



## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Ipsley CE RSA Academy</b>	Winyates Way Redditch B98 0UB
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese/Methodist District</b>	<b>Worcester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Good
Date of academy conversion	January 1 <sup>st</sup> 2013
Name of multi-academy trust	Redditch RSA Academies Trust
Date of inspection	28 September 2016
Date of last inspection	4 November 2011
School's unique reference number	139020
Principal	Nicola Beech
Inspector's name and number	Stephanie Boulter 785

### School context

Ipsley Church of England Middle School converted to academy status as Ipsley CE RSA Academy on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013. The current principal has been in post since the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. The school is heavily oversubscribed with only 2 pupils out of 165 transferring to Ipsley from a Church of England First school. The large majority of pupils are White British, 19% of whom are eligible for free school meals which is higher than the national average. Pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding are 40%. The number of students with significant special educational needs and/or disabilities is 14.6%, 12 of whom are statemented pupils. The academy currently has 5 looked after children.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Ipsley CE RSA Academy as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The principal's inspirational leadership of Ipsley as a distinctive, highly effective church school which is modelled for the whole school and local community on a daily basis.
- Exceptional pastoral care nurtures the uniqueness of each pupil resulting in strong relationships, positive attitudes, high levels of self-esteem and confidence in learning.
- The behaviour of pupils which is based on mutual respect for all and the living out of the school's six distinctively Christian core values which are deeply embedded in all aspects of school life.
- The dedicated and committed staff who go that extra mile to ensure all pupils achieve their best and whose care for pupils is 'unconditional'.
- Religious education (RE) is extremely well-led and managed. It anchors the school's values, allowing pupils to test out their ideas safely and to make personal choices.

### Areas to improve

- Enable pupils to independently plan, lead and evaluate complete acts of worship in a variety of settings, so that their own spiritual journeys can be enhanced and strengthened.
- Further develop the role of the governors so that they establish a robust cycle of formal monitoring and evaluation of the school's distinctively Christian characteristics which lead to challenge and improvement of the school.

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

The strongly embedded, explicit Christian ethos at Ipsley CE RSA Academy provides a secure foundation from which its life and work flourishes. Outstanding relationships and exceptional pastoral care exist at every level because the uniqueness of every person, seen as a child of God, is embraced, celebrated and nurtured. The principal, staff and governors define their role as collaborative leaders who strive to 'raise aspirations in the community through the work done with pupils'. As a result, the school's core Christian values of friendship, thankfulness, forgiveness, perseverance, respect and compassion pervade, and the teachings of Jesus are at the heart of everyday practice. Pupils recognise how this makes a difference. For example, they speak confidently about respect for all, and explain how the school encourages them to 'celebrate differences' making them appreciate the uniqueness of everyone, and this in turn secures a happy community life for all. Parents say, 'The school keeps the needs of each child and family at the heart of everything they do, finding ways to support parents to do their best for their children.' The school's 'open door' policy is appreciated and parents say that 'staff know their children inside out' and that 'every child' is given responsibility then encouraged to rise to their own particular social or learning challenges'. The love and care pupils have for their school is tangible; they demonstrate highly positive attitudes and confidence in learning and consequently progression is good and sustained. There is a high degree of understanding of and respect for people of diverse cultures and faiths, even though the pupils' experience of these communities is extremely limited. Charity work is driven by the pupils' understanding of Christian values in action and their sense of responsibility to others; as one pupil said, 'We collected for the Primrose Hospice because they help lives that are important to God.' Older pupils are exemplary role models to their younger peers caring for them in all areas of the school and living out the school's Christian values. Spirituality and pupil's spiritual development is central to all decisions and actions the school makes. Leaders and members of staff never lose sight of the importance of this aspect of children's development and routinely plan for opportunities to engage pupils in thinking about and discuss the big questions in life. Not only do they learn to value the views of others but they develop a real sense of spirituality that enriches their personal development and gives all pupils a strong foundation for their lives. Attendance is very good and parents feel that Ipsley's distinctively Christian ethos ensures that their children 'always want to go to school' and 'constantly strive to do their very best'.

