

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

<b>Bishop Wilson Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School</b>	Puddington Lane, Burton, Neston, Merseyside CH64 5SE
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Chester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Good
Local authority	Chester West and Cheshire
Date of inspection	29 September 2016
Date of last inspection	October 2011
School's unique reference number	111312
Headteacher	Darren Jones
Inspector's name and number	Robert Haigh 660

### School context

Bishop Wilson, a smaller than average-sized primary school, is located in a village setting close to St Nicholas church and serves a relatively affluent rural catchment area. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A much smaller than average proportion is eligible for pupil premium funding. The percentage who have special educational needs and disabilities is above the national average. There are fewer pupils on roll than at the time of the last inspection. A staffing and class organisation re-structure took place in 2016. At the same time, pre-school provision was introduced. The school holds national awards for its success in promoting a healthy lifestyle, music, sport and inclusion.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bishop Wilson as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Dynamic leadership ensures that Christian values pervade all aspects of school life, effectively supporting the development of character and enhancing learning.
- The belief that each pupil is unique and loved by God inspires excellent pastoral care and a Christian family atmosphere within which pupils feel valued and nurtured.
- The Christian ethos, collective worship, religious education (RE) and culture of prayer have a strong and positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- A vibrant partnership with the church extends the spiritual experience of pupils and strengthens the church within the community.

### Areas to improve

- Ensure the monitoring of standards in RE becomes more robust to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and assessment in promoting pupils' learning and academic progress.
- Strengthen the governors' monitoring and evaluation role in respect of church school aspects to sustain the school's Christian distinctiveness and capacity to achieve its strategic aims.

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

The Christian values of respect, friendship, trust, love and forgiveness are deeply embedded in the life of the school community. All members of the school family understand and express the importance of these core values. They know of their origins in the teaching of Jesus and their positive impact on relationships and behaviour. High levels of mutual care, support and kindness are a striking feature of daily life. Pupils explain confidently, 'We are an extended, loving family looking to God our guide as we grow in our faith and work'. Pupils are known well and feel safe. A belief in the God-given value of each child is paramount. It is proclaimed in the mission statement, which pupils know by heart, and motivates staff to ensure all achieve. Members of staff are regarded as Christian role models with high expectations. Pupils respond with exemplary behaviour and a thirst for learning. Their attendance level is high because they enjoy coming to school. As a result, most make good progress and attain at or above national figures. Where weaknesses occur, interventions are focused and effective. Staff diligently support the vulnerable and those with special needs, all of whom make good progress. High quality experiences encourage personal spirituality. These include worship in school and church, thought-provoking values and biblical displays and reflection areas in classrooms and outdoor areas. RE enhances the Christian character of the school and strengthens pupils' spiritual and moral development. It helps them to understand the biblical basis of the school's core values, develop respect for other religions and appreciate social diversity. Pupils grow produce in the school garden which encourages their sense of the stewardship of creation. Involvement in local care homes and community arts projects enhances pupils' social development. Links with a school in Uganda foster cultural understanding and awareness of Christianity as a global faith. Pupils support local, national and international charities which they describe as Christian love and care in action for those in need.

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

Worship is very important in the life of the school. Pupils and staff speak about the inspiration and learning they draw from worship in class groups and larger gatherings. Year 6 pupils regard worship as an opportunity to 'sing praise and give thanks to God, ask for forgiveness to wipe the slate clean, pray for others and learn how we can live better lives'. Themes include Bible teaching, Christian values, the seasons of the church's year, saints' days and Christian and other faith festivals. The spiritual closeness of church and school mirrors their physical proximity and is more than symbolic. Pupils enjoy the frequent whole school worship in church which they describe as a 'holy place' where they can 'feel God's presence'. It also helps them to understand Anglican worship styles and liturgy. Worship themes are carefully planned by the headteacher, supported by the vicar who leads worship weekly. Pupils value the vicar's leadership and ministry because they say she makes worship fun whilst encouraging them to think. They also enjoy the twice-termly visits of the Open the Book team whose dramatic presentations bring the Bible to life for them in a memorable way. The use of the symbols of the Bible, cross and candle flame in worship helps pupils appreciate the three persons of God, although their understanding of the Trinity is not fully secure. Their joyful singing and responsiveness to times of prayer and reflection are impressive. Pupils confidently contribute prayers they have written themselves and know the Lord's Prayer. They value silence in worship and use their classroom reflection areas 'to help us think or talk to God'. Pupils are becoming more involved in the preparation, leadership and review of worship which is enhancing their understanding, skills and confidence. Evaluation of the impact of worship has become more systematic since the last inspection and contributes effectively to planning and development.

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

RE is a popular core subject and makes a strong contribution to the school's Christian character and pupils' SMSC development. They make good progress and their standards of attainment in RE are in line with those of other school subjects and national expectations. These standards apply equally to pupils'

subject knowledge as well as their ability to reflect on and use it. Pupils describe the way in which they are stimulated to grapple with some of the big questions within Christianity, other world faiths and current affairs. Class portfolios, interactive displays and pupils' books show how the creative learning experiences provided by teachers stimulates pupils' spiritual and moral development. Art, music, drama and visits to places of worship, including Chester cathedral, are used to good effect. The annual faith day is a valued forum during which pupils find out about other religions and cultures. The vicar, who is also the RE link governor, visits lessons regularly to help pupils explore their beliefs and discuss spiritual and moral questions. The standard of teaching is good with a strong emphasis on questioning, reflection, evaluation, discussion and the sharing of opinions and experiences. This improves the quality of pupils' learning. They show a familiarity with religious vocabulary and say they welcome these opportunities to 'go deeper'. The subject leader's expertise, vision for RE in a church school and supportive leadership build teachers' confidence and skills. As a result, the recently adopted Diocese of Chester syllabus and its approaches to teaching and learning have been successfully implemented. The need to embed the scheme is a recognised priority. Monitoring and evaluation through lesson observation and work scrutiny is not yet systematic and robust. Marking and assessment processes are becoming more rigorous as the new policy is being implemented.

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

The headteacher's strong, dedicated Christian leadership and dynamic promotion of the core values are very well supported by the deputy headteacher. This ensures that the Christian ethos remains paramount. Their desire that pupils realise their God-given potential is shared by governors and staff, motivating them to do their best. Development in RE and collective worship is well-led, adequately resourced and given a high profile. The areas identified as needing improvement at the last inspection have been addressed. Leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's performance and Christian distinctiveness. This ensures that the Christian ethos of the school has a positive impact on children's academic achievement. Priorities for church school progress inform the strategic development plan to affirm their importance in school improvement. Governors are vigilant in supporting and challenging leaders, although their formal monitoring and evaluation of church school features and Christian leadership development is not fully established. The commitment of leaders and governors to sustain the integrity of the school's Christian character was evident during the recent challenging period of budget difficulty, staff re-structure and reduced pupil numbers. The school's partnership with St Nicholas church is strong and their collaboration with families is a dynamic, mutually beneficial community alliance. Links with the local authority, diocese, local partner schools and a Liverpool Roman Catholic primary school enhance pupils' learning and the professional effectiveness of leaders, staff and governors. Families are known well and the school's culture of Christian nurturing secures parents' commitment. They say their children's happiness is assured by the Christian ethos of the school which they see as the heart of its daily life.