



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Reginald Street

Derby

DE23 8FQ

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Derby

Local authority: Derby

Dates of inspection: 17th June 2016

Date of last inspection: May 2011

School's unique reference number: 112922

Headteacher: Gill Zelynskyj

Inspector's name and number: Alastair Wood 575

School context

St. James' is a larger than average size junior school serving a multi-ethnic community. The school has a very broad range of ethnic groups; 81% of pupils speak English as an additional language and 28 languages are spoken across the school community as a whole. The school is divided into 12 classes, 3 classes per year group. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is slightly below the national average. The school is part of a federation with St James' CE VA Infant and Nursery School and Rosehill Infant and Nursery School. The headteacher has been in post since 2015.

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

- Very strong values which define a school of unique and distinctive Christian character
- Outstanding leadership from the headteacher, senior staff and governors
- The strength of support from local churches, the clergy and the Cathedral

Area to improve

- Embed the pupils' chaplaincy team to enhance their effectiveness as leaders of worship
- Provide more opportunities to develop pupils' spirituality

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

'I was a stranger and you took me in,' Matthew's words are clearly displayed next to the school's Christian values in the entrance hall at St James' and epitomise the inclusive nature of a school which draws its pupils from the diverse community which it serves. Pupils arrive at St James' from all over the world and a high percentage are new to English, making it a truly international place of learning. The school's character and ethos are based on its key Christian values of love, respect, trust, perseverance, hope and friendship which are shared and articulated by all, whatever their faith, and impact all areas of daily life. As a result, everyone is treated with respect, differences are celebrated and relationships and pupils' behaviour throughout the school are exemplary. The pupils say there is no bullying just occasional differences that are quickly resolved. The school nurtures and develops its pupils treating all with fairness and Christian love ensuring they make very good progress from a wide variety of starting points. This is a school of distinctive Christian character where all pupils are valued as unique children of God who are encouraged to reach their full potential. The pupils are given opportunities to develop their spirituality, for example in prayer spaces and in reflective spaces in the classrooms; these opportunities make an important contribution to their moral, social and cultural understanding (SMSC) which helps pupils to know right from wrong and respect differences. Respect for others is a quality intrinsic to the pupils at St James' and underpins the other values giving the school its special character. The pupils and parents speak highly of the staff, their exemplary role modelling and acknowledge their hard work and commitment. There are close links with the Cathedral, St Augustine's church and Osmaston Road Baptist church. The clergy play an important role in the school's development as governors and supporters helping to make St James' Christian character special and recognisable. St James' is at the heart of a diverse community and to support understanding, a Christian-Muslim dialogue group has been developed between the vicar of St Augustine's church and the Imam of Jamia Mosque, enabling deeper understanding and friendship from the school to the whole community. There are Christian symbols throughout the school and each classroom has a colourful and interactive RE display stimulating pupils' thoughts and encouraging discussion. Pupils know their contribution to the life of the school is valued by the staff and they are encouraged to give their opinions with confidence. The school council has been able to make suggestions for change which have resulted in a new climbing frame with astro turf. The area for development from the previous inspection has been fully implemented.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a special time at St James' where the whole community comes together to share. An atmosphere of calm is created through music and a stillness pervades the hall. There is an altar with an appropriate cloth in church calendar colours, a cross and interesting artefacts, reinforcing pupils' learning of the Anglican tradition. The pupils' chaplaincy team play an important role by contributing to readings from the Bible, they are learning how to deliver collective worship and have a display board in a corridor which encourages individual thought and prayer. All the staff attend and the analogy of the Kerplunk game of sticks supporting marbles is used frequently at worship to demonstrate the strength of the school community working together in God's name. The importance of the school's values, Bible stories and clear links to the life of Jesus are all highlighted enabling pupils to easily draw meanings which apply to their own lives. The school prayer is used and this is formulated on a jigsaw, each class having two lines for the prayer, interlocking and emphasising the spirit of all being one in this very special community. Collective worship is carefully planned by the co-ordinators from both the infant and junior schools working with the clergy ensuring that there is strong continuity from the youngest to the oldest pupils. Prayer forms an important part of worship and of the school each day helping pupils to develop their individual spiritual journeys. From regular visits to St Augustine's church the pupils have a good knowledge of Anglican artefacts, the major Christian festivals and the colours of the church year. The pupils also have a good knowledge of the Holy Trinity and are able to articulate its meaning clearly and confidently. Visits to the Cathedral are strongly supported by the education officer who has constructed a focused learning experience for example, the Christian-Muslim trail around the Cathedral that encourages comparisons between Islam and Christianity and helps to broaden pupils'

