THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND EDUCATION OFFICE

The Methodist Church

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. Giles Church of England Aided Primary School	
Starkholmes Road, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3DD	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	**Good**
Diocese	**Derby**
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Satisfactory
Date of academy conversion	September 2015
Name of multi-academy trust	Derbyshire Diocesan Academy Trust
Date of inspection	16 November 2017
Date of last inspection	20 November 2014
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 141674
Head of School	Suzanne Forster
Inspector's name and number	Louise Patterson 310

School context

St. Giles is a small school with 77 pupils on roll. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and there is a higher than average pupils premium population at 34%. The school has been through some turbulent times and was placed into special measures by OFSTED in June 2013 from being judged as outstanding in their previous inspection. The school joined the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust in September 2015. The current headteacher has been in post both acting and substantive since September 2014. There is significant pupil mobility, which impacts all year groups. Attendance is slightly above the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Giles, Matlock, as a Church of England school are good.

- There is a distinctively Christian ethos within the school which is understood and can be articulated by the vast majority of stakeholders. This is having a positive impact on its provision and outcomes for the pupils.
- There are very good relationships throughout the school which are based on Christian values. This results in a very positive and supportive learning environment.
- High quality collective worship and Religious Education (RE) form a solid foundation for the Christian life of the school.
- Pupils are developing into confident, well-behaved and well-rounded individuals in the knowledge that they are loved by God.

Areas to improve

- Develop the role of pupils in the planning and delivery of worship to strengthen their ownership and understanding of what it involves.
- Strengthen pupil appreciation of diverse communities through links with other schools, visitors and visits.
- Embed the range of developments undertaken recently, including the Understanding Christianity materials, to ensure their impact is sustained.

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

The school ethos and treatment of every child as an individual and the quality of the relationships demonstrate that the life and work of the school is firmly rooted in Christian values. The school is making great efforts to encourage

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pupils to achieve their God-given potential. Pupils are given opportunities which enable them to consider, reflect and question in a safe and caring environment. Pupils often take these opportunities so are becoming more rounded individuals. The effective Christian ethos of the school is evident in the quality of care and respect for each other and the good behaviour of pupils. Pupils are able to articulate what it means for them to go to a church school, saying such things as, 'God is in our school', 'There is a real presence of Him here', and, 'we light a candle at the start of worship because God is the light of the world'. Data confirms that pupil attainment is improving but with small cohort numbers and the very high pupil mobility, uncertainties remain for the future. The support and nurture given to all pupils and their families is a reflection of the school's commitment to being a caring, inclusive establishment rooted firmly in Christian values. Pupils are, as a result, developing into well rounded, caring and morally grounded individuals. Pupils are in the early stages of developing a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and global awareness. As a result of this they have a limited wider world perspective. The recent visit to places of worship of a variety of faiths in Derby, like the Gurdwara, has had a significant impact on those involved. The development of awareness through the charity work undertaken enables pupils to further understand a range of backgrounds. The charity committee, made up of pupils, supports and encourages collections for a good range of charities, local, national and international. Pupils are keen to achieve and work hard as a result of rewards, not only for achievement but also for behaviour and thought for others. Pupils say that they feel very safe and well cared for, which contributes to the above average attendance. There are high expectations for behaviour, care and love, with staff acting as good role models, with parents commenting that they often, 'go the extra mile'. This results in pupils who have a positive attitude towards school. They engage readily with the learning process and are generally keen to come to school. The Christian character of the school is not yet outstanding because some pupils found it difficult to articulate what the distinctively Christian characteristics of the school are. Pupils are not afforded a wide range of spiritual opportunities and there are insufficient chances for pupils to experience diverse communities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good.

The Christian foundation of the school is being well reflected in collective worship and it is enabling both staff and students to develop a sense of community and Christian fellowship. Pupils and staff fully engage with the worship and clearly enjoy the experience. A pupil commented that 'everyone likes it'. Staff regularly attend and lead elements of the worship, such as the prayers. Visitors are welcomed to deliver worship on a regular basis and are having a positive impact on the appreciation of diversity within Christianity. There are opportunities for the development of the spiritual dimension within worship with singing, prayer and periods of quiet reflection being in evidence. Pupils sit in mixed age 'family' groups to enable discussion and one commented, 'it's great that teachers are trusting you to be in the groups'. The opportunities within worship are taken up with some enthusiasm, with all involved demonstrating a knowledge of some Anglican liturgical format. Pupils have an understanding that the teachings of Jesus are taught in worship and lived out through their behaviour towards others and the choices they make. These teachings are regularly reinforced through use of appropriate biblical content. Prayer is a regular feature of the school, with most pupils having some understanding what prayer is. School worship is clearly well planned and thoughtfully delivered. The very able co-ordinator said that the Christian foundation of the school along with the worship has been consistent elements through difficult times. This demonstrates the positive impact of the worship within the Christian foundation of the school. The main Christian festivals are celebrated in church and parents greatly appreciate being involved in these experiences. However, pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in the planning and delivery of worship and they said that they would welcome the opportunity to both plan and lead worship in the future. They felt that they had a good understanding of what constituted effective worship in school. Difficult Christian concepts, like the Trinity, are openly discussed within the worship, enabling pupils to question in a secure environment. There are currently no designated areas for either prayer or spiritual reflection. This is something that the school considered several years ago. Though there are some opportunities for pupils to experience diverse communities the school acknowledges that this is an area in need for further development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good.

