



SIAMS Evaluation

September 2016

School Context

St. Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School maintains a very strong Christian Character that is recognised and celebrated by all members of the school community. As a result of this all pupils are confident, articulate and demonstrate great care and respect for one another. Pupils of all abilities are now making at least good academic progress and are very well prepared for transition to secondary school.

Ofsted July 2016 stated that **St, Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary pupils' *'spiritual, moral and cultural development is a core strength of the school. Pupils behave impeccably and all ages and backgrounds mix harmoniously. Pupils become increasingly highly responsible, and fully understand right and wrong and consistently demonstrate British Values. They deeply respect different religions and cultures and are very well prepared for life in modern Britain'***.

They recognised that ;

- *Pupils are extremely proud of their school, value their education and demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. The overwhelming majority take care with their presentation of their work and are eager to improve. They are very enthusiastic when working in pairs or groups and welcome new challenges.*
- *Pupils explain very well what they understand by British values and are given opportunities to experience democracy and fairness, for example when voting for members of the school council.*
- *Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They behave outstandingly well at all times.*
- *Pupils are polite, well-mannered and respectful. They thoroughly enjoy welcoming visitors into their school and talking about their achievements. They take on their many responsibilities enthusiastically and are excellent school ambassadors.*

St Matthew's aims to provide its pupils with a dynamic and academically challenging environment in which to learn and make progress, where 'nothing is impossible with God', a line from St. Matthew's Gospel printed on the front wall as you enter the school, and where distinctively Christian values are embedded within the daily life of the school. It is a progressive school which harnesses change to the benefit of all its pupils regardless of their social, ethnic or economic backgrounds.

We have high ambitions and expectations for every member of our school community. We are fully aware of the obstacles and challenges faced by some of the pupils, which have to be overcome so that they can enjoy learning and achieve as well as possible in the safe, secure, caring and stimulating environment the school provides. We are 'Individuals Working to Potential Together' where only our best is good enough. (Refer to the Equal Opportunities Inclusion Statement)

The school population has increased to capacity over the last three years , presently we are full in all year groups apart from years 4 and 5 which have 1 place each available.

The school is larger than average and is situated in the highest percentile rank for the most deprived areas for income, with the lowest % of high social class households, lowest % of adults in higher education and highest overcrowded households in the ward. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is presently 31% including Nursery , excluding 7% Forces (Jan 16). Our mobility rate stands at 20% (Raise 2015).

Children enter Nursery at well below National and more recently a number of children have a particular weakness in communication, literacy and language skills. The overwhelming majority of pupils achieve a very low score in Literacy and Maths on entry to Nursery. These factors have increased the demands placed upon the school to ensure all pupils make good progress and reach the highest levels of attainment possible. Over the last few years there has been a rise on the number of pupils of ethnic minority groups, including African Ghanaian and Eastern European. 2015 Raise indicates White British has declined and is now 72% of the school population, with 83% with English as a first language. Presently our ethnicity stands at 21% (Jan 16)

At present the number of pupils registered as SEN is 16% (43 pupils Jan 16), they are identified as School Action Plus and 2 pupils are receiving statements of educational needs, this places the school in the highest percentile for SA+ and Statements. We have currently 2 children with EHCP plans in place (Jan 16). There is a wide range of need within school and subsequently the level of provision varies depending upon severity. Current difficulties include mild learning difficulties within areas of the curriculum, speech and language difficulties, motor control concerns, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, and medical and physical difficulties for which the school has been modified.

We constantly seek to measure our success against local and national benchmarks. We have achieved a range of awards and received many accolades. These include:

- Outstanding SIAS inspection 2011
- Arts Mark Gold 2012
- ICT Mark awarded 2014
- Energy Award 2014

Refer to our School's website www.stmatthewscofe.co.uk

Following our most recent Ofsted Inspection the following comments confirmed our commitment to drive standards to new heights at St. Matthew's.

