



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St. Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Townfield Lane
Lower Bebington
Wirral.
CH63 7NL

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Wirral
Date of inspection: 21 January 2016
Date of last inspection: December 2010
School's unique reference number: 105077
Headteacher: Vivienne Woods
Inspector's name and number: Anne B. Woodcock (445)

School context

The school serves a wide catchment area in and around Bebington. Approximately 25% of the 212 pupils travel from Birkenhead, an area of high unemployment and deprivation. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and they come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The school supports an average number of pupils with additional needs. The number of pupils attracting the Pupil Premium grant is broadly average. The school gained the Gold Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) in summer 2015.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Andrew's CofE Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The highly effective, distinctly Christian leadership of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors inspires all aspects of school improvement.
- Pupils' extremely good behaviour and attitudes to life and learning are closely connected to their understanding of the school's deeply-embedded Christian values.
- Outstanding collective worship, together with excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision, has a significant impact on pupils' personal development and spiritual growth.
- Excellent links with St. Andrew's and Townfield churches, together with other local Christian groups contribute significantly to the school's Christian character and to pupils' spiritual growth.

Areas to improve

- Extend pupils' awareness of the concept of the Trinity in collective worship, so that they gain a clearer understanding of this aspect of Christianity.

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

The school's deeply-embedded Christian character is immediately evident to visitors. The motto, 'Learning for life in a caring Christian community' is fully developed. Parents agree that the school's strong sense of community, based on Christian values, nurtures and supports every child. Children's understanding of the 4 C's (care, courtesy, consideration, Christianity) is reflected in their outstanding behaviour and very positive attitudes to life and learning. Children are happy, confident and articulate. They thoroughly enjoy all their school experiences and are inspired by their teachers saying, 'they make learning really fun and help us to improve'. The extremely well-planned and delivered creative curriculum excites children. It provides regular opportunities for pupils to shape their own learning. As a result, they are eager, collaborative and reflective learners. All pupils, especially those with additional needs, are very well-supported. They make very good progress from their starting points. Standards of attainment are consistently high and continue to rise. The school's strong focus on spirituality ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is outstanding. Conceptual-based learning extends and challenges pupils' thinking. Their reflections are displayed in colourful, extremely well-presented displays of pupil work. The school ensures that all children are able to develop their unique, God-given skills and talents through the provision of an extensive music and arts programme, wide range of clubs and inspiring visits. Pupils have a clear understanding of their place in God's world, recognising their responsibilities to care for and support others. One Year 6 pupil explained, 'God gave us life so we need to do something good with it. We help others and show our love by raising money for charities like Tearfund and Children in Need.' Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, participating actively in projects such as the Wirral Civic Award and acting as sports ambassadors and play buddies.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is highly valued by all members of the school family because everyone feels included. 'It is all about worshipping together as part of a family,' explained a Year 5 pupil. The impact of collective worship is clearly articulated by children. 'It tells us more about love and forgiveness and how God wants us to live. It makes believers stronger and helps people to decide what to believe,' stated a Year 6 child. Worship is extremely well-planned and recorded. Themes are based on Christian values and festivals. Gospel teaching is extremely strong. This is evident in the way older children speak of and use Bible stories and quotations. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the life and work of Jesus and of the nature of God. 'We can always trust God. He is always there for you,' stated a Year 3 pupil. The school recognises that further work is needed to extend pupils' understanding of the Trinity. Worship is a highly participatory and inclusive experience. Pupils regularly help to act out stories or use games which help them to remember and understand concepts clearly. The pupil worship committee, introduced in response to the last inspection's development issue, provides regular opportunities for children to plan, lead and evaluate worship. Children write prayers and select music to reflect their thoughts and understanding of a theme such as humility. Pupils' understanding of the nature and purpose of prayer is well-developed. 'We write prayers to thank and praise God, ask for help and say we are sorry,' explained a Year 4 pupil. Clergy make an exceptionally strong contribution to the worship and spiritual life of the school. They support planning and lead worship each week. Pupils' experience of Christian worship is enriched by visitors from other local churches, such as the Life Church. Robust monitoring and evaluation systems are in place, ensuring that the ongoing development of collective worship is secure.

The effectiveness of the religious education (RE) is outstanding

The exceptionally high quality of all aspects of the school's work in RE is evidenced by the Gold REQM award gained in summer 2015. RE makes an outstanding contribution to the school's distinctiveness and to pupils' SMSC growth. Pupils really enjoy RE because it is relevant and challenging. 'We use what we learn in RE in our lives all the time. We learn about Jesus and try

to follow his ways,' stated a Year 6 pupil. Through the concept driven curriculum, children are challenged to think deeply. They raise questions, investigate and analyse. Lessons are extremely well-planned and differentiated. Children are engaged and inspired by the wide range of activities provided. Drama, art and music are used extensively. All pupils make very good progress and levels of attainment are extremely high. This is reflected in the impressive work displayed around the school and in pupils' books. All demonstrate the balance achieved between learning about and learning from religion. Subject leadership is exemplary. Highly effective monitoring and teacher training has secured a high level of expertise which ensures the ongoing development and effectiveness of RE. Robust assessment systems track progress, identify gaps in learning and inform future planning. Effective marking is valued by pupils because it identifies a 'next step' showing them how to improve their work. RE supports children's understanding of diversity very well. They develop a substantial knowledge of other faiths, such as Judaism and Islam, respecting the way other people worship God and live their lives. Pupils identify similarities and differences between religions. For example, older pupils explained the link between the Jewish feast of Pesach, the Last Supper and the celebration of the Eucharist, whilst others described the different ways in which people pray. The links with schools in Kenya support pupils' awareness of Christianity as a multi-cultural faith.

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

The school is exceptionally well-led by leaders whose personal faith and commitment to the pursuit of excellence are tangible and profound. The school unashamedly declares that 'What would Jesus do?' is at the heart of all decision-making and defines their distinctiveness. Christian values are extremely well understood and lived by all members of the school family. Governors challenge and support the work of the school very effectively. They monitor and analyse progress through regular visits and scheduled meetings with staff, pupils and parents. They ensure that the curriculum and other provision meets the needs of all children, raises aspirations and leads to rising levels of attendance and attainment. Rigorous, insightful self-evaluation processes engage all members of the school community and lead to ongoing improvement. Church school issues are prioritised within school improvement planning. The issue from the last inspection has been fully addressed and the impact of changes evaluated. Governors have secured outstanding leadership of RE and collective worship. They ensure that both are well-supported and resourced. Strategic development and succession planning is exemplary. This is evidenced in the way in which middle leaders are able to carry on the work of the deputy following his promotion to the headship of another church school. Highly effective partnerships with other church schools and the diocese support many aspects of school management. Strong community and church links support pupils' understanding of issues such as poverty and citizenship. Established links with schools in Kenya and Chile help children to understand wider global issues. This results in their increasing understanding of problems such as drought and refugee migration. The pupil voice is exceptionally strong and children know that their opinions are valued and acted upon. Parents are highly supportive of the school because they know that their children are treated 'as individuals who really matter'.

SIAMS report January 2016 St. Andrew's CofE Primary School, Lower Bebington, Wirral CH63 7NL