

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

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

<b>Address</b>	Bolton Old Road, Atherton, Manchester, M46 9FD		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	6 December 2018	<b>Status of school</b>	VA primary
<b>Diocese</b>	Manchester	<b>URN</b>	106515

<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 Philip's is a primary school with 420 pupils on roll. 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 in line with national averages. The religious background of the majority of pupils is predominantly Christian. The school has increased in size since the last inspection and a new headteacher has been appointed.

#### The school's Christian vision

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* (Philippians 4:13)

As a loving, Christian family, we provide a nurturing, safe, inclusive environment where everyone can flourish and achieve their full potential. St Philip's develops resilient, compassionate learners with an in-depth understanding of faith and spirituality, in the community and the wider world.

#### Key findings

- With the leadership of the school's inspirational headteacher, the vibrant Christian vision of St Philip's has grown in its positive influence over every aspect of school life, inspiring all to live out its faith-driven ethos. The vision also enriches the mutually beneficial links between school and church communities.
- The overt Christian vision and faith values stimulate the many ways in which all members of the school, adults and pupils alike, gain fulfilment from working hard together and caring for each other.
- Invitational and engaging worship is at the heart of school life. Its messages richly support the spiritual growth of both pupils and staff, uniting all in a caring school family that reaches out to the needs of the wider world.
- Pupils of all abilities are nurtured and encouraged to achieve their very best, as they enjoy the excitement and challenges of the school's broad and stimulating curriculum.
- Religious education (RE) enables pupils of faith or none to consider in depth the meaning and impact of belief within their lives. All are supported in developing the ability to articulate and discuss personal viewpoints with respectful confidence and eloquence.

#### Areas for development

- Utilise the skills and enthusiasm of the worship council in supporting other pupils to independently plan, lead and evaluate collective worship. This will empower more pupils in sharing their faith vision and message with the school community in ways that challenge and inspire.
- Extend governing body scrutiny to include a more formalised evaluation of the impact of the school's faith vision to ensure that all pupils receive the highest quality educational experiences and nurture.

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 pervasive and welcoming Christian vision of St Philip's is at the heart of all aspects of school life. Because of its strong impact, the vision shines in the ways in which the school community lives and works together. The ensuing faith-driven harmony celebrates the biblical teaching that each person is uniquely special, known to God and therefore of infinite value. This means that all receive wholehearted, caring support. Pupils' self-esteem, resilience, social skills and learning needs are nurtured through specific plans and interventions. Parents are highly appreciative of these approaches. Personal wellbeing and mental health is a high priority, all staff receiving 'emotionally friendly school' training.

Senior leaders ensure that pupils' learning is enriched by an inspiring curriculum that stimulates individual talents and interests to shine, and enables spiritual and moral growth for all. From a relatively low starting point, pupils make steady progress through school, with overall attainment exceeding national expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils' behaviour for learning is exemplary. Their enthusiasm for acquiring new knowledge ensures that they want to work to full potential as they strive to master new concepts. Regular reviews of pupils' individual needs ensure any potential blocks to learning are removed. Because pupils enjoy school, attendance is maintained at above national expectations, with families supported in improving attendance where necessary. The governors are closely involved in the life of the school. They hold senior leaders to account in driving forward the school's academic standards. However, they do not have a clear and systematic methodology for evaluating the impact of the school's Christian vision.

Daily collective worship celebrates faith as the driving force that inspires the whole school family to join together in reflection each day. The worship gives due recognition to the beliefs of other world faiths, and provides for the needs of those of no particular belief. Because of this inclusive approach, it is highly regarded by all members of the school community. For those of no particular faith, worship has meaning and relevance because it supports their consideration of the significance of belief within global culture and human interaction. For those of faith it offers reflection on living belief and connection with God. This inspires some pupils to choose to progress in their faith lives. A Year 6 boy explained, 'It was taking part in worship that inspired me to want to go further in my faith and be confirmed'. In order to support this faith journey, the team rector leads appropriate weekday school Eucharistic worship in the nearby local church. This mutually beneficial partnership between school and church also enables joint family worship and working together to create art works and interactive faith events.