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

Collective worship is at the heart of the life of this distinctive and effective church school. The themes used are linked to the school's distinctive Christian values and this in turn enables pupils to relate messages heard in collective worship to their own attitudes and behaviours. Pupils say that collective worship brings everyone together and helps them perceive the world in different ways. What pupils learn through collective worship has a direct impact on their attitudes and behaviour. Bible stories are at the heart of worship; this helps pupils understand the values as being distinctively Christian. Prayer and reflection are embedded features of school life, with the school providing a 'prayer room' for pupils to sit, talk, pray and reflect with two members of the local church community. World issues are highlighted with visible reminders of issues such as the migrant deaths in the Mediterranean. This openness results in children who are emotionally intelligent and who respect and value all God's people regardless of religion or cultural differences. Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of collective worship is highly effective and leads directly to significant improvement. For example, as a result of pupil voice, reflective journals have been introduced to enable pupils time to follow up from the contents of acts of worship, and allow pupils to consider how the theme impacts on their lives and the lives of others. Much has been done to make worship more interactive. Pupils are 'challenged' to develop their thinking by engaging in activities such as 'partner talk', testing out ideas and interpretation of themes as part of worship. The Crew are beginning to take on more responsibilities for certain parts of worship such as prayers and reflections, and the opportunity for pupils to independently plan and lead worship in school and in the community has been identified by the school's own self-evaluation process. Pupils have a developing understanding of the Trinity and this is reinforced by the use in worship of symbols such as a Bible, cross and candle. Reflection areas are well established in classrooms and

further pupils' spiritual development and have a positive impact on quietness and reflection. Pupils write their own prayers, describing prayer as 'a way of talking to God'. One pupil described how the opportunities for prayer has sustained her through difficult times. Pupils regularly translate the concept of 'everyone is your neighbour' into fundraising activities. They view these as an outworking of their Christian values and explain how Jesus would want them to care for members of the wider community.

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

RE is highly valued by all pupils and they are excited and inspired by the subject. They enjoy lessons and make good progress. The majority of pupils arrive at school without the benefit of having attended a church first school. As a result, standards in RE on entry are enormously variable. By the time pupils reach Key Stage 3 standards in RE are at least in line to those found nationally with a significant number attaining higher. A wide range of learning opportunities which are differentiated into bronze, silver and gold challenges, with further extension tasks available, enable pupils' progress to be accelerated. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to these opportunities to verbalise ideas using discussion on Biblical text or responding to different religious art as a way of showing their understanding of complex issues. RE lessons are creative and original and contribute significantly to pupils SMSC development. The work of pupils is regularly assessed and progress is effectively monitored, by a highly dedicated, inspirational and effective RE co-ordinator. This includes lesson observations, work scrutiny and learning walks. The introduction of a tracking system has identified gaps in learning and this in turn has influenced future lesson planning to ensure pupils are supported and progress. Enhancing pupil voice is a strength of the school and used very effectively by school leaders. Pupils know that their voices have been heard by initiatives such as visiting places of worship being planned for them after a recent questionnaire. Well taught RE lessons give pupils knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions and regularly give the pupils confidence to compare and contrast these major faiths. This results in pupils who respect diversity and are appreciative of how faith and religion influences the lives of individuals and the world. Leadership in RE is a strong feature of the school with a high level of expertise.

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

The principal effectively articulates her vision of the school as a church school, with the result that there is an excellent shared understanding of Christian distinctiveness right across the school community. As part of that vision, great emphasis is placed on nurturing the individual, with the result that standards of achievement are high and every pupil feels valued. The principal, staff and governors go 'the extra mile' at every opportunity, driven by their belief that everyone within their school community deserves the best, as unique individuals in the eyes of God. Parents eloquently describe how staff work as a cohesive team and how their children's self-esteem and confidence comes from the affirmation they receive from staff in all aspects of their work. Christian values have become firmly embedded, consequently pupils make clear connections between each value and the teachings of Jesus and their own behaviour. All leaders effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of Ipsley's distinctive Christian character extremely well and results in outstanding provision for all pupils. Governors have a good knowledge of the school as a church school and are able to discuss strengths and areas that need further development. However, robust independent formal monitoring and evaluation need to be developed further, so that governors can independently challenge the effectiveness and impact of Ipsley as a distinctive church school. The school self-evaluation and mission statement comes from the belief that every child should experience success and be valued for his or her individual strengths. The school has a strong and effective partnership with parents who know they can talk with confidence to class teachers and senior staff and that they will be fully supported in sometimes difficult situations. They speak about the school being at the heart of the community and the community at the heart of the school. The school's partnership with the two local churches of St. Peter's and Christ Church, Matchborough are exceptionally strong and of mutual benefit. The school has addressed the areas for development from the previous inspection and statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met.