- ***The school has improved significantly since the last inspection, leaders have created an extremely purposeful atmosphere where pupils learn well because they feel safe and warmly nurtured.***
- ***Teaching is Good, as a result pupils engage well with adults and learn at a good pace.***
- ***Achievement is Good. Pupils' progress has improved strongly since the last inspection, including that of the most able, those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and / or disabilities.***
- ***Parents are full of praise for the school, and an overwhelming majority say they would recommend it to others.***

The school demonstrates outstanding practice in:

- ***Leadership and management*** *'The outstanding head teacher and Deputy Head teacher and governors have a crystal clear vision of what the school should be. Together their skills are driving rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes'*
- ***The early years provision is outstanding*** where *'children are given the best possible start in school and as a result they make rapid progress.'*
- ***Personal development, welfare and behaviour*** *'Pupils rarely miss a day of school. They attend regularly because they do not want to 'miss out' on any aspect of school life and are keen to learn as much as they can.'*

The highly effective SEND/learning mentor team is helping pupils to deal with their anxieties rather than become disengaged in their learning, as a result of which temporary exclusions have decreased and pupils **'behave outstandingly well, they say there is no bullying in school and the vast majority of parents confirm this. Pupils know exactly what to do if they experience bullying, but insist that it does not happen.'**

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Matthew's as a Church of England School

To include:

- how well the Christian character contributes to the academic achievement, personal development and wellbeing of all learners, regardless of their ability or background
- how effectively the Christian character supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of all learners whether they are Christian, of other faiths, or of none
- how effectively the distinctively Christian character shapes the relationships between all members of the school community
- how well the Christian character promotes an understanding of and respect for diverse communities
- the contribution of religious education to the Christian character of the school

Christian Distinctiveness is Outstanding

Our previous outstanding SIAS inspection in 2011 stated; 'St Matthew's provides an exceptional and unique learning environment where pupils are proud to belong, feel valued and achieve highly. Here is a place where exemplary relationships are nurtured and everyone values the care and respect which underpins all school life. Within this cohesive family, there is a very strong sense of what it means to be living in a Christian community today.'

There is a strong student voice within St. Matthew's, the Student Council firmly believe their role is important, they are regularly involved in recruitment of teachers and Teaching assistants, and are ambassadors for the school, taking question and answer sessions with visiting members of the armed forces on remembrance days, speaking to parents visiting the school with their children prior to joining St. Matthew's and putting their minds at ease. They are incredibly articulate and take great pride in speaking about their school and teachers. They are proud of their role in influencing changes within the school and grounds, and safety issues. Most recently they have approached the Headteacher having created an assembly on germs and they felt the younger children weren't keeping themselves safe from a cleanliness perspective.

The Executive council apply for their roles by letter and have to deliver a speech to their classmates to demonstrate their commitment to the role. Through this our children learn about the importance of democracy and are able to relate this to how their country works. They are appreciative of their position and support younger children in the school through buddy / peer mentor positions.

Year 5 and 6 peer buddies support our younger children on the playground, and are always there as a support when needed, demonstrating great care for the whole school community.

The very strong Christian values underpin all aspects of the work of the school and ensure that pupils are very well supported and cared for. Our SEND team, led by our Senco, involves our two learning mentors supporting our most vulnerable pupils with counselling, nurture sessions, social and emotional support, bereavement, self belief and confidence. This team has made a fundamental impact in enabling vulnerable children to thrive and grow in confidence to break down their barriers to learning and close gaps in their learning. As a result of this, attitudes and behaviour across the school and nursery centre are often exemplary, with pupils demonstrating great respect for one another and taking great pride in supporting others. In this environment pupils flourish and make good progress. Through consistent opportunities for the children to learn of other faiths and beliefs they demonstrate tolerance and respect.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

To include

- the extent to which learners and adults engage with collective worship, its relevance and the way it makes a difference to members of the whole school community
- the extent to which collective worship is distinctively Christian, setting out the values of the school in their Christian context
- how well collective worship develops personal spirituality within the school community through a range of experiences, including a focus on prayer
- how well collective worship enables participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- how effectively the school community is involved in the planning, leadership and evaluation of collective worship

Collective Worship is Outstanding

Ofsted July 2016 stated:

