

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

<b>SS Simon and Jude's Church of England Primary School</b>	
Newport Road, Bolton, BL3 2DT	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Manchester</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	N/A
Name of multi-academy trust	SS Simon and Jude CE Multi Academy Trust - Conversion September 2014
Date of inspection	8 February 2017
Date of last inspection	February 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled URN: 138957
Principal	Elizabeth Peacock
Inspector's name and number	Stephen Burrow 622

### School context

SS Simon and Jude's CE Primary School is a larger than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average, with over 20 different languages spoken in school. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium is above average with the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability being broadly similar to the national average. The school became an academy in 2014 and opened nursery provision for two-year-old as well as the existing provision for three-year-old pupils in September 2015.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of SS Simon and Jude's CE Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Excellent relationships, the outstanding behaviour and the highly positive attitudes of pupils are firmly based on a clear understanding of the importance of Christian values.
- Each child is highly valued and nurtured as an individual in a caring Christian environment, which enables them to grow academically, spiritually and socially.
- Outstanding leadership by the executive principal and principal, with excellent support from staff and governors, demonstrates a clear Christian vision. This strongly promotes the school's Christian character and mission through a deeply embedded distinctive Christian ethos.
- Collective worship and religious education (RE) contribute significantly in promoting distinctive Christian values and significantly deepen pupils' spirituality.
- The explicit Christian character of the school, enhanced by Christian symbols and high quality displays of pupils' work, creates a very positive, welcoming and supportive atmosphere for everyone involved with the school.

### Areas to improve

- Further develop the role of middle leaders in worship and RE so that the exemplary practice within the school, is shared across the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and with other faith schools.

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

Christian values and distinctiveness are explicitly expressed, deeply embedded and clearly understood by all members of the school family. As a result of the school having a Mission Statement which is lived out in daily life, pupils have a clear understanding of the Christian faith and gospel values. Consequently, strong mutually nurturing and supportive relationships, rooted in Jesus' teachings, exist throughout the school. Pupils feel safe, happy, valued and well cared for, mirroring the excellent adult role models. They say their teachers encourage them to reflect on what they have learned and share their opinions and views. Self-esteem is nurtured in this loving Christian school and as a result, pupils give of their best and make contributions, without fear of failure. As a result, they make outstanding progress. The high profile of RE within the school makes a significant contribution to its Christian character. Pupils talk confidently about the school's core Christian values, which are reinforced through vibrant and stimulating displays around the school. The whole school environment lifts the spirit. A wealth of opportunities for reflection and discussion contribute to a deep spiritual understanding of Christian life. Reflection areas in all classrooms provide opportunities for pupils to think and quietly pray. Displays, including a large wooden cross, stained glass windows designed by the pupils and prominent value trees, emphasise the school's Christian character to all visitors. Christian values are woven effectively into the school's rich and varied International Primary Curriculum which is underpinned by the school's distinctive Christian ethos. Consequently, pupils enjoy school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They want to be in school because they enjoy their learning. This is reflected in the good levels of attendance. An extremely supportive approach is extended to all families, based upon a clear understanding of each pupil's unique needs. This is enhanced by the work of the school's very effective learning mentor. Pupils' awareness of Christianity as a global faith is strong. Their appreciation and understanding of the beliefs and practices of other world faiths is aided by the school's 'Faith Trail'. This includes a range of visitors and opportunities to visit places of worship. It emphasises the similarities that pupils of different faiths and cultures share. As a result, pupils are well equipped with life skills based on compassion and care to prepare them for life in modern Britain. The vicar has a high profile in school, giving practical and prayerful support, which is valued and appreciated by the whole school family. The school's strong emphasis on caring for others leads pupils to raise money for charities such as a local Food Bank and the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal. Parents recognise how distinctive Christian values are rooted in the life of the school and the impact these have on their children. One parent reinforced this when they said, 'The school looks to educate the whole child.'

