

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Philip's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Barrow Street, Salford M3 5LF	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Manchester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Salford
Date of inspection	28 April 2017
Date of last inspection	21 October 2010
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 105944
Headteacher	Hazel Brady
Inspector's name and number	Gail Fullbrook 530

School context

St Philip's is a one form entry primary school serving an area in the centre of the city of Salford. Pupils from a wide range of cultural and religious backgrounds attend the school. 57% of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is significantly higher than average as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, disabilities or educational health care plans. The school includes a 16 place specialist language resource unit for pupils from the surrounding area. Mobility is high. At the time of the inspection three members of staff were on maternity leave.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Philip's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The headteacher and staff are passionate in their commitment to a vision rooted in distinctly Christian values of love, care and friendship. As a result, all pupils feel accepted and valued regardless of their ethnicity or faith.
- The Christian character of this inner city school is exemplified in the ways in which Christian values are taught and lived out day by day in a multi-cultural, multi faith context.
- The pastoral care and well-being of pupils is underpinned by a belief in the uniqueness of each child in the eyes of God. As a result, pupils show respect and consideration for their peers and are excited by, and proud of their school.

Areas to improve

- Formalise the process and procedures by which the school evaluates the impact of its vision as a church school so that current strengths are maintained and areas for development identified.
- Develop a range of strategies that will support pupils' spiritual development and ensure spiritual development has as high a priority as pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

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

The vision of senior leaders of the school as a family standing firm in faith and sharing Christian values, is widely recognised and understood. Pupils recognise the importance of the core values as Christian values but are encouraged to explore and understand them in the context of their own faith. This results in a respect for difference and diversity that threads through the life of the school. Pupils know that their teachers want the very best for them. They work hard and show very good attitudes to learning. A deep understanding of the uniqueness of each child in the eyes of God is widely shared amongst staff. This results in a commitment to prioritising the personal development and wellbeing of each pupil. It also makes a significant contribution to the very good progress pupils make. Staff are relentless in their commitment to remove the barriers that sometimes put pupils at risk of poor attendance or prolonged absence.

Christian values are taught and lived in such a way that all pupils recognise their relevance and importance. They have impact across all aspects of school life and are routinely referred to by staff and pupils when appropriate. The Christian values of fellowship and compassion are revealed daily in the school's commitment to the wellbeing of school families and extends to care for and of the wider community. For example, during a discussion about a local charity, a Key Stage 2 pupil spoke of the importance of showing compassion to others who struggle financially. Understanding of Christian values is founded on Biblical teaching. One child commented that 'they remind us of how Jesus wants us to be with each other'.

A Christian emphasis infuses the wide range of activities, within and beyond the school day, that support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Pupils find the opportunities that enrich their curriculum exciting and are keen to share their current favourites. One pupil talked eagerly of the fruit and vegetable plots in the school garden. A group of pupils shared the pizzas that they had designed and made. Pupils raise funds for local, national and international charities and understand the importance of sharing what they have with others.

Relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils behave well and show great respect towards one another. Although keen to share the consequences of poor behaviour, it was clear that for most pupils this knowledge was not based on actual experience. Parents recognise that the school's focus on Christian values underpins the 'family feel' of the school. They are appreciative of the ways in which the headteacher and her staff make themselves available each day to discuss issues of importance. One parent commented that 'teachers give so much support' whilst another said that 'the school really goes the extra mile for us'. Pupils learn of the importance of the Christian values of friendship and justice for all people. As a consequence pupils new to the school, and in some cases to the UK, settle quickly. When discussing key figures in history such as Rosa Parkes and Nelson Mandela, pupils make links with Jesus' teaching and his life. Pupils have a good understanding of the global nature of Christianity and show respect for the different ethnic and religious backgrounds of their peers. They see the diversity of their school as providing the opportunity to make new and different friends. Pupils are keen to share their personal understanding of issues of faith, both within RE and across the curriculum. The openness and curiosity this encourages makes a valuable contribution to SMSC development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

At St Philip's inclusive daily worship lies at the heart of the school day. The opportunity to meet together to learn, praise and reflect or pray is universally valued. Pupils share times when worship has deepened their understanding of God or made a difference to their behaviour. For example, one pupil, when reflecting on the story of Daniel and the lion, marvelled at the depth of Daniel's trust in God. Another, following a reflection on the story of the Good Samaritan, said he realised that 'it isn't enough to say you believe something, you have to live it'.

Staff, aware of the multicultural nature of their school family, provide space and time for older pupils to respond to world issues. Following the terrorist attacks in Paris pupils lit candles spelling out 'hope not hate'. Their understanding of the importance of unity on such occasions is deeply moving.

Understanding of Christian values is developed within worship. Pupils are familiar with a range of Biblical stories and Christian teaching. They know the stories of major Christian festivals and understand the importance of seasons such as Lent and Advent. Older pupils learn about the significance and importance of the Eucharist.