- ***Pupils' behaviour during assemblies is exemplary. Here, there is a great sense of unity, common purpose and spirituality. This is shown during a rewards assembly where pupils were encouraged to recognise and value the efforts of others, and to celebrate their schools success.***

The Foundation Governor and Rev'd of St. Matthew's Church plays an important role in the life of St. Matthew's, visiting for assemblies, co-ordinating joint services such as Harvest, Easter, Christmas, Community Carol Singing, Candlelit Services, and Community Eucharist with the RE leader within school. Pupils help to plan these services, demonstrating heart felt reflective thoughts regarding poverty, famine, Jesus dying for us, and the birth of Christ. They also perform mini dramas which are always acted out with passion, and write prayers and prose. At Christmas they reflected on the true meaning of Christmas, giving the congregation much to think about. Our choir perform during every festival / celebration, which has always been very well received in church. One parent wrote following a service;

'I have just returned from this morning's Easter Service and I would like to pass on the delight in listening to the singing, in particular the song titled When I think about the Cross, though all the songs were lovely. As a choral singer myself I know how scary it is to sing a solo and the young lady did a fantastic job, when the choir and the school joined in it was really very moving. Every service I have attended through both my son's school life at St Mathews has been a real delight and I would like to pass on a well done to all involved.'

Pupils also visit the church for experience church sessions with other members of the church community. The Rev'd Paula also encourages children to attend 'messy church sessions' enjoyed by many.

Parents attend these services in church so the worshipping life of the school is supported by all. Pupils continue to attend 'Open Door' at Shrewsbury Abbey and Lichfield Cathedral. The Rev'd of St. Matthew's supports the school with teaching on baptism, marriage and the Eucharist. Our Eucharist service with Year 6 last year brought tears to the congregation as they reflected on what the Eucharist meant to them, and special meals they had shared with friends and family. All these experiences enable pupils to feel part of a larger, worshipping Anglican family. Pupils already take their turn in planning and leading worship in school, the church and the school grounds. They welcome the opportunity to be more fully involved by contributing their thoughts and reflections on worship.

The children are very proactive when it comes to thinking of others less fortunate than themselves. This often comes across during our Recommendation Assemblies, or assemblies on values, belief, tolerance etc.

Prayer plays an important part within school, during collective worship, recommendation assemblies, and services together with the children writing their own prayers for the prayer trees within school, and saying class prayers together. The Lord's Prayer is recited often. The children understand the importance of prayer as a means of communicating with God and sharing their thoughts, anxieties, and hopes with God.

Pupils understand 'pilgrimage' and regularly undertake these to St. Matthew's Church. They also can articulate other pilgrimages they have made, including one to Westminster Abbey in 2012.

Worship is firmly embedded within the school, the RE leader plans the worship timetable, where all staff are timetabled to lead acts of worship, prayer and song on a weekly basis. The pupils lead the RE group 'Inspire' who regularly meet up to plan projects / assemblies which involve awareness raising sessions of a wide range of charities and leading on charity days such as Red Nose Day, MacMillan Day, Children in need, wear it purple (Diabetes day) and more in liaison with the Student Council.

The worship co-ordinator is passionate about the importance of religious education and collective worship and as a recently qualified teacher knows what she needs to do to further develop her leadership and management role. She is presently working closely with the Headteacher to develop further opportunities.

How effective is the religious education?

To include

- the achievement of learners in RE
- the quality of teaching and learning in RE
- the effectiveness of the curriculum in RE and especially the teaching of Christianity
- The effectiveness of the leadership and management of RE

We constantly seek to measure our success against local and national benchmarks. We have achieved a range of awards and received many accolades. These include:

- Basic skills Quality Mark 2011
- Outstanding SIAS inspection 2011
- Arts Mark Gold 2012
- ICT Mark awarded 2014
- Energy Award 2014

Following our recent Ofsted Inspection the following comments confirmed our commitment to drive standards to new heights at St.Matthew's.

'Leadership and Management is Outstanding. The head teacher has maintained a very strong, uncompromising focus to secure rapid improvements in key aspects of the schools work. Across the school, leaders accurately identify and remedy areas of weakness and ensure that pupils access consistently good quality teaching that results in good progress for all. All staff who responded to the Ofsted survey agreed saying they are proud to work at the school.

