

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Westbury-on-Trym Church of England Academy

Channells Hill
Westbury on Trym
Bristol
BS9 3HZ

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Bristol
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	1 August 2011
Name of single academy trust	Westbury-on-Trym CE Academy
Date of inspection	3 May 2017
Date of last inspection	19 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary Academy 137062
Headteacher	Cathy Milton
Inspector's name and number	Patricia Morris 626

School context

Westbury-on-Trym is a larger than average sized primary academy with 418 children on roll. The majority of children are of White British heritage with about one fifth from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The number of children entitled to receive the Pupil Premium is also below the national average. Attendance is in line with the national average. The school converted to single academy status in August 2011.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Westbury-on-Trym as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The passionate and dedicated leadership of the headteacher, supported by very committed governors and staff, ensures that the school is continually moving forward as a church school.
- Christian values are made explicit and deeply embedded in the life of the school generating a strong inclusive environment.
- The contribution of the children's Express and Reflect team significantly promotes worship and school reflection areas.
- Excellent partnerships with the church and local community cultivate opportunities to engage and challenge children.

Areas to improve

- Extend and embed opportunities to develop the outdoor environment to enable children to have high quality experiences for spiritual development.
- Continue to gather evidence to support the planned attainment of the Church and School Partnership award.

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

The school's Christian vision 'Striving for Excellence, enriching our Faith, cherishing our Community', named the 'Westbury Ways' by children, is strongly underpinned by Christian values that are deeply embedded in the daily life of the school. All members of the school community articulate the impact of values and children confidently link them to Bible stories. Children thoughtfully retell the story of how Moses crossed the Red Sea as an example of their current value of thankfulness. Visible reminders of values in action are demonstrated through 'freeze frame' photographs on canvases designed by children and in vibrant displays around the school, which incorporate inspirational biblical quotes. Children describe values as 'part of every day life' and 'a guide to keep us on track'. The Christian character has an extremely high profile that is reflected in children's positive attitudes to learning and excellent behaviour. There are many outstanding opportunities, across the curriculum, to support the development of children's spirituality. A spirituality wheel encourages children to reflect on experiences to develop self-belief, to empathise with others and to reflect about the world in which they live. A framework based round 'Windows, Doors and Mirrors' also supports children in giving them a shared vocabulary to discuss feelings and emotions. Class reflection areas are extremely well linked to values and individualised by children. For example, a clock encouraging children to stop and reflect on what they are thankful for, at different times of the day, and paper chains joining examples of thankfulness together. This impacts on children's genuine appreciation of Christian values and spirituality, which one child described as 'being like Pi, stretching into infinity'. Children are excited and talk animatedly about a new outdoor reflection area that has come to fruition this term, incorporating a 'lie down and reflect' board and a log circle under a parachute. Opportunities for 'awe and wonder' in religious education (RE) ensure the subject makes a significant contribution to children's spiritual development and plays an important role in determining the Christian character of the school. For example, challenging questions extend children's opportunities for deeper thinking such as inviting them to suggest questions they would like to ask God. Ideas include 'How did you make us?' and 'What is heaven like?' Children are fully aware of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. There is a high degree of understanding and respect for diversity and difference in other faith communities. This is enhanced through a well-established partnership with a community in Singdi, Nepal. This association was originally initiated in 1999 by a former parent and previous headteacher and has grown in strength over time. In recent years, money was raised to build parts of a school in this remote village and carry out repairs following the earthquake. In April 2017, a group of children and parents visited the school. Another international partnership with a school in Uganda has also involved the sharing of learning, resources and funds raised to build and equip a girls' dormitory and chapel on the school site. Children also initiated a whole school charity day, raising funds for more local charities chosen by them. Such experiences are invaluable and give children a sense of service to others. Rich opportunities to experience other faiths are developed through visits to different places of worship such as the cathedral, synagogue, Hindu temple and mosque. Children speak animatedly about these visits, which enables them to gain first-hand experiences to encourage respect and tolerance as well as enabling them to appreciate similarities and differences with Christianity. Parents praise the welcoming, family atmosphere of the school and feel that each child is highly valued as an individual and is being equipped with Christian values that will support them throughout their future life.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is highly valued and plays an important role in the life of the school. The positive contribution worship makes to the Christian distinctiveness of the school is affirmed and celebrated through a display in the hall. Worship is fully inclusive and engages and challenges children to take responsibility for their own behaviour and responsibilities. Christian values successfully underpin themes. Planning is thorough and follows the pattern of the church year. Children were involved in designing liturgical cloths for the school and confidently articulate the meaning of each colour. Members of the church community then engaged in making the cloths, which are now used in collective worship after being blessed by the parish priest. This is an example of the excellent partnership with the church community. The parish priest is a regular visitor to the school, taking worship twice a week, and views the church as part of the school family. Children visit the church regularly for celebrations and as part of RE lessons. They participated in voting for the design of a new stained glass window in church, to celebrate thirteen hundred years of worship. Children spoke proudly of their contribution, making some insightful comments. During a recent church building project a hollow clay pipe was discovered and children were invited to create a time capsule to store in the wall of the church where the pipe was found, for future generations. The ethos committee ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation is consistently moving worship forward. For example, the introduction of a children's 'Express and Reflect' team is making a significant contribution to worship and provides opportunities for children to give feedback about worship, to monitor the use of reflection areas and to deliver class worship. One successful initiative was the introduction of 'a bucket full of thoughts' as a practical way of sharing ideas or concerns. 'Express yourself folders' offer inspirational evidence of some of their ideas in action. The team also contributed to the planning of a recent RE week and the worship observed was an excellent showcase of the work that had been