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

Collective worship is central to the daily life of the school. It is the driver for the school's Christian values and has a strong Christian foundation. Worship is very well planned with themes developed around the school's core values, the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. Christian festivals are celebrated and pupils learn about those of other world faiths. This very effectively promotes pupils' tolerance and respect for the views and beliefs of others. The differing needs of pupils are met through whole school, key stage and class led worship. They talk enthusiastically and with confidence about their worship experiences, which contribute significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and outstanding behaviour. One pupil said, 'Worship calms us'. Another added, 'Worship allows us to reflect on the things we have done.' The operation of the church as a 'Church in School' means that the life of the church is closely entwined with that of the school. Prayer and reflection are regular features of all forms of worship and together with the well-used prayer and reflection areas in all classrooms, make a very significant contribution towards pupils' spiritual development. Pupils record their views of worship on reflection cards which are hung on the reflection tree in the hall and are shared both in school and with church members. Along with staff evaluations, they provide a focussed opportunity to reflect, share thoughts and evaluate worship themes. The school, led by enthusiastic and skilled worship/RE leaders, has very effective procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship. The pupil worship committee are involved in planning, discussing and reviewing worship and monitoring is carried out by the governor Ethics and Ethos Committee. Findings are then used to assist future planning. Pupils have a good understanding of the Trinity and Anglican tradition through pertinent worship topics, the use of Christian greetings, prayer and the presence of church furniture in the school hall. They enter worship, to the playing of peaceful music, with a sense of expectation and reverence. This provides pupils with opportunities to reflect and prepare themselves for worship. The Bible, cross and candle with a stunning stained glass window as the background, enhance the setting of worship. All staff participate in worship and this supports pupils' development of spiritual awareness.

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

School leaders, through their strong personal Christian faith, articulate with commitment a strong vision, expressly rooted in Christian teaching. This informs all policy and practice in the school. Thinking about faith is carefully woven throughout the curriculum and reinforces that Christianity is the heart of the school. The distinctive Christian character and vision is shared, agreed and upheld by all members of the school community. It is reinforced by the strong, nurturing relationship which permeate the school. The principal and senior leaders have a clear understanding of what it means to lead a church school and carry out their roles very effectively. They have created an atmosphere underpinned by Christian values in which all staff feel their ideas are listened to and appreciated. Staff are inducted well into what is expected of them in relation to promoting the Christian ethos of the school and they regularly consider the impact that living out the mission statement has on pupils. There is a clear focus on meeting the needs of the individual child through a well-developed and effective self-evaluation process that places the uniqueness of each child at the heart of school improvement. There is a real passion for every pupil to succeed. One teacher said, 'We all respect each other and it's really good to see children of different faiths praying together.' Potential future leaders of church schools are prepared well through a strong emphasis on supporting professional development in Christian leadership. Governors support and challenge the school leadership team in all areas of school improvement, ensuring that church school issues are prioritised in improvement planning. They are clear about what needs to be done to improve further. Being regularly involved in the life of the school through learning walks, questionnaires and the receipt of updates from the principal, RE and worship leaders, governors know the school well. They carefully monitor the impact of the Christian ethos on pupils' well-being, personal development and academic achievement through the Ethos and Ethics Committee. The chair of this committee said, 'School life is based on compassion and care.' He further added, 'If I wanted a snapshot of the Kingdom of God, it's here.' The school council provides opportunities for pupils to offer suggestions and all pupils know that their views are valued. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They are actively encouraged to participate in school life and are supported in helping their child at home through a range of parent workshops. They say the school listens to their views, that their children enjoy school, are happy, safe and nurtured. They attribute this to the strong Christ-centered ethos of the school. One parent summed up the feelings of the parents when she said, 'Staff show a real sense of Christian fellowship to parents.'

SIAMS report February 2017 SS Simon and Jude's CE Primary School, Newport Road, Bolton, BL3 2DT