'Pupils development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding'

The school demonstrates outstanding practice in:

- The Early Years
- Leadership and Management
- Pupils development, behaviour and welfare

Teaching of RE is outstanding

Standards have improved rapidly over the last 18 months, learners are inspired by religious education and worship, they articulate themselves well. They develop and apply a wide range of higher level skills and deeper learning both through learning about Christianity, and also through making links between beliefs, practices and value systems of a range of other faiths. We recently implemented the Chris Quigley Curriculum model of assessment which enables us to assess children's depth of learning utilising the three levels of learning, Apprentice, Skilled and Expert. These are applied to the new diocese framework through planning, differentiation and assessment. From January, at the end of each unit of work, the children will complete an assessment in order for us to determine progress and the depth of knowledge and understanding gained from each unit of work. These will be moderated by the RE Subject Leader alongside a senior teacher to ensure consistency and parity in standards and provision.

All classrooms and many areas within school have reflection areas where the children know they can sit, reflect and pray. They can also add prayers and wishes to pray trees both inside the school, in the library, and various classrooms, and also in the 'Garden of Reflection' created in 2012 as a thank you to the previous Head teacher who had led the school for 28 years with great passion. Classes and groups of children can go to the garden to reflect, pray together, or share religious stories or debate / act out religious events. As a result of these areas the pupils feel they have quiet areas in which they can 'talk to God'.

Teaching of RE is outstanding, as a result of this pupils make at least good progress in the majority of cases. The teaching of religious education has a high profile within the school and learning is well differentiated. It provides links with Christian values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learners are creative and motivated and apply their knowledge and skills in RE to their own personal reflections on questions of meaning and purpose. The new curriculum is being implemented and learners are aware of the differences in acquiring skills and knowledge and using higher level skills to deepen their knowledge through enquiry, analysis, interpretation and reflection.

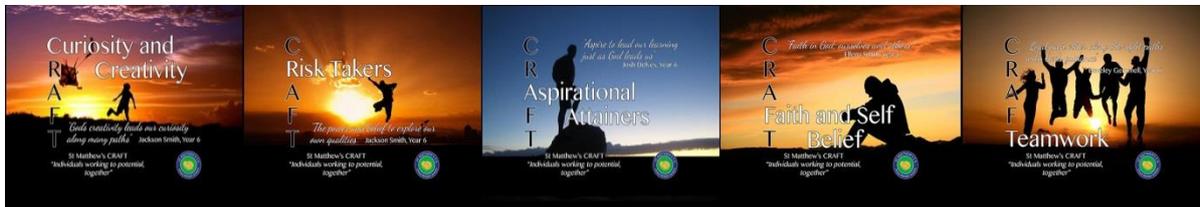
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school

To include

- the extent to which leaders articulate an explicit Christian vision that has impact on standards of achievement, the distinctively Christian character of the school and the well-being of the whole school community
- the extent to which school leaders secure the impact of this vision through evaluation and strategic planning
- how well leaders prepare for future leadership across church schools
- the effectiveness of partnerships with the church, the diocese/district and the wider community, including the parents and carers.
- if the arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements

Leadership and Management of the school as a church school is Outstanding

Our vision statement has been agreed by Governors and staff and is available for parents on our School Website. Our learning culture is centred around the St. Matthew's 'CRAFT'. This was created by teachers, governors and pupils and is displayed in every class and learning area within school. The pupils fully understand its significance and regularly refer to it when talking to visitors and parents.



We believe it is important to foster and develop these attributes and characteristics in all pupils in order that they develop into confident self-assured learners. As a Church of England Primary School the Christian principles we uphold are central to the moral development and well-being of every child. We encourage children to listen to God's word and understand how he wants them to be. We also ensure our children are given the opportunity to develop an awareness of the rich diversity of culture and religion that surrounds them. We will teach them compassion, understanding and tolerance in all aspects of life.

