



CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

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

### Tanworth- in-Arden Church of England Academy

The Green  
Tanworth-in-Arden  
Solihull  
B94 5AJ

**Previous SIAMS grade: Good**

**Current inspection grade: Outstanding**

**Diocese: Birmingham**

Local authority: Warwickshire

Date of inspection: 19 June 2015

Date of last inspection: January 2010

School's unique reference number: 125695

Headteacher: Beverley Hartigan

Incumbent: Revd Paul Cudby

Inspector's name and number: Lizzie McWhirter 244

#### School context

Tanworth-in-Arden is a stand-alone converter academy which was judged to be outstanding by Ofsted in September 2014. The school serves the rural area of Tanworth-in-Arden, with some pupils coming from outlying areas on the outskirts of Redditch. These are mainly from a White British background. There are a number of children from the traveller community. The headteacher has been in post for four years. The school enjoys a very close relationship with its parish church adjacent to the school in the heart of the village.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Tanworth in Arden as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Strong leadership and good governance are rooted in the mutual and substantial links between church and school. This ensures the Christian character of the school permeates all school life.
- Each child is treated as an individual in this welcoming and inclusive environment. This is supportive of all and is underpinned by the school's core Christian values.
- The school's worshipping and prayer life and its religious education [RE] enrich pupils' spiritual development and their daily lives.

#### Areas to improve

- Deepen pupils' experience of Christianity as a worldwide faith and enable them to encounter people of other faiths to enhance their spiritual and cultural development.
- Enhance pupils' experience of leadership of worship and extend times to consider great questions with their vicar to enrich their spiritual development.

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

Tanworth-in-Arden School sustains an inspirational learning environment which successfully embodies its motto: 'In God's family, learning, loving and growing to be our very best'. This is because the school models and lives by its chosen core values. This makes a positive difference to the lives of the children. Relationships are excellent because all members of this inclusive family community continually and consistently demonstrate kindness and care. As a result, pupils thrive in the Christian ethos and culture which this school creates. Pupils enjoy coming to this Christian school so attendance is above average. In addition, the children know the teachers are there to help them learn and encourage them to believe they can achieve. This is because the staff take the Christian value of service seriously. Within the model of living in God's family and wanting the best outcomes for all children, the school employs a counsellor to help all who need it. Pupil progress has improved over the years with one to one tuition, small mathematics groups and planned opportunities for all to make progress, given their starting points. The focus is very much on tailoring the approach to the individual child's needs. In this way, progress is achieved with the right support. Overall, achievement is good. Levels of progress show a high number of pupils achieving Level 5 in reading and writing with some pupils achieving Level 6 in mathematics. Staff go the extra mile. Excellent examples include the deputy headteacher and headteacher designate meeting with parents from the traveller community at their site and helping them to overcome difficulties. In all these ways Christian values are modelled and embedded within school practice which reflects the Christian character of the school. Pupils are well aware of the Christian values of peace, joy and love and show them in their own lives. Consequently, all groups of pupils are doing well, growing in their self-esteem. A full range of extra-curricular activities, including music and sport, enable a variety of achievement to be celebrated. Fundraising enables pupils to show Christian service in action. This includes the school's link with Kenya. Pupils show respect for diverse communities and cultures through RE and worship. These make a very good contribution to the school's Christian character, the pupils' understanding of spirituality and to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural [SMSC] development. However, the school acknowledges that pupils' understanding of the worldwide Christian faith is an area for development.

