



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St James' Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Chadwick Street
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK13 8EF

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derbyshire

Dates of inspection: 28th January 2016

Date of last inspection: 6th April 2011

School's unique reference number: 112818

Head teacher: Chris Jones

Inspector's name and number: John Clapham 775

School context

St James' Church of England (CE) Primary School is a larger than average primary school serving the town of Glossop as well as outlying rural areas. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language. The proportions of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (those eligible for free school meals or who are in local authority care) are below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is within the national average. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of staff changes as well as reorganisation of the governing body.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St James' as a Church of England primary school are good

- St James' CE school is an inclusive, loving and caring environment where every child is nurtured as a child of God, and their needs are met very well.
- The Christian character of the school and the broad learning experiences, contribute effectively to the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school community values collective worship, responds positively and participates willingly. This contributes to the ethos in which children thrive, succeed and are happy.
- St James' CE school is well led, with all members of the school community contributing tirelessly to the rapid progress that the school continues to make.

Areas to improve

- Work with all members of the school community to identify, make explicit and clearly articulate the distinctively Christian character of the school's values and the impact they have on the whole life of the school.
- Utilise classroom 'learning walls' to develop children's spirituality by increasing the creative opportunities for personal reflection across the curriculum.
- Enable staff, children and governors to take greater involvement in evaluating the impact of collective worship.

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

St James' is an outward looking church school which demonstrates God's love to the community through strong relationships based on genuine care for children and families. Though not fully explicit, the school's Christian character naturally results in a secure and caring environment where most children are making good or better progress both academically and in terms of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Each child is given the support, challenge and opportunity to flourish and use their God given talents to His glory. As one parent commented during inspection "this school nurtures the whole child, and nurtures self-esteem and value". Parents report that any concerns are acted on immediately and addressed effectively because "the staff are on top of issues and treat children with compassion". The school's work on anti-bullying is valued by children, who demonstrate strong, supportive relationships and say that they feel safe, valued and included. One child observed that "our school is special because we look after each other". House captain surgeries and the role of head boy and head girl contribute to children feeling valued and listened to across school. Children take their responsibilities seriously in school council activities, through playground buddies and in caring for younger children. Children make a meaningful contribution to the wider community, showing care and respect for others through a wide range of charity fundraising and community engagement. As an example, an Easter Cross competition gave opportunity for children to share the Christian message of Easter with the wider community, which was well received. Children were observed to reflect with great thought and perception in Religious Education (RE) lessons. The classroom environments, however, are not fully utilised as reflective spaces that make the school's Christian values explicit and provide opportunity for pupils' spiritual development. RE makes a positive contribution to the Christian character of the school, because staff give opportunities for children to explore spirituality and apply learning to their lives. As an example of this, in an RE lesson observed on the Lord's Prayer, children came up with highly insightful questions that they would like to ask God. Children not only have a good understanding of Christian belief, but through the study of a number of religions, are developing a strong understanding and respect of diverse communities. This is well supported through productive links with schools in Tanzania and Oldham. As one child put it "working with a school in Tanzania helps us to understand people whose lives are different to ours".

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is seen as an important part of the life of St James' by all members of the school community. Children value collective worship, respond positively and participate willingly. This contributes to the ethos in which children thrive, succeed and are happy, and influences the thinking and day to day actions of the whole school community. The opportunities for children to lead collective worship are growing, which was an area for development in the previous inspection and is now being addressed. Collective worship is well planned around biblical material and Christian teaching, which many children are able to relate to their own lives. Children are developing a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in worship. The Parish team are highly involved in supporting the planning and delivery of collective worship, with a comprehensive three year rolling plan in place. This is giving children a clear understanding of the 'Story of God', which they are able to relate to their own lives. Singing is clearly valued and an important part of worship at St James'. Prayer impacts strongly in some classes, where class prayer books written for a range of occasions are insightful and thoughtful, and a lesson on Muslim prayer enabled children to take meaning and significance for their own prayer and reflection. Whilst the use of prayer and reflection is not yet consistent across school in classrooms, prayer and reflection are given prominence and importance in collective worship, and the school is well supported by a group of parents who regularly pray for the school. In worship observed during inspection, children shared a real

sense of awe and wonder and were inspired to see relevance for their own lives. Children and parents value the partnership with the church community and are enthusiastic about celebrating special services both at school and church, as evidenced by the strong support for recent services. The head teacher carefully monitors the impact of collective worship on the whole life of the school. However, staff, governors and children currently have only limited opportunities to evaluate worship and participate in this process of ongoing improvement. The head teacher ensures that collective worship meets statutory requirements.

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

St James' is a school that is led well because the head teacher, with his senior leadership team, has given a strong direction to the school and has been well supported by the governing body and parish. Through this, significant school improvement measures have impacted strongly on progress and standards over recent years. The Christian faith of the head teacher clearly shapes the ethos and direction of the school as a church school ("everything that happens here is referenced through Christ"- head teacher). School leaders live out a vision rooted in Christian values and describe the impact of Christian values on the life of the school, although these values are not yet explicit. Monitoring and evaluation is well planned strategically, with targeted actions in place to continue to move the school forward. Restructuring of the governing body has given a clear focus on school improvement. Rigorous monitoring by the senior leadership team of the quality of teaching, marking and feedback as well as the practices of collective worship feeds into teacher appraisal, and is regularly reported to governors. Governors have increasing involvement in monitoring activities, including pupil interviews where children's views arising from questionnaires are explored. The role of governors in monitoring and evaluation has not yet extended to collective worship. The RE coordinator is supporting the raising of standards by working with individuals to support assessments and moderate judgements. The RE and collective worship coordinator has not recently had opportunity to monitor the impact of RE and collective worship across school, although this has now been addressed for the future. The parish church works in close partnership with the school, including clergy supporting the teaching of RE, giving significant input into collective worship, and an oversubscribed lunchtime club that is rooted in Christian values. Staff training on biblical themes by the vicar, has also impacted positively on the teaching of RE across school. Changes to the recruitment process have ensured that staff are appointed who understand and value the Christian faith. Parents speak very highly of the school and comment positively on the impact of the Christian character, the relationships with the church and the relationships with the clergy. They are confident in the school and the way in which it gives their children an excellent start in their educational journey. Significant progress has been made towards meeting the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

SIAMS report January 2016 St James' C of E Primary School, SK13 8EF