Prayer or times of reflection are a core strand of worship and part of the rhythm of the school. Many pupils pray at key times during the school day such as lunchtime and home time. They are encouraged to write their own prayers and have a profound understanding of the purpose of personal prayer. Pupils use the classroom reflection areas and prayer spaces around the school to stop and think. One pupil said that he 'liked telling God how he was' whilst another spoke of 'sharing things that make her sad' with God.

The school's Key Stage 2 sparkle group regularly share prayers within worship. They enjoy the opportunities they have to plan and lead worship. Their role in developing the Christian ethos of the school is particularly valued by their peers. Recently the group helped Key Stage 1 pupils to make hand shaped prayer chains. Pupils are familiar with a number of traditional prayers and greetings. The Lord's Prayer and the school prayers are spoken regularly and from memory. Worship is firmly founded on Christian teaching. References included within worship that

support those of other faiths are frequent and effective. Pupils are familiar with the teaching of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Older pupils share their personal understanding of the Trinity within RE lessons. SMSC development is a key part of worship and pupils value the time given at the end of each day to reflect on the theme of the day's worship and the events of the day. Opportunities that promote spiritual development, although in place, are not as apparent as those promoting moral, social and cultural development. As a result, the spiritual development of some pupils is not as strong as it might be. Key members of staff work alongside the parish team to plan and lead worship. Evaluation involves a range of people. The school is currently increasing the role of pupils in the process to ensure that their viewpoint informs future developments.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The majority of pupils attain standards in RE at the end of Key Stage 2 that are in line with the expectations of the Blackburn syllabus. Teachers' planning is informed by robust assessment procedures whereby the progress of all pupils is tracked. This means most pupils make good progress across the school. However, few achieve at higher levels. This is because, despite effective tracking, opportunities for more able pupils to deepen their understanding are not consistently prioritised through the school.

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is good and has many strengths. At its most effective, it is clearly focussed on the lesson objective and allows time for pupils to discuss their responses with their peers. Where questioning is used skilfully, pupils are appropriately challenged within lessons and develop a depth of understanding of key themes. For example, when considering what makes a good leader, Key Stage 1 pupils thought about leaders they knew and reflected on the qualities they had. Through application of this learning to leaders in their own lives, pupils' understanding of the responsibility of leadership was deepened. Pupils enjoy RE and welcome the breadth of themes studied and the creativity of the experiences offered.

The RE curriculum is highly effective in developing pupils' understanding of key Christian themes and Anglican tradition. In most lessons teaching is applied to pupils' own experience and in this way their SMSC development is supported. A review of themes taught during this academic year revealed that the focus of lessons is almost entirely on Christianity. The school has identified the need to address this imbalance within the school year.

The headteacher is currently overseeing the management and leadership of RE. The school has rightly prioritised the importance of increasing the proportion of lessons that are outstanding. Through book scrutinies and focussed lesson observation feedback the school is committed to ensuring that more pupils achieve at higher levels.

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

With honesty and integrity all staff reflect the headteacher's vision of a school standing firm in faith and living out the Christian values of love, care and friendship. School leaders ensure that school is a safe and secure place to be and pupils are justifiably proud to attend St Philip's school. The headteacher and pastoral staff ensure that no stone is left unturned in seeking to ensure that pupils are ready and able to learn. Parents are appreciative of the commitment of senior leaders to the high level of support given to their children to help them to learn. All pupils, including those who access the school's specialist language support provision, achieve well and grow in confidence whilst at the school.

Current procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school as a church school do not always support governors and senior leaders in identifying the strengths of the school and areas where the school's practice might be further developed. As a consequence, governors are not always able to hold the school to account with sufficient rigour for its Christian character and distinctiveness. Current development points identified in the school's self-evaluation document are relevant and appropriate. These are already leading to improvement but some key areas, particularly relating to teaching and learning in RE, require greater definition. The foci for development identified at the last inspection have been addressed. The school is committed to the professional development of staff. In preparation for future leadership roles within church schools, two teachers have completed a Christian leadership course provided by a collaboration of northern dioceses.

The effective relationship between school and church is of mutual benefit to both organisations. Pupils recognise the importance of links with their community and joint events such as the Christmas fair are well supported. Experience Easter, a time each year when the church community shares the story of Holy Week and Easter with pupils, has a clear impact on pupils' understanding of the events of Easter. The rector, youth worker and staff team are welcome and regular visitors to the school and pupils enjoy visits to the church to learn about the building as well as to worship. The school is actively involved in a number of local community groups such as the Wood Street Mission, a local charity supporting children and their families, and the Chapel Street Community Arts Project. Parents make important contributions to the life of the school. A particularly good example was the way they prepared and shared food from their own cultures for a multicultural event celebrating the school's rich diversity.