



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

### Woodseaves Church of England (C) Academy

Dickey's Lane  
Woodseaves  
Stafford  
ST20 0LB

**Diocese: Lichfield**

**Previous SIAMS Grade: Good**

Local authority: Staffordshire

Dates of inspection: 8 July 2016

Date of last inspection: 18 July 2011

School's unique reference number: 141856

Headteacher: Paula Gallant

Inspector's name and number: Reverend Alison M. Morris 759

#### School context

Woodseaves Church of England Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school with 100 pupils on roll. It is set in a rural location and serves a wide catchment area. Pupils come from a mainly White British heritage and a range of social backgrounds. It has close links with the wider community the incumbent and Knightley parish church. The proportion of pupils entitled to Free School Meals and those in receipt of Pupil Premium is below the national average. There are currently 10 children with special educational needs and/or disability. The school converted to academy status in April 2015 within the West Stafford Multi Academy Trust.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Woodseaves Church of England Academy as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Inspiring leadership by the headteacher who has worked with urgency and commitment to promote the redefined distinctive Christian vision and values.
- The significant link between the incumbent and the school which enhances pupils' attitudes to collective worship, faith and their subsequent spiritual journey.
- The independent, prayerful and self-disciplined pupils who have a strong Christian identity and sense of belonging and who live by their school's Christian distinctiveness and values.

#### Areas to improve

- Engage with the Faith Team, the Incumbent and the Christian Distinctiveness Champion to explore Christian worship so as to include more Anglican traditions and practises from around the world.
- Build upon already strong relationships with parents to include them in the evaluation of collective worship as part of the monitoring and evaluation schedule within the school.
- Further develop and implement fully the new Guildford Diocesan scheme of work for religious education (RE) alongside the 'Understanding Christianity Project' in order to introduce an enquiry based approach to the teaching of RE.

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

The Christian distinctiveness, ethos and values are immediately apparent and are at the heart of this school. A redefined mission statement and refocused Christian vision underpins and permeates all aspects. The school motto, *'Inspire, Respect and Achieve'* makes explicit the commitment to being a distinctive church school which is lived out in the daily lives of pupils, governors and staff. Pupils experience the love of God through the six shared Christian values which build character and inform attitudes and behaviours that are consistent with the teaching of Christ. All pupils are equally valued, appreciated and respected within this 'school family'. They benefit from an exceptionally inspiring and happy environment which makes pupils feel safe and secure and which encourages them to be respectful and responsible. All pupils strive to achieve their potential supported by an exemplary pastoral care. Pupils from all ability groups achieve well, most reaching good standards of attainment. This is the result of a total commitment to meeting the needs of the whole child and to developing their potential through offering rich learning experiences and an environment built on Christian values. The school's emphasis upon well being and personal development embraces diversity, promotes respect and encourages a cohesive community. It enables pupils to be creative, open minded, unique and independent individuals, respectful of themselves and of others. Harmonious staff relationships provide excellent Christian role models which are attributed to the Christian character and values. This also nourishes and challenges the excellent spiritual moral, social and cultural development, the latter being promoted in religious education and embedded in the school ethos. Work with the Christian Distinctiveness Champion, who is a designated staff member working on RE and distinctiveness within the school and the Faith Team have contributed significantly to promoting the church school ethos. Pupils understand what it means to be a pupil at a church school and make the link to Christian teaching in the bible. An effective school council and opportunities to show initiative encourage responsibility, maturity and team work. Pupils participate in the mission of the wider community and worldwide church through fundraising. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils ran a Fair Trade Stall to support farmers in poor communities abroad. Pupils love learning and are keen to attend school and so attendance figures are excellent. Religious education makes a very significant contribution to pupils SMSC development: as belief matters in this school. It fosters self-awareness, knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures. One pupil said, *'RE is fun; it opens the mind to believe in God.'* Classrooms have Christian symbols, reflective areas, with focused displays and artefacts in the hall and foyer which visually express the school's Christian distinctiveness and which encourages spiritual reflection. Exemplary behaviour is guided by the new 'Woodseaves Code' and a culture of praise and reward supports this. Both are underpinned by Christian values which promote an excellent learning climate for all pupils to make progress.

