

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Tynsel Parkes Church of England Primary Academy	
School Road, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire ST14 7HE	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Lichfield
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Date of academy conversion	January 2017
Name of multi-academy trust	Staffordshire University Academies Trust
Date of inspection	16 March 2018
Date of last inspection	27 March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	First school phase academy 143896
Principal	Rachel Chandler
Inspector's name and number	Rosemary Woodward 583

School context

Tynsel Parkes Academy is situated on the western edge of Uttoxeter, and draws its 170 predominately White British pupils, who are aged between 3 and 9, from an area of mixed housing. The school suffered a fire during the recent holiday and so current use of undamaged buildings is stretched. Since the last inspection academy conversion has resulted in a new management structure and there have also been significant staff changes. The principal has been in post for almost two terms. The parish church is a mile from the school and has also seen a change in clergy.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Tynsel Parkes Primary Academy as a Church of England school are good

- Christian love and nurture makes every child feel special, valued and included, enabling them to succeed well in all areas of their learning.
- Dedicated leadership from the principal, who works effectively with the staff and local academy council to ensure that the academy's Christian foundations have a meaningful impact on the life of the school.
- Strong and faithful support from members of Churches Together in Uttoxeter which enables the academy to be seen as a centre of Christian love in the area.
- Appropriate and varied opportunities for prayer that are valued by pupils.
- Religious education teaching that allows pupils to explore the concepts and beliefs at the heart of Christianity and other faiths with appropriate depth and challenge.

Areas to improve

- Leaders should formulate a shared vision that will move the academy forward in its distinctive Christian journey and monitor and evaluate its implementation.
- Embed the recently identified explicit Christian values so that they are clearly promoted throughout all areas of school life.
- Ensure that relevant collective worship includes a time of reflection and challenge while allowing pupils to plan, lead and evaluate worship regularly to develop their spiritual confidence and independence.
- Generate opportunities to explore and interact with the diversity of faith and culture beyond Uttoxeter.

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

The new principal has a clear vision for an academy built upon its Christian foundations. The school is at the beginning of its journey towards achieving these aspirations, but the academy is working very hard to ensure that it is on the journey towards shining as a beacon of love in the community. The motto, 'loving and learning together' is augmented by newly identified Christian values which are becoming increasingly embedded in the life of this safe and happy academy. However, some pupils still find it difficult to make explicit links between the school values and their knowledge of biblical teaching. A high level of care, support and guidance is provided for all its learners enabling them to achieve well. The pupils' spiritual journey is recognised as an important part of their personal development, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of all children is given high priority. Data shows that progress and results are strong and that pupils attend school regularly and behave very well when there. This is because the academy values every individual and enables them to strive to reach their full potential. Relationships at all levels are motivated by mutual trust and respect resulting in a caring and supportive community in which issues are resolved quickly, and bullying is rare. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and celebrate good choices. They are also proactive in showing their care and concern for those less fortunate than themselves. Many opportunities for reflection are provided within classrooms and pupils speak of how they interact with these areas. The academy has responded to the previous inspection's suggestion of exploring signage by designing and displaying a new logo which clearly has the cross at its heart. Pupils explain this logo with pride and know what it means to be a Church of England academy.

Well planned religious education (RE) lessons offer opportunities for the deeper study of Christianity and an exploration of other faiths. The use of the Understanding Christianity resource is beginning to add depth and challenge to learning about the concepts at the heart of Christianity. Visits by local Christians to answer pupils' questions ensure faith is seen as personal and relevant. Plans to add similar rigour to the study of other faiths should ensure pupils develop a good level of religious literacy. However, pupils currently have only limited opportunities to engage directly with those of other beliefs and experiences living beyond their immediate community, either within RE or wider school life.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship plays an important role in the life of the academy. Whole school and class groupings ensure that content is relevant and age appropriate so that children can participate fully. However, pupils find it difficult to relate the stories and values they have shared in worship time to their own practical experience. There is scope for developing a more united approach to planning of worship themes and ensure a clear structure to the shared time, including time for reflection. All teaching staff are involved in leading worship, but there are few opportunities for the worship to impact on the adults within the school community. Pupils clearly understand that Jesus takes a central role in the Christian faith and know something of the importance of His life, death and resurrection. They can explain that 'He was God's Son who came to earth to show us the way'. Teaching about the Trinity is reinforced through the use of three candles to symbolise God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils enjoy singing and praise and can link some of the content of the songs to the Christian message. They talk confidently about the Bible as a very special book and can share a variety of stories from it that they know. They take pride in their personal Bibles which travel with them on their journey through school and are then presented to them as they leave. Prayer underpins the life of the school, with many opportunities for worship within classrooms and outside, as well as in governors' meetings. Children are confident that the prayers they write will be heard and answered, and they are beginning to pray spontaneously. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of some Christian festivals, and are confident in using the Lord's Prayer. They are also very aware of the different Christian traditions found within their town, as worship is regularly led by a committed team from Churches Together in Uttoxeter, including an Open the Book team and children's worker. All pupils greatly enjoy and value opportunities to visit and worship in the church. Many parents attend and highly value school worship. Pupils are confident in discussing the use of liturgical colours, but have not yet experienced other features of Anglican liturgy, including any experience of the Eucharist. Pupils do, however, help to plan and lead church services and older pupils are beginning to take charge of some worship times within school. They value the opportunities this gives and are keen to increase these opportunities particularly within their class worship times.

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

The principal has a very clear vision for the school as a community that models Jesus's love, and is striving to ensure that this becomes a reality. While members of the local academy council (LAC) endorse this vision, the leadership team are at the beginning of their journey towards implementing it and the vision is not yet clearly shared or embedded. At present the local academy council lacks foundation governance and, as the academy is still finding its

identity, much of the documentation does not yet proclaim the school's distinctive character and Christian values. However, a number of LAC members, including the chair, who is a local church leader, express their total dedication to upholding and building upon the Christian foundations of this school. The leadership team have begun to monitor strategic planning for the academy's future, and have formulated an action plan for moving Christian distinctiveness forward. All staff are also involved in embedding the Christian values across the whole curriculum. Leaders have begun to listen to the views of pupils, so they can discuss the impact of the school's Christian effectiveness. Staff within the academy are given opportunities for their own professional development.

The school is extremely well supported by members of local churches and pupils are well aware of the diversity of Christian expression found in their town. A local faith trail ensures that they visit the places of worship as well as hosting visitors. Visits to the parish church are spoken of enthusiastically and parents value the church status of the academy very strongly, explaining that, were it not a Christian school it would 'be cold as the Christian love gives it warmth'. They recognise that, at Tynsel Parkes, 'they don't just talk about faith; they live it in a gentle, unforced way. God is there'. As a result, pupils talk about the Christian faith, and some have introduced prayer times at home with their families. Parents explain that the school's love and care extends beyond its pupils to embrace the whole family. There are good links with Lichfield Diocese and staff and governors benefit from their training, projects and resources.

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