The Church factors significantly in the life of all children at St. Matthew's, we offer a rich RE curriculum, and involve all the children in festivals throughout the year, including Harvest, Easter and Christmas services. Year 6 attend community Eucharist services at St. Matthew's on a termly basis in their final year. Our children also have opportunities to explore the church as a valuable resource through 'Experience Church' sessions and Lichfield 'Open door' initiatives. Within school we have an active Student Council and RE 'Inspire' group who lead assemblies to build on others awareness of British Values, Charity fund raising and helping those less fortunate than themselves. They also regularly initiate, plan and perform dramas within church services, and the School choir regularly fronts the singing, singing with great pride and soul.

The school works well in partnership with the local community, we support the local food bank at the life-long learning centre, having collections of food during harvest time. We join with community carol singing and community Eucharists. We also regularly contribute to other services, and often decorate St. Matthew's Church with Artwork for various church initiatives. We are planning joint fund raising activities for future events. All these partnerships help the children develop a greater sense of belonging between the school, its parish and the diocese. Children also volunteer to bag pack to raise funds at their local Asda store in Donnington, and sing at local care homes. The School has a good reputation within the area and children are often praised for their behaviour by local residents, demonstrating a sense of care and compassion.

The Head teacher, Senior leaders and governors ensure the clear vision permeates throughout our School and Nursery Centre. As a result of this the school is near to full, parents value the firm Christian foundation and are respectful towards what this represents. The Governing Body has the Rev'd from St. Matthew's Church as a Foundation Governor, with other Foundation Governors being representatives of the Church, and the Diocese SIAMS advisor Mrs Furlong as a Key Strategic Governor of RE.

Leadership empowers all members of the school to carry out their roles effectively. The school has been on a long journey, however the Governing Body is now resolute in its determination to aim for outstanding at the next inspection. They have high aspirations and an absolute commitment to see

everyone within their school community to succeed. There is a strong commitment from the leadership team to constantly move boundaries and tackle any obstacles that appear.

Following a recent LA monitoring visit of SMSC, this was described as a strength of the school with pupils demonstrating a 'great maturity in their responses' and 'a strong awareness of Christian beliefs'.

The Head teacher has forged close links with many local church schools and has visited them to gain greater awareness of how different church schools embed Christianity. She has also involved her senior leaders in liaising to share ideas, carry out moderation exercises etc to develop consistent monitoring standards across the local area. Barrow C of E Free School , St.Georges C of E Primary School, St Peter's Edgmond and St.Lawrence's Primary School all have close links. These are all very different although all church schools, varying hugely in social, economic and ethnic characteristics. Visits are being planned for our 'Inspire' student council group to visit these schools to share their thoughts with the student councils at their schools to broaden their awareness of the diversity that exists amongst the learning cultures of different church schools.

Focus for development from previous SIAS inspection 2011 and progress towards these

- **Establish a system where pupil views on collective worship are monitored and evaluated by the governing body**

Since our previous inspection we have formed our 'inspire group' who work alongside our Student Council to lead worship, hold pupil discussions, collate statistical analyses of Christian values awards, determine structures of celebrations at Church such as plays, harvest, Christmas, Easter etc.

Work with other School councils to have a broader understanding of British Values and the make up of other neighbouring schools in terms of different cultures and religions.

Work with the community to make the area a better place for all.

Influence school reflection areas where pupils can go to reflect and pray.

Each 'inspire' and council member wear badges so that they are instantly approachable to others so that they can talk, discuss, support and encourage others.

There is a section within the head's report to Governors which feeds back these views , projects and initiatives on a termly basis to ensure Governors are fully informed.

- **Take forward plans for a gifted and talented register in RE**

Ofsted 2016 'Teachers plan exciting tasks. Lessons are interesting and lively. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to pitch work correctly according to pupils' skills and abilities. Work at the right level of challenge is provided to enable pupils, including the most able, to make at least good progress.'

We have worked tirelessly to ensure our pupils are consistently challenged and encouraged to work at greater depth . Through focussing on our model of Apprentice, Skilled , Expert for the curriculum we monitor and assess , tracking the % of pupils who meet each level , this is reported through our

assessment system each term and analysed by LMT to ensure pupils are progressing and deepening their knowledge and skills when working through the RE half termly identified units within our Matrix.