Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

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| **St Jude’s Church of England Academy** |
| Paget Road, Wolverhampton WV6 0DT |
| **Current SIAMS inspection grade** | **Good** |
| **Diocese** | **Lichfield** |
| Previous SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Date of academy conversion  | 1 March 2014 |
| Name of multi-academy trust  | St Chad’s Academies Trust |
| Date of inspection | 30 March 2017 |
| Date of last inspection | November 2009 |
| Type of school and unique reference number  | Academy 140355  |
| Headteacher  | Denise Dalton |
| Inspector’s name and number | Lizzie McWhirter 244 |

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| **School context**Currently there are 464 pupils on roll. This two form entry school became an Academy on 1 March 2014 and takes pupils from the age of two. It serves a richly diverse multicultural community in an area of high deprivation with pupils from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and for whom English is not their first language is significantly higher than the national average. The headteacher was appointed in July 2012. St Jude’s was judged to be good by Ofsted in January 2017. |
| **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Jude’s as a Church of England school are good*** The excellent pastoral care in this welcoming and nurturing Christian family community ensures Christian values are modelled and pupils are encouraged and inspired, enjoy their learning and achieve well.
* Strong leadership at all levels and good governance in this dedicated and hard-working team ensures St Jude’s puts its pupils and their families at the heart of their continuing journey of service.
* The importance given to prayer and reflection in collective worship and religious education [RE] instils respect and reverence as part of this school’s worshipping life.
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| **Areas to improve*** Deepen pupils’ knowledge and understanding of The Holy Spirit and key times in the church year, such as Ascension-tide, to enrich their experience of worship in a church school.
* Enable pupils’ viewpoints on worship to inform the governors’ regular monitoring of this key aspect of Christian distinctiveness.
* Increase the breadth of worship at St Jude’s by extending the range of those leading worship to include representation from different Christian denominations.
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| **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good****at meeting the needs of all learners**The strong symbolism of Jesus as the light of the world, taken from John Chapter 8 verse 12, is at the heart of St Jude’s Christian character. This is reflected in light, love, integrity, generosity, hope and tolerance seen daily in the good relationships and behaviour at St Jude’s. As a result, pupils say, ’we all learn and share in this school'. In addition, the school’s mission statement that St Jude’s pupils are the rainbow of the world is characterised by their chosen values which include the key value of respect, as well as achieve, inspire, nurture, believe, outstanding and welcoming. These attributes are modelled by pupils and adults alike in a positive and inclusive Christian environment where all achieve within an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Moreover, pupils who are positive role models and demonstrate compassion and respect are presented with St Jude’ award. There is a commitment to the wellbeing of all where all achievement is celebrated, such as musical and sporting activities. One of the hallmarks of St Jude’s is the excellent pastoral care, with pupils and families at the heart of St Jude’s continuing journey of service. Consequently, pupils are encouraged and inspired and achieve well. The dedicated home/school liaison officer’s role is to remove barriers in getting pupils to school. He has signposted parents sensitively and appropriately to housing or social care if needed. He has enabled parent champions to be trained to help. If a new family arrives, not speaking English, they are welcomed and uniforms and meals provided so they don’t feel intimidated. Both the Christian calendar and multi-faith calendar are consulted in a spirit of understanding, tolerance and respect. For example, no lunch events for parents take place during the holy month of Ramadan. A year ago, in Year 4 there were 34 new arrivals who came from all over the world not speaking English, so support was put in place. As a result, progress for all groups of pupils is good, and the gaps have been closed rapidly. This is because of the holistic approach to the pupils, their families and the community which is underpinned by high expectations and the school’s Christian values. In addition, the highly skilled and dedicated staff, including the teaching assistants, teach until 5.30 pm every Tuesday. They identify and target support for any pupils who may be underachieving and instil confidence within a nurturing environment. As a result of this success, there have been no exclusions and the pupils take the school’s Christian values with them when they leave. This is because the distinct Christian values which St Jude’s upholds helps build partnerships and relationships. In addition, the experiences which Forest school affords, gives pupils the space to express themselves whilst enjoying the wonders of God’s creation. Worship and RE enables pupils at St Jude’s to reflect, share opinions and explore cultural differences. In this richly diverse multi-cultural community, there are 24 different languages spoken in the school. Consequently, St Jude’s focuses on Christianity as a worldwide faith because its pupils come from many different countries. Pupils have embraced RE and have positive attitudes to RE which makes a good contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural [SMSC] development and to the school’s Christian character. Pupils comment that RE challenges and excites them even if they do not personally believe in God. They like the fact that they don’t just write in their books, but cover scenarios through drama and discussions. They add, ‘we discuss different religions most of the time’, such as Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. Bible