Religious education is making a good contribution to the school as a Christian community, enabling pupils to question and discuss in a safe and understanding environment. Pupils are acquiring a secure subject knowledge which is increasingly being applied so that pupils are demonstrating that they are not only learning about religion but also from religion. Pupils are making progress at least in line with other foundation subjects and are attaining to a similar level. Teaching and learning observed was good with some outstanding elements. Differentiation in the lessons observed was evident. When questioned, pupils throughout school have an understanding of a range of Christian concepts and some multi-faith content with a degree depth, indicating consistently good teaching. Pupils engage appropriately with the major world faiths alongside the significant Christian input. They are developing an appropriate understanding of world faiths. A pupil commented, 'it is important to look at other faiths so that we can see what is the same and understand what is different'. They were comfortable using a range of appropriate

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language. The school is committed to the development of the subject and to all practitioners becoming skilled in planning and delivery. To that end they are introducing the Understanding Christianity resource into their scheme of work, which is currently based on the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus. There has also been the introduction of assessment without levels, which has not yet been monitored for impact. The pace and level of all the developments has been carefully considered to enable all staff to be confident and competent. The highly competent co-ordinator is committed to the subject and ensures that it has a high profile in the curriculum and a clear development plan. She is aware of latest developments through regular attendance at courses and training opportunities and therefore has a good grasp of what needs to be done to continue to develop RE within the school.
Marking is generally to a good standard with the use of learning objectives and some feedback for pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy the subject saying that, 'we all like it and we loved the trip to Derby'.

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

The committed and capable Christian leadership and management of the headteacher and governors makes a significant contribution to the success of this good church school. Stability after a significant period of uncertainty is being positively reflected in many areas of the school, including comments from parents and pupils. The school monitors and reviews its Christian distinctiveness with discussions with governors and clergy. This is enhanced by the feedback from governors on their regular visits into school, including local clergy. Governors are clear in their role of setting the vision and direction of the school alongside the headteacher. There is a real sense that everything links back to the Christian foundation of the school. The self-evaluation of the distinctively Christian nature of the school is accurate, demonstrating that the leadership of the school has a clear understanding of where the school is and how it can improve. The areas they have highlighted are entirely appropriate to enable the school's further development. The Christian vision of the school is effectively promoted through the website, new school logo and the quality of the relationships in evidence on a daily basis. Public documentation makes it clear that Christianity underpins every aspect of the life of the school resulting in an ethos of compassion and forgiveness. The website gives some indication of the centrality of collective worship and RE to school life stating accurately that pupils 'will leave us as well-educated, confident, responsible individuals with a strong set of Christian values.' Parents speak highly of the school as a church school. They say such things as, 'there is lots of emphasis on kindness', 'they are following the Christian values' and 'it feels just like a family, so supportive'. They say that they are kept well informed about their children and that they appreciate the 'open door' policy and the headteacher being available at the start of the day. They said that they are an important part of the school family and feel supported. They said that the school often goes beyond what is expected, which strongly implies the Christian faith underpinning all of the work of the school. The staff team have shown great resilience during the difficult times the school has been through and are all fully committed to and enthusiastically support the Christian vision and ethos of the school. Within this time they have grown together and they have made significant progress, taking increasing responsibilities. There has been the introduction of a wide range of ideas, processes and developments. These are having a positive impact on all involved in the school. There is a real sense of all staff working very well together to enhance the educational experience being given to every child within a Christian framework. There is an increasingly effective and mutually supportive relationship with the local parish. There are more contacts both formal and informal, than there have been in some considerable time, enabling pupils to have a clear understanding of the importance of the church in the life of their school. This relationship has contributed significantly in maintaining the Christian distinctiveness of the school through difficult times. Since the move to academy status there has been a necessary shift in the governance of the school, however, governors remain effective and are acutely aware of their role as leaders of a church school. They take their role as leaders of a Christian community very seriously. The school feels that it is well supported by the diocese and takes advantage of the training provided by them. This relationship with the local Christian community is having a more significant impact on the Christian life of the school.

The school has made some progress in addressing the areas for development from the previous inspection though some remain as areas for further development. Pupils still need to be more involved in the planning and delivery of worship but the school had made significant progress in reviewing what it means to be a Church school. The school is well placed to move forward within its Christian foundation.

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