go above and beyond resulting in articulate, happy individuals who have hope and belief in themselves.

SIAMS report June 2017 St. John's Church of England Middle School Academy Bromsgrove B61 7DH