

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Werburgh's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Address	Church Street, Spondon, Derby, DE21 7LL		
Date of inspection	05 March 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary
Diocese	Derby	URN	112919

Overall Judgement	Grade	I
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgements		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	I
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	I

School context

St Werburgh's is a larger than average primary school with 315 pupils on roll. The school has very low levels of religious and cultural diversity. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils considered to be disadvantaged is below national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with national averages. A new headteacher, who was previously the deputy, has been appointed since the previous inspection. The school is currently becoming an academy as part of the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust (DDAT).

The school's Christian vision

Achieve- 'With God all things are possible' Matthew 19:26b; Believe- 'Whatever you ask for in prayer is possible' Matthew 21:22; Together- 'I am the vine and you are the branches.' John 15:5. We want every child to be the best person that they can possibly be and to know that they have a valuable place in God's world.

Key findings

- St Werburgh's is an inclusive, compassionate and caring community where every child is valued and nurtured as the person God created them to be.
- Together, the school and church community share a clear Christian vision for the school. This vision, and associated values, underpins the whole life of the school and informs every decision that is made.
- Christian values give children confidence to challenge themselves in pursuit of their learning and impact strongly on their social, emotional and spiritual development. They think deeply, ask 'big questions', and regularly put the needs of others before themselves.
- Collective worship is valued by all members of the school community as the lifeblood of the school. It significantly influences the lives of both children and staff and enables them to flourish.
- Religious Education (RE) at St Werburgh's is inspiring, challenging and engaging. A consistent enquiry based approach empowers children to explore their own convictions and those of others with a deep level of understanding.

Areas for development

- Develop a consistent approach to the use of learning objectives, success criteria and key questions in RE. This is to give children greater responsibility for and ownership of the progress they make in RE.
- Building on the whole school culture of care and encouragement, actively promote a culture of positive mental health for both children and adults across school.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

The whole life and work of St Werburgh's school is informed by and lived out through a clear Christian vision. This is owned, understood and passionately articulated by the whole school community. It shapes the strategic direction of the school and impacts significantly on every aspect of daily school life. As put by a parent, 'Achieve Believe Together happens every day in every classroom.' Through this, the school is highly inclusive in meeting children's needs and supports each child to be the unique person God created them to be. Church and school work in exceptionally close partnership, with inclusive practice at the heart of both. As described by the priest 'we are truly one community- church and school together as one.' The school now better reflects its local community through a new admissions policy that focusses ethically and courageously on meeting local needs. The whole school community are meaningfully involved in exceptionally rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of RE, collective worship and the Christian vision and values. The Christian vision is the key driver behind school improvement planning and underpins the strategic direction of the school. Professional development is given a high priority for staff and governors, including through effective partnerships with other schools and the diocese. Succession planning was an area for development at the previous inspection. This has been fully addressed and staff development is now a strength. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that staff are empowered to flourish personally and professionally.

Following reflections on the question 'what makes a spiritual person?' staff have a secure understanding of spiritual development. Creative and inspiring topics are planned around big questions to ask God. A recent topic entitled 'Did God abandon Jews in the Holocaust?' elicited profoundly deep thinking and reflection. This innovative focus has placed the Christian vision at the heart of the curriculum. Opportunities for spiritual development and reflection are planned across all subjects and staff regularly address questions and opportunities that arise spontaneously across the curriculum. Children's spiritual development is also met exceptionally well outside of the curriculum. This includes a Lent Club, mindfulness activities during lunchtime and residential retreats. All groups of pupils make strong academic progress, recognised in collective worship through 'Outstanding Progress Awards'. This includes RE, where expectations of progress and standards are at least in line with the rest of the curriculum. A parent noted that children make strong progress as they are 'comfortable, valued, loved and respected therefore ready to learn'.

Children have regular opportunities to explore what the school vision and associated values mean to them personally. This inspires the whole school community to consider their actions in line with God's Word, putting the needs of others before their own. A parent observed that, 'the values foster morals'. Reflection on the school values underpins children's moral development. This regularly extends beyond school, such as support for the Padley Centre and for residents at a local care home. A mutually beneficial partnership with Sukantanagar School in India has made a significant impact of children's cultural development. This has been adopted as the church mission link to further unify the work of school and church. Children are passionate about this partnership and recognise the difference it makes to their own lives. They regularly take initiative to challenge injustice and engage in ethical social projects beyond those organised by the school.

Inspired by the Christian vision, school leaders work tirelessly so that pupils and adults can flourish and live well together. Priority has been given to this through the appointment of a learning mentor who supports children in their relationships and delivers specific mental health and wellbeing interventions. Relationships within and beyond the school are firmly rooted in Christian values, with everyone given the support, encouragement and opportunity to thrive. A child exemplified this saying, 'everyone is part of school, everyone is valued.' Pupils, appointed as Peer Mediators and Playground Peace Makers, confidently support the living out of this approach and ensure that no one is isolated or excluded. Behaviour policies are rooted in the Christian vision and based on forgiveness and reconciliation. Children talk about this as a way of living: 'we forgive each other and put things right because Jesus taught us to forgive'.

School and church have worked together innovatively to create a shared culture where everyone, regardless of their background, disability, sexual orientation, gender or identity are fulfilled as the person God created them to be. This commitment was summed up by the headteacher who said, 'If you can't be the person who you want to be then you can't be your best'.

Collective worship is valued by all members of the school community as the lifeblood of the school. All staff participate fully in worship. Collective worship is inclusive yet invitational: everyone's involvement is welcomed, but without compulsion. Decorated classroom crosses and class prayer bags are taken to collective worship daily and classes are given something to take back. This makes clear links between collective worship and classroom practice. The many creative opportunities for prayer and reflection are used meaningfully by children and adults alike. Children value their roles as worship leaders, and take a considerable lead in planning, leading and developing worship. This was an area for development in the previous inspection and is now a strength. All classes are involved in regularly evaluating the effectiveness and impact of collective worship. Children value this input because that know their views are taken into account, with recent changes made to seating, song choices and celebrations. Children are regularly and proactively involved in Sunday services. This includes children administering the Eucharist in church, which had enabled a shared understanding of worship between church and school. Worship has a clear theological basis and strongly supports children's understanding of Christianity.

Pupils are inspired, challenged and engaged by RE. A creative enquiry based approach empowers children to confidently explore their own convictions and those of others with a deep level of understanding. The Understanding Christianity resource is used effectively to support children's theological understanding of Christianity. Quality questioning supports children in thinking deeply about their own identity and the person of God. Pupils are knowledgeable and respectful of other religions and world views. They have an informed and respectful understanding of the role of religion in Britain and in India. As one child noted, 'Learning about other religions helps us treat others with respect. We can relate to people of other religions because we have lots of things that are the same.' The school has achieved the Gold RE quality mark.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

The quality of teaching in RE is consistently good or better and clearly shown through rigorous monitoring over time. Progress is evident in RE books, with strong evidence of children's depth of understanding. Assessment systems are robust and have been innovatively extended to cover other religions effectively. Judgments are secure and have been moderated with other schools. RE is taught through key questions, which are often used as the learning objective for the lesson. Learning objectives and success criteria, however, are sometimes confused with key questions. As a consequence, the clarity of expectations is not as sharply focussed as it could be. Marking has the same rigor as other core subjects, with opportunity for children to respond to improvement points. These are often through probing questions, which have been particularly effective in challenging and extending the more able. Marking relates to spiritual development, so that RE impacts directly on children's lives.

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