understanding of other religions. The collective worship co-ordinator and the linked governor monitor collective worship. They assess the impact on pupils' learning and the co-ordinator reports the outcomes to the focus group of governors enabling all the governors to derive a full picture of worship in the school and assess the contribution collective worship makes to its distinctive character. While the chaplaincy team play a major part in collective worship, this has yet to be fully developed.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Pupils make good progress in RE which is led by two committed and enthusiastic co-ordinators with high standards of expectation for the pupils, as a result there is real consistency of pupils' progress from the youngest infants to Year 6. Pupils say they enjoy the creativity in RE as the lessons are interesting and it gives them the opportunity to think about their own religions and to learn from other pupils who come from different religious backgrounds. The co-ordinators support the staff effectively enabling all to deliver high quality lessons with confidence. The school uses Derby City's Agreed Syllabus as its curriculum base and they have designed an effective method of following pupils' progress and assessing their achievements. RE is taught imaginatively, for example, in a Year 3 lesson the pupils were asked what they could learn from the Bible and the teacher through effective questioning and feedback linked the story of Adam and Eve to consequences and the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) learning. This helps them to understand that their actions always have consequences. The oldest pupils were learning about equality and fairness and the teacher drew connections between pupils' experiences and the school's values encouraging perceptive comments from the pupils. The values and character of the school are clearly demonstrated through the high quality of teaching and the varied learning experiences the teachers provide for individual pupils. The teaching is carefully planned and delivered in a way in which all pupils can make progress ensuring that learning is effective and everyone enjoys RE. Although taught as a subject in its own right, RE is given the same importance as English and maths, contributing to the school's character. RE is a consistent thread which runs through the whole curriculum and is monitored by the co-ordinators and a governor who give regular reports to the focus group of governors. This ensures all the governors are kept informed and can offer the headteacher effective independent support and challenge. RE fulfils the National Society's Statement of Entitlement.

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

The headteacher leads the school through a strong personal Christian faith and with a supportive leadership team and staff. Her vision is clearly defined and strategic. She knows exactly where she wants the school to go and how to get there. The vision is shared by the whole community and this has enabled the school to make significant progress in a short space of time enhancing its distinctive character. At the heart of her vision are the pupils and she strives to overcome their difficulties and vulnerabilities through powerful Christian support typified by the school's values. The result is a school at the centre of a diverse international community which is highly respected by everyone, whatever their faith. The governors are independent in their views and offer strong strategic support to the head and staff. They hold the school to account through in-depth personal knowledge drawn from frequent visits to classes. Staff are encouraged to develop their skills through training opportunities and the school is keen to develop expertise which will enable succession planning and the future leadership of church schools. Church school leadership is a key priority area identified on the school's development plan. The school's arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements and both are well resourced and allocated specific budgets. Both churches and the Diocese provide significant support for the school and acknowledge its unique and distinctive Christian character. Parents appreciate the hard work of the staff and say the school is very supportive and easy to approach with any issues. They say their views are valued and they are kept well-informed through regular parent meetings and

questionnaires enabling a successful partnership between school and home. As one parent described St James': 'This is a large family where everyone is welcomed and valued.'

SIAMS report June 2016 St James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School, Reginald Street Derby, DE23 8FQ