Adults leading the worship include the teaching staff and the team rector who also has a significant pastoral role in school. Pupil leadership of worship is focused through the work of the volunteer worship council, who often read from the Bible or write prayers for worship. However there is no systematic approach to regularly involving a wider range of pupils in worship leadership. A well-organised worship programme, based around the church year and the Bible, alongside local and world events, inspires pupils' growing spirituality. Pupils often choose to write prayers for use in worship or as a more private means of sharing thoughts with God. This widespread use of prayer also extends into pupils' home lives. A parent commented, 'My son settles at bedtime with the prayer his class use at home-time. He often talks about God.' School worship concludes with an invitation for each class to reflect on its theme. These themes also have increased impact because they are shared through monthly newsletters. Responses provide excellent worship evaluation that is fed into future plans.

The caring interaction of the staff team acts as a strongly positive role-model for all pupils to emulate as they live out the school's Christian values, the nine biblical Fruit of the Spirit. All pupils are encouraged to follow their teaching. Pupils self-regulate their caring, thoughtful behaviour, a pupil commenting, 'No one is ever left out here, because we are all friends.' As a result, discriminatory behaviour and bullying are very rare, with senior staff acting swiftly, using restorative justice that emphasises forgiveness to resolve any instances. The Christian values also underpin the belief that all have the right to be themselves. This inspired a trail-blazing pupil initiative that led to the school gaining the Proud Trust's Rainbow flag status. Pupils prepare for puberty through consideration of self-respect, gender issues and relationships alongside empathy for others. Because St Philip's has very few pupils from minority faiths, the significant celebrations of other major world religions are highlighted to widen faith understanding. Mutually beneficial links with a local primary school serving a more diverse community also enable pupils to meet and work with those of contrasting faiths.

Pupils are keen to support and suggest both local and international charitable giving, whilst also involving themselves in active community engagement, such as the Archbishop of York's Young Leaders scheme. Other pupils decided they should volunteer at the local food bank after collecting food donations during the harvest festival. The school also demonstrates its Christian stewardship in providing all staff with training and the sharing of staff expertise with neighbouring schools. Senior leaders have undertaken the diocesan Christian leadership

course which has ensured that they are skilled in creating a school where spirituality thrives. Spiritual provision includes stimulating classroom reflection areas and the outdoor environment. Here a reflection garden and allotment with chickens provide times of spiritual refreshment and inspiration for all members of the community.

Because RE is embedded as an integral and influential part of the full curriculum, its influence as a core subject goes well beyond what otherwise could be achieved. Because they are inspired by its content and wide-ranging learning approaches, pupils relish the spiritual experiences and learning challenges RE provides.

By using the Questful RE syllabus, the school ensures all pupils grow in understanding of key Christian theology such as the Holy Trinity, alongside the beliefs of other major world faiths. Pupils from other faiths are proud to be the expert teachers of their own religion. Pupils are proficient in using the Philosophy for Children reflective approaches when sharing opinions on the 'big questions' of life and belief. This approach ensures pupils learn to discuss and disagree in ways that engender tolerance and respect. Godly play, using miniature characters, promotes pupils' richly spiritual learning experiences and helps them develop religious empathy and understanding.



### **The effectiveness of RE is Excellent**

Because RE teaching is always of a high standard, it inspires pupils' understanding and engagement. They make good progress and achieve levels at or above those reached in the other core subjects. Subject data is collected and used to inform future teaching to ensure continuity and to drive forward improvements.

RE is taught in multi-sensory inclusive ways to ensure that it remains exciting and challenging for all pupils. Their learning outcomes are marked solely for RE content, which enables all pupils of all abilities to excel in the subject.

Staff feel confident in teaching RE because they are ably supported by their subject leaders, who also make certain that the subject is well resourced. In turn, the RE subject leaders benefit from taking part in diocesan RE hub meetings and conferences, whilst also supporting colleagues in local Church schools.

Headteacher

Lisa Rigby

Inspector's name and number

Nigel Castledine 652