



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

Tudor Grange Primary Academy St. James	Halifax Road Shirley Solihull B90 2BT
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese/Methodist District	Birmingham
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Good
Local authority	N/A
Name of multi-academy trust appropriate]	Tudor Grange Academy Trust
Date of inspection	29 September 2016
Date of last inspection	17 October 2011
School's unique reference number	139007
Executive Principal/ Head of School	Vivienne Stone-Fewings / Sarah Deakin
Inspector's name and number	Reverend Alison M. 759 Morris

School context

Tudor Grange Primary Academy St James is a smaller than average sized academy with 237 pupils. It is now a one form entry academy with pupils aged from 3 -11 serving a diverse community. St. James Junior, the previous school, had problems with small size and viability. As a result, Birmingham Diocese sought a sponsor and in January 2013 the school became an academy within the Tudor Grange Academy Trust (MAT). Since then, the academy has changed its age range. The school shares an Executive Principal and has a Head of School permanently in school. In December 2014 the school was judged 'good' by OFSTED

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Tudor Grange as a Church of England school are good

- Inspirational leadership by the Executive Principal who is motivated by her own personal faith and who, with the leadership team, is instrumental in ensuring that the academy's development and growth remains true to its Christian vision.
- Effective and exemplary staff relationships that both promote and model Christian values embodying the Christian distinctiveness, which ultimately enhances all pupils' learning.
- Embedded Christian values; seen particularly in the pupil's ability to speak about Christian values such as forgiveness or honesty and how the values impact upon their daily life within the academy.

Areas to improve

- Build upon already established links with St. James's church to invite a wider provision from the parish which will enhance the relationship but will also engage consistently with the academy in the areas of collective worship, governance and the teaching of RE.
- Engage all governors in the process of implementing more rigorous and robust formal systems of monitoring for church school development.
- Invite a wider range of leaders and speakers from different Christian traditions to collective worship to facilitate pupils understanding of Christian diversity within the Anglican Church.

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

The Christian distinctiveness, character and ethos are immediately apparent through documentation and visual statements around the school which make explicit links to Anglican teachings. A difference is being made to this rapidly improving school through use of an inclusive approach and a total commitment to meeting the holistic needs for all groups of learners. Staff have equally high expectations of pupils where all are valued and supported to achieve their best, no matter what their ability or background. Pupils benefit from a nurturing and inclusive ethos which attempts to strive for all pupils to achieve their full potential. As a result, pupils make at least expected progress and achieve very well, most reaching good standards of attainment in academic work. Pastoral support and care of all is very strong and this is matched with systems for tracking pupils' progress so that they have the best chance of success. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well catered for, the latter being promoted in religious education (RE) as well as embedded in the school ethos. Use of Circle Time and reflection both in RE and worship provide pupils time to reflect upon their inner self and their individuality which builds self-esteem. It is also nourished and challenged by conversations that promote positive Christian behaviours. As a result, pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is impressive. A culture of praise and reward encourages good attitudes to learning. Pupils are keen to succeed, take pride in their work and attend school because learning is fun. Some older pupils understand what it means to be a pupil at a church school and make the link to Christian teaching in the Bible. In the words of one pupil, *'The Bible teaching helps us to be friendly towards one another within this church school'*. An effective school council encourages pupils in decision making and understanding of charity work. This is illustrated in their fundraising for Cambodia 500 and charitable giving, for example food donations to the 'Sparkhill Food Bank.' Pupils feel safe and happy, secure in the knowledge all are respected, belong and are valued in this academy. Religious education (RE) makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. For example, RE lessons provide activities to discuss 'Right & Wrong' moral issues. A well-structured RE curriculum provides experiences for pupils to understand and make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the range of faiths studied. Enthusiastic staff model Christian values such as tolerance and love in their dealings and conversations with pupils which optimises learning for all. Classrooms have Christian symbols and worship tables which, when used for reflection and prayer, make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. A very secure and stable atmosphere is promoted through relationships, visual statements within the foyer display and reflection areas so that pupils flourish and develop into self-assured and confident young people.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Daily worship is distinctively Christian and evokes a sense of gathering within a spiritual atmosphere. It is planned around the 'Roots & Fruits' resource, which ensures that the planning is grounded in the Christian Liturgical Year. Weekly themes reflect Bible stories, Christian values and belief, with reference to the common Tudor Grange values associated with the academy trust. As a result, there is a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ and the Trinity. It is inclusive, spiritual and accessible. Pupils are keen to sing, and pray. Attitudes to worship are good because it provides some meaningful experiences based in Christian beliefs and festivals. For example, pupils are encouraged to think on how they can show respect, celebrate and also compare difference. Worship is appropriate and significant to the pupils' needs, age, development and interests. It also helps pupils to understand the love of God. A pupil referred to worship as *'God's loving arms around you'*. Visual images, symbols and artefacts are used well to create stillness for time of inner self reflection. Pupils do lead some worship. Prayer is a central part of school life. As a result, pupils are able to speak well about their faith and prayer life. One pupil spoke of prayers as *'asking for the guidance for what you need'*. Pupils also use familiar prayers including the Lord's prayer and their class prayer. Appropriate use by pupils of prayer spaces and prayer boards demonstrates their understanding of the purpose of prayer and reflection in their own lives. For example, a pupil said, *'He listens to you and is always there'*. Key Christian festivals are celebrated in St. James's church which reinforces the historic link between the church and school. Parents are also beginning to respond positively to invitations to attend special services and to share in worship. Additional activities such as Messy Church enhance worship experiences through practical approaches which introduce pupils to worship and Bible stories. Some Anglican traditions and practices are embedded in worship but knowledge of Christian diversity across the Anglican Communion is the next step for development. Visits to Birmingham Cathedral for events such as the Pentecost Party and Year 6 Leavers service foster pupils' understanding of their relationship within the diocesan community. The school correctly identifies the need to be involved in evaluating the impact of collective worship on pupils to inform future planning, and that this evaluation should be monitored rigorously and consistently by the governors so that high quality worship can be ensured.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE is given a high priority supported with an increased budget and a new revised scheme with planning from the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus, which has led to improved effective practice. The subject leader in RE effectively communicates expectations, and shows skilful expertise and management which has impacted upon the quality of teaching. Effective RE middle and long term action plans also provide targeted support for teaching and this has impacted upon staff development in this subject. As a result, the quality of teaching is at least good. High expectations of pupils have led to some good progress and standards are in line with national expectations. Through the sharing of experiences and the 'big questions' RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' religious development. It provides a positive, spiritual and affirming experience for pupils with a significant effect on SMSC development. One pupil wrote, *'The Christian value I want to work on is self-control.'* Teachers have good subject knowledge and teaching methods are age appropriate. These are used very well to question pupils in order to check their understanding and deepen their learning. Lessons are 'scaffolded' to help pupils grasp new material and those who demonstrate good understanding are quickly moved on to the next task. For example, pupils have discussed, and reflected sensitively on, how to make decisions on moral choices using statements such as 'I agree with ...I would like to add'. Pupils enjoy their learning in RE. They are excited, achieve well, are keen to learn and are challenged to be inquisitive and ask questions. Pupils' knowledge of the Christian story is very good and they have some understanding and awareness of other faiths and cultures. Visits to the Gurdwara and celebration of Diwali have encouraged pupils to think globally and to be culturally aware. Tracking of pupils' attainment and progress in RE is good achieved with the use of new assessment materials. Substantial support and INSET training is enhancing staffs' spiritual development and impacting on the confidence of teachers of RE. RE books and lessons are monitored and standards moderated by senior leaders. This has ensured high standards of teaching and learning and has led to improved pupil's standards of attainment.