stories are used with the Early Years Foundation Stage to ‘get the message across of God’s rules and how God wants us to behave’. Teachers of these young children say that ‘reflection time has deepened learning and the pupils are amazingly silent, you can see them thinking’. Reflection at the end of the lesson enables them to see ‘how we take away what we have learned from the lesson and bring it into our own lives’. For example, how Jesus washed the disciples’ feet as a servant is explored through drama. Consequently, reflection instils reverence and respect in RE. Pupils’ knowledge of the Christian story of salvation is very detailed. Pupils explain incarnation ‘as when God put himself in the form of a baby’. They speak of heaven as ‘another life and a chance for you where you can live in peace’. Pupils welcome visitors to lessons, such as the visit of the Bishop of Wolverhampton to Year 5 and 6, but say they would like to go on more visits to other places of worship. The school acknowledges this. |
| **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**Pupils say the most important part of worship for them is ’praying together’ as in ‘speaking to God you can tell him all your worries and it will be alright’. They enjoy worship in St Jude’s Church as ’it’s more like God’s home and that’s where everyone else goes to pray’. Pupils often write prayers for worship and also sign The Lord’s Prayer in worship, dance or sing in the gospel choir. Reflection areas instil reverence and respect and have made an impact with pupils saying they ‘do reflect and there is plenty of time for private prayer’. A good example of this is Forest school worship. Prayers are chosen at the end of the day from class prayer books. In addition, prayers are read out from the prayer box every Wednesday. Pupils go on to say they ‘pray to St Jude the patron saint of our school and church, no matter how desperate the need is’. Parents say they really appreciate the way prayer has a focus in worship, with pupils writing the community prayers at home with them. With its focus on Christian belief and festivals, as one might expect in a church school, whilst being inclusive of other faiths, Harvest, Christmas and Easter are celebrated. Pupils and staff now lead worship, with pupils developing their leadership roles as adults model the way worship is planned and led. Pupils explain The Holy Trinity as ‘the Father and Son are one but they are all three different segments. Jesus sacrificed his life for everyone else’. They say they would like more help in understanding The Holy Spirit. The school has already identified this as part of its ongoing journey. In addition, the school also recognises the need to deepen pupils’ understanding of key times in the church year, such as Ascension-tide. Whilst the vicar of St Jude’s Church is a welcome and regular visitor to school, leading worship, the school also acknowledges that extending the range of Christian leaders of worship will enrich the school’s worshipping life. In addition, the school recognises the importance of pupils’ viewpoints regularly informing governors’ monitoring. For example, pupils say they learn more about God and serving others in worship, commenting, ‘Bible stories such as The Two Builders shows you can build confidence and strength so your life won’t fall apart. The Good Samaritan makes me think of other people who need help.’ Others speak of their favourite songs like, ‘He danced in the morning as it’s a joyful song and tells you more about the Easter story and how Jesus rose from the dead.’ |
| **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**St Jude’s leaders model Christian values in life as an integral part of its evolving journey as a good church school. As a result of strong leadership at all levels, the team and the governing body have brought about effective transformation, embracing Christian distinctiveness. Good governance has addressed areas from the last inspection, and priorities have been formed, which include serving the children and doing what is best for them. Pupils and parents have a voice and the vicar takes a lead on a small strategic group with a focus on skills. Parents praise the support of this extended family where their children feel safe, are listened to and are always happy to come to school. They speak highly of the pride and respect they have for the good church and community links, such as the grandparents’ lunches and breakfast mornings. They cite the respect the pupils have for other religions in this Christian school and for their fundraising activities, for charities such as Water Aid. Parents say pastoral support is very good, with any medical or counselling needs met. They find all teachers and the headteacher are ‘very approachable and they model the school’s Christian ethos, always linking back to Jesus’ teaching in the Bible’. Wellbeing is a priority and all pupils are able to succeed, academically and personally, in their own way in this nurturing and spiritual community. Parent champions are viewed as ‘a great way to advise new parents to settle in to school life’. Links with the diocese are good, with the school benefitting from support and training as a member of St Chad’s Academies Trust. Horizons are widened. For example, on Bishop Clive’s visit, Year 5 and 6 pupils asked him questions, such as what inspired him. Governors monitor worship and RE books as part of their termly learning walks with the leadership team, as for other core subjects. Both RE and worship are well led, managed and resourced, with succession planning very strong. RE and worship meet statutory requirements, with school improvement a focus for RE. Staff say, ‘this is a place where you can develop and reflect on Christian values, shining light within a diverse community’. They enjoy the fact that everyone feels part of the community, which is a big family, inspiring staff and pupils alike. They cite the way that the pupils ‘play, dance sing and laugh around the school’ and praise their ‘vibrant obvious love for life and those around them’. St Jude’s is a place where everyone is respected and valued, all are important ‘cogs’ and treated equally, all relying on one another as they journey forwards in serving God and one another. |

SIAMS report March 2017 St Jude’s CE Academy, Wolverhampton WV6 0DT