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

Worship involves and engages pupils and is rooted in Biblical teaching and Christian values. Themes celebrate the Christian church year and nurture pupils' spiritual development. The relationship between church and school is strong because of the vicar and the parish community's involvement in the life of the school. Excellent examples include the work of the 'Open the Book' team who lead worship fortnightly in the parish church of St Mary Magdalene. Pupils say that listening to the music in church and taking a part in, or seeing the drama helps them to make the connections between faith and their own lives. Good examples include the story of the widow's mite which they say teaches them that 'no matter how much you give, you can always help someone'. Everyone sees the parish church as a natural extension of the school. Year 6 pupils visit the cathedral for the annual leavers' service. The Bishop of Birmingham has also visited the school. Such links enable pupils to use a common liturgy and help pupils understand Anglican tradition and practice. In addition they are able to grow in their knowledge of their place in the wider Anglican family. Consequently, pupils and their parents enjoy church worship. The school is mindful that developing services to engage pupils and their parents is important. Liturgy is very well developed, with the school using a Trinitarian blessing and sending everyone out 'In God's family to go in peace, in joy, in love'. In addition, they have their own 'Open the Book' worship song book and a songbook for Messy Church and Tanworth School. Prayer features strongly in the life of this school with pupils contributing by writing and reading their prayers. The prayer garden is well used for prayer and reflection. Pupils are growing in their understanding of The Holy Trinity, linking this to the school's values and vision statement. They say, 'God made the world. God is your father. Jesus is your brother. Pray to them. Always believe in them. When Jesus rose into heaven he sent down The Holy Spirit. God's love is quite strong and we're all his children'. Evaluation of worship is gathered from the collective worship committee comprising children, as well as from annual questionnaires. The school recognises that it is important to develop children as leaders of worship. This ensures that worship is always evolving in quality and integrity.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding**

RE enjoys a high profile in this school which now use the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus. Teachers enjoy using the dispositions as they focus on the important aspects of truths which staff value. It also enables staff to visibly display key values in class reflection areas and for pupils to continually and consistently make the link between RE, worship and their own lives. This encourages staff to think about different ways to record pupil progress and the school has begun a portfolio of work. Good tracking of pupils' progress and assessment is in place. Work has been externally moderated so staff know that their judgements in RE are correct. Teaching is consistently good and standards are high, with pupils knowing how to improve in their work. Moreover, teaching is of such high quality that pupils are able to speak with interest and insight about Christian beliefs and prophecies regarding the end times. Excellent examples include Year 6 pupils annually hot seating the vicar and asking him challenging, searching and important questions. These include creative questions about his vocation to the priesthood, the end of the world and 'If God made the world, who made God?' Teaching staff and the vicar have created such a trusting atmosphere for profound discussions, that pupils are also comfortable speaking about their own ways of experiencing God. Within this very good and accepting Christian climate for learning, pupils are encouraged and inspired to think creatively and ask puzzling, and sometimes difficult, questions. The school recognises the need to extend such times when their vicar is able to discuss deep questions with pupils from across the year groups to nurture their own spiritual journeys. Year 2 pupils engage with the prayer garden and forest school to observe God's creation. One pupil said, 'I feel Jesus close to me' when looking at a photograph of Christ of the Andes. Such activities support pupils' own spiritual journeys of discovery. Pupils relate the Christian narrative very well, especially the Christmas and Easter story. RE is well led and managed by a senior member of staff. Diocesan training and support is much valued by the RE subject leader and all staff.

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

At Tanworth-in-Arden the headteacher, senior leaders and governors have a strong Christian vision for the school. Consequently, they have ensured that the core values of love, joy, peace and respect are central to the strategic direction of the school. Governors regularly focus on the distinctive Christian character of this church school at their learning and achievement committee and at full governing body meetings. This includes discussion about learning walks and monitoring visits. Spiritual and moral aspects of Christian distinctiveness are always on the governing body agenda and in the school development plan. The governors are always mindful of new ways to enhance the evaluation and monitoring role they carry out. Good examples include a priority for monitoring RE mid- way through the first term in Year 6. Staff acknowledge this helps them understand where pupils are in their spiritual development. It also informs progress and future practice early on in pupils' final year in school. The vision for the future is to enable this to happen in other year groups too rather than wait until the end of term when monitoring has been taking place. The wellbeing of pupils is of paramount importance. Very good examples include the presence of the pupil wellbeing committee. Collective worship promotes the wellbeing of children and parents who enjoy worshipping fortnightly together in church. Consequently, RE and worship meet statutory requirements. Governors support the professional development of staff and the future leadership of church schools. There are excellent links with the diocese, which includes support for training. All areas from the previous inspection have been addressed, with clear priorities for future action. Parents value this large extended family and the way the school develops all aspects of their children's character. They especially praise the support for all children in developing their emotional wellbeing. Parents acknowledge that the headteacher has transformed the school and how their children are so well looked after. Pupil voice is valued by staff and governors. Pupil achievement is praised by the whole community and parents see their children modelling Christian values in their worship and home life. Community links are strong with the school and church working in close partnership with one another. In addition, the school seeks to develop its own role in supporting other church schools.

SIAMS report June 2015 Tanworth in Arden Church of England Academy B94 5AJ