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

The experienced and energetic leadership by the executive principal has contributed significantly to this school's transformation from a fragile school to a thriving, popular academy. A clear consistent strategy based on Christian principles is provided by the leadership team for an inclusive academy which welcomes pupils of all faiths and none. Governors and staff are committed through policy and practice to the embodiment of Christian distinctiveness. This has a positive impact upon the way that all stakeholders promote the vision through conversation, relationships and engaging with all stakeholders. As a result, this academy is seen differently and its improved reputation is now galvanising support through the community. Exemplary relationships ensure that all feel valued and part of the academy family. All governors and staff plan strategically and have an honest and challenging view of the school's future needs. The decision to become part of the Tudor Grange Academy Trust is already enhancing the academic reputation of the school but now the leadership is now developing its status as a Church school. The sharing of good teaching and learning, as well as management processes and practices has led to improvement. Self-evaluation is implemented through rigorous systems to monitor data analysis and pupils' achievement. The ongoing work of the foundation governors makes a distinctive Christian difference but a more formal and robust monitoring schedule for this and for worship is the key for future improvement. Insightful succession planning and identified professional development mean staff are given training for leadership roles and this has already impacted positively upon school improvement. Statutory requirements for both RE and collective worship are met. Both areas are well led with an enthusiasm which radiates through to the staff and pupils. Strong partnerships exist with the diocese, multi-agencies and the wider community which all help to meet pupils' needs. A productive relationship with parents also enhances pupils' learning. An example of this is seen in the extensive work of the Parent Teacher Association who raises money for school resources and local charities. Parents speak of the care and concern shown to their children and the very professional way in which staff work, which enables their children to flourish socially, spiritually and academically. As one says, *'It is a family with Christian values.'* Parents believe pupils' needs are being met and progress is made through the enhancement of sporting, enrichment and extra-curricular activities as well as classroom learning. Pupils speak of their sense of Christian identity. One pupil said, *'We are part of God's big family.'* Pupils have activities and reflection time to celebrate and value diversity within our society. Current effective strategies include links with Birmingham Diocese and international links with Malawi.