## **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Worship is explicitly Christian in character with a strong focus on Jesus Christ, the Trinity, biblical material and Christian teaching. Through the use of 'Welcome Words,' bible stories, songs and prayers, pupils find daily worship to be engaging, inspiring and enjoyable. They sing enthusiastically, and respond well to prayer and fellowship. Pupils speak about worship as *'being peaceful'* and *'worship is more like a family.'* As a result worship is inspirational and makes an outstanding contribution to the core life of the school. Through a mini-topic and thematic approach, pupils now understand the importance, meaning and contribution of collective worship to their personal spirituality. One pupil said, *'Worship is a time to be peaceful and pray to God with respect.'* They are able to see that their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour are influenced by the Christian distinctiveness of worship. It also enables pupils to think more deeply, reflect on their own actions and their impact upon people around them. Attitudes to worship are very good because of the way in which British Values are carefully crafted and the manner in which it caters for this inclusive school community. Worship relates to the pupils' own lives. Both staff and clergy facilitate liturgical worship around Christian beliefs, values and festivals of the church's year. This ensures that worship is substantial, relevant and influential. A pupil said, *'Worship is where you*

*Speak lovingly to God*. Pupils are enthusiastic and look forward to leading worship through contributions to prayers, drama or singing. Key Christian festivals, which are mainly celebrated at Knightley parish church re-enforce the spiritual link between the church and school community. Pupils pray formally and informally so that prayer is an integral part of school life. Pupils use prayers such as the 'Messy Church Grace' and 'Our School Prayer' with a varied range of approaches such as the 'Five Finger Approach', or using prayer boxes or prayer stones. All these encourage reflection. One pupil said, *'Prayer is when I find comfort with God...he is always by my side'*. Substantial evaluation of worship from 'pupils' voice' questionnaires provides feedback for development. Links with the clergy, parish and foundation governors are very strong and enable worship to make a distinctive difference to this Christian school. This also ensures that Christian values are reinforced and that all pupils engage in many Anglican traditions and practice. Additional activities such as Messy Church and the monthly Church Club offer practical activities which provide inspirational and reflective activities which enrich the church link. Visits to 'Inspire' at Lichfield Cathedral, provides pupils with a rich experience and understanding of the diocesan community. Formal evaluation and monitoring of the impact of collective worship upon pupils by foundation governors is rigorous and effective, so that the quality of worship offered is relevant to pupils' spiritual development.

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

The dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of the headteacher has quickly secured and embedded the revised vision and values placing the Christian ethos at the heart of this school. As a result both stability and harmony have been brought to this school as all stakeholders are now committed to develop and articulate the shared Christian vision which pervades the school community. Both chair and foundation governors are particularly supportive of the strategic drive to sustain the improvement in Christian distinctiveness. Governors know exactly where priorities lie and so monitor the factors that will also sustain that Christian character. Collective worship and RE have a high profile and play a key role in ensuring Christian distinctiveness. Self-evaluation is rigorous, as skilled and knowledgeable governors act as critical friends and play a vital role in strategic planning and school improvement. All staff and governors now have a clear understanding of the school's future developmental needs and of church school education more widely. Experienced leadership by the head teacher has contributed significantly to this success through identified strategic professional development and succession planning, which strengthens the capacity to plan for the future development. Staff and governors have taken up training opportunities for leadership roles through diocesan courses. Through the outstanding work of the incumbent and foundation governors, a distinctive difference is made to this school. RE teaching, general learning and whole-school evaluation is very well managed across the school. Effective and positive engagement exists with parents, multi-agencies and the wider community such as Stafford Rotary Club, West Stafford Multi Academy Trust and the Methodist church. These partnerships are very successful and mutually beneficial. Parents appreciate the open door policy and say that the school is welcoming. One parent said; *'I like the family environment'*. They feel that issues are dealt with efficiently and quickly and that staff are supportive to their requests. Parents believe pupils' needs are being met and progress is enhanced through experiences such as the strong tradition in music provision. Pupils are also provided with activities and reflection time to help them think globally and to be aware of cultural diversity. One parent said, *'This reinforces many of the values that, as a family, we hold dear'*. Parents also value the exceptional school and church link and appreciate that pupils have a strong sense of Christian identity and belonging. As one parent said, *'Christian ethos is at the forefront of the school's teaching'*. As a result all pupils show a positive, respectful and caring attitude which fully demonstrates the school's Christian distinctiveness, values and ethos in action.