covered, involving a variety of faiths and cultures. Worship has a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Children have many opportunities to develop their understanding of the Trinity and can talk about it with an impressive degree of understanding. Reflection and prayer are highly valued in worship. There is an excellent understanding of prayer and children have opportunities to write their own prayers such as the personal prayer written together for the parish priest in appreciation of his contribution to school life. A prayer club takes place on a regular basis for older children and parents have also initiated an adult prayer group, which is very supportive in praying for aspects of school life. A long standing association with a school for deaf children in the local community is reflected in the positive way children speak about how worship starts and ends using words and sign language. Worship starts with 'peace be with you' to which children respond with 'and also with you'. Worship ends with 'our service here has now ended' and children respond, with words and in sign language, 'our service to each other begins'.

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

The headteacher is a dynamic and driving force in moving the school forward as a church school. She provides exceptionally effective leadership and is very well supported by a well-informed and very committed team of governors and staff. Leaders have a clear grasp of the purpose of being a church school and the impact it has on the lives of children. They consistently promote and live out a vision based on distinctive Christian values enabling the Christian vision to permeate every aspect of school life. There is a thorough understanding of the school's performance based on effective and insightful self-evaluation. The headteacher and governors have written a clear and concise strategic plan that is regularly monitored and enables all governors to remain fully informed. Governors visit the school on a regular basis and evaluate the Christian ethos in action through learning walks and observations. Strong partnerships exist between the church and the school. Leaders would now like to see this promoted even further by participating in the 'Church and School Partnership Award', which is a way of celebrating the mutual enthusiasm and support given to each other. Excellent links with the local community are developed through opportunities to participate in joint events such as bird watching, singing at different venues and involvement in annual fetes. Close links with the Diocese effectively contribute to school improvement and the development of leadership skills. The development of spirituality and prayer within the school was published in a Diocesan newsletter, reflecting the mutually beneficial partnership. The leadership of worship and RE is given a high priority and this leads to highly effective practice. Tracking of children's progress in RE is thorough and informative. Religious education makes an invaluable contribution to the development of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through opportunities for children to consider big questions about the wider world. Attainment in RE is in-line with other core subjects and statutory requirements for RE and worship are met. Parents work in partnership with the school in many ways including a very active PTA. They say their contributions to school life are valued and they feel appreciated. They have regular opportunities to express their views and praise the school for their 'open door' policy. Parents confirm the 'true sense of community' within the school and feel children are empowered to discover who they are and to have faith in themselves.

SIAMS report May 2017 Westbury-on-Trym CE Primary Academy, Westbury on Trym, Bristol BS9 3HZ