

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

### St Paul's Church of England Primary School

<b>Address</b>	Hampton Dene Road, Tupsley, Hereford HR1 1UX		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	02 April 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Single Academy Trust, formally VA
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Hereford</b>	<b>URN</b>	116886

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

#### School context

St Paul's is a large primary school with 436 pupils on roll. It has been a national support school since 2015. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The Executive Headteacher is currently Acting Diocesan Director and CEO of the Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust.

#### The school's Christian vision

*For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light* (Psalm 36. V9). Inspired by God's love for us, we illuminate the goodness in others. We care for and protect His children and reach out to help others flourish in their journey to the fullness of life.

#### Key findings

- The aspirational outlook and vibrant curriculum combine with a commitment to cherishing each individual, enabling all pupils to flourish.
- The staff unreservedly share their practice with other schools so that excellence radiates beyond St Paul's, supporting pupils across the diocese.
- As a result of mutually supportive, reflective and cohesive leadership from both clergy and school leaders, staff are enabled to experience joy, and excel in their work.
- Collective worship is the keystone of the school; there is an outflowing of spirituality that resonates across the school, reflecting its strong links with the church.
- RE is innovative and interesting; children relish and rise to the high expectations. As a result, religious literacy and spiritual development are of high quality.

#### Areas for development

- Enable pupils to develop an even deeper understanding of different faiths so that they are better prepared for life in our modern multi-faith society.
- Share the vision more widely so that its influence has an even greater impact on the local and wider community.
- Ensure that under new leadership the school's Christian vision continues to evolve in order that children and adults continue to thrive.

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 school's deeply-considered Christian vision is seen as an expression of God's limitless love and grace, illuminating the goodness in everyone. It reflects this school's distinctively inclusive and aspirational culture. The gospel values give a firm foundation for the school's work and enable the vision to be lived out. This has led to a bold and empowering spirit that characterises decision making and forward planning by leaders and governors. There has been a deliberate investment in appointing and developing staff as church school leaders. As a result, St Paul's has become a significant support for other schools in developing their church school distinctiveness. The vision permeates the culture of professional trust, so that staff feel both upheld and fulfilled in their work. They hold the conviction that their work is about 'engraving attitudes and emotions' that will enable everyone to make a positive contribution. They demonstrate a responsive and accommodating approach, ensuring, 'We fit what we provide to suit the children: our searchlight shifts to find and meet their needs'. Accordingly, theirs is a living mission.

Spiritual development has high status. Attractive and inviting reflection spaces across the school expand and deepen opportunities for pupils' spiritual engagement. Opportunities for pupils to consider and engage in discussions that promote spiritual literacy are woven through learning in RE. Collective worship offers moments for personal reflection as well as shared prayer. Governors and clergy are integral to the spiritual work of the school, with governors meeting regularly as the Church School Distinctiveness Committee to monitor RE and advise on spiritual development.

The atmosphere is one of harmonious calm. Pupils flourish in this culture that cultivates their personal, spiritual and academic development. Outcomes for pupils are very good, and the high attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. There is a pro-active and assiduous approach to addressing any gaps in attainment across subjects. Support to enable more vulnerable pupils - including refugees - achieve well is a particular strength arising from the school's vision and values. The school has strong links with local and global charities, resulting in a culture of 'self-perpetuating' charitable work enacted by the pupils. Pupils regularly act as agents of social change. Recently, they have initiated support for a school in Uganda after it suffered the effects of natural disaster. There is a strong sense of the school seeking out innovative ways in which children's horizons can be opened, and the global partnership links are one such example of this.

Pupil behaviour is exemplary: the school establishes in pupils an internal 'moral compass' as well as personal resilience. Exclusion rates are consistently low. Pupils say the school's vision teaches them to 'see the good in everyone'. The practice of forgiveness and reconciliation forms part of the school's philosophy for forming positive relationships. Anti-bullying work is proactive and preemptive. Engagement in some film projects based around this theme have achieved national prominence on social media. Pupils are clear that, as God's children, they are all valued: 'We take anti-bullying seriously. We're all equal and we're all different... it's good to be different.' A cheery display of differently coloured and patterned socks celebrates this school-wide belief.

Wellbeing, care and compassion are central to this school's Christian mission. Pastoral support is a strength of the school, enabling pupils to flourish. As one pupil said, 'I like the social environment here. The teachers make you feel really comfortable. I feel really strong.' The school has taken significant steps to support pupils' mental health through the employment of a dedicated pastoral support manager who engages with all members of the school community. Such is the impact of this work that staff feel 'free to teach'. The school dog, Winter - an innovation inspired by the school's mission to support vulnerable learners - has played a significant part too, bringing a sense of healing to those in particular need.

Collective worship is widely seen as the 'beating heart' of the school, generating for pupils a 'living faith'. Faith and spirituality are explored in music and drama; creative ways are conceived to give people a chance to engage joyfully and peacefully. This expression of faith is recognised as being very special: the school was recently chosen as the only primary school to sing at the inauguration of the new Hereford university. Worship is typically varied and engaging, following both the liturgical calendar and biblical teaching. It is led by pupils, clergy from a range of denominations and staff. Pupils say, 'Our services are really fun and you always learn something new.' The great impact of collective worship on pupils can be attributed to the close link between school and the clergy and church community. Worship at the local church is a weekly event, and during the inspection the church service exemplified the reflective and respectful character of worship at the school. The headteacher sometimes leads

worship at the local secondary school and these children also attend worship at St Paul's. Pupils form part of a Worship Council which meets to promote worship in the school. The use of pupils' reflections to evaluate and improve collective worship was an action point from the previous inspection and has been actioned in depth by the church school committee through evaluating pupil questionnaires. Monitoring and evaluation by staff and governors is similarly assiduous and leads to meaningful improvements in provision, such as the use of class prayer books. Teaching about the Eucharist in RE enables pupils to gain a good understanding of its importance to Christians.

RE plays a pivotal role in the curriculum and in teaching and learning. Pupils are able to broaden their understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern society as a result of visits from people of other faiths and visits to places of worship. This development point from the previous inspection has been addressed. Pupils have a good understanding about Christianity as a worldwide faith. Pupils' performance in RE is also shared with parents through the annual report. The school has acted on points raised in the previous inspection to improve pupil understanding of key ideas in religious education. Well-considered marking comments by teachers now create opportunities to further enhance learning.

The passionately-held vision of the school has generated strength for innovation: 'We wanted to put down the draw-bridges.' In so saying, the headteacher sums up the way in which St Paul's has become a centre of excellence for the diocese, providing support and training for other schools both locally and regionally, and bringing a new vibrancy to the diocesan mission.

This school lives out its faith in loving service to its community; it is a model of generosity in meeting need.



**The effectiveness of RE is Excellent**

Well-presented pupil books and class RE journals evidence the high quality and inspirational teaching. Thoughtfully-planned lessons enable pupils to develop a progressive understanding of Christianity as well as of other faiths and beliefs. Their knowledge and understanding are strong. As a result of high-quality coaching and training for all staff, Understanding Christianity, is further deepening pupil understanding. Specialist staff generate a shared enthusiasm for this subject that translates into the positive engagement of pupils right across the school. Assiduous assessment processes ensure every child can flourish in this subject. Pupils appreciate being able to make connections to their own experiences and feelings. There is a great focus on enabling pupils to grapple with demanding and challenging aspects of their lives and world through teaching in RE, supported by the school's strong links with the church. As a result, religious literacy is strong and RE makes a powerful contribution to spiritual development.

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