

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

### Wybunbury Delves Church of England Primary School

Bridge Street, Wybunbury, Nantwich, CW5 7NE

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Outstanding**

**Diocese**

**Chester**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Date of inspection

27 April 2017

Date of last inspection

May 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Aided 111346

Headteacher

Carolyn Casserley

Inspector's name and number

Robert Haigh 660

#### School context

Wybunbury Delves is a smaller than average-sized primary school serving the village of Wybunbury and the surrounding rural community. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is below average. The school holds several national accreditations, including the RE Quality Mark (Silver). The headteacher leads in school three days a week and the deputy headteacher is head of school on the other two. The school is currently preparing to convert to an academy and join the Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT).

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

- Outstanding Christian leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher, supported by the dedicated staff team and strong governance, means that the Christian ethos is paramount.
- The school is an exceptional community, confident in its Christian distinctiveness and modelling unity and inclusivity. Everyone is known well and cared for deeply. The culture of supporting others is fundamental so that Christian hospitality is experienced by all who encounter the school.
- A belief in celebrating the God-given value of each child inspires excellent pastoral care. This promotes pupils' self-esteem, impeccable behaviour, respect for others and love of learning.
- A rich and exciting curriculum, incorporating the golden threads of Christian values, creativity and emotional intelligence secures the school's aspiration that each child 'is able to shine'. Pupils expect to serve the good of the community while at school and the wider world when they are older.

#### Areas to improve

- Ensure the Christian ethos and character evolves as the school's status changes to embrace the new opportunities for leadership, collaboration and service within CDAT.
- Develop further the role of pupils in planning, designing, leading and evaluating collective worship to enhance their spiritual understanding and leadership skills.

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

Wybunbury Delves is a small school with a big heart. It is a happy place in which to learn, grow and thrive. Everyone is engaged in its vision to be a 'school community where each child experiences a love of learning and of life and is able to shine'. The school aims, which are expressed as a prayer, are supported by eight core Christian values. They were chosen by the whole school community and are woven through every aspect of its life. Pupils understand that the values and aims are modelled on the person of Jesus and rooted in the language of the New Testament. They are a topic of conversation at home and parents recognise that the core values permeate the school ensuring that each child is celebrated as an individual. Pupils can explain the positive effect of the values and what they have learnt from worship and Bible stories on their attitudes and behaviour. They also say they feel safe and loved in school. A Year 6 boy remarked, 'We feel at home and accepted here, it is more like a family than a school.' Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their above-average attendance.

All pupils are known very well. As a result of the emphasis on belonging together, the behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are mature, very keen to learn and extremely respectful towards adults and one another. The school's nurturing and vibrant culture is highly conducive to learning and its Christian ethos enhances outcomes. The mood is calm but pupils buzz with enthusiasm. Purposeful activity, aspiration and high expectations are combined with extensive support and impressive individual care, which for the most vulnerable pupils is transformational. As a consequence, all pupils become increasingly effective learners to make consistently good or better progress from their different starting points. The standards of attainment are high and often significantly above local and national averages.

Being enabled to shine, however, is more than a focus on academic success – it is a challenge to fullness of life for each individual and to be a blessing to others. Consequently, this is a community which lives well together in the light of Jesus. Relationships are excellent. Throughout the school, pupils work and learn collaboratively displaying much kindness, courtesy and mutual support. They show compassion in the way they speak about other children's needs and in their willingness to befriend and help them. Older pupils care for younger ones in the playground and around school. This buddy system has a positive impact on the self-esteem of both groups.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is promoted strongly in religious education (RE), worship and the wider curriculum. Pupils respond well and are able to express their ideas about faith and its influence in their own lives with increasing confidence and spiritual maturity. High quality interactive worship points in classrooms and ethos and values displays in public areas prompt pupils' engagement and their spiritual and moral development. They have a strong sense of what is right and wrong. The work of the enthusiastic eco team is inspired by and promotes a sense of stewardship for creation and service to the community. Pupils organise charity fund raising, many linking this to the Christian values of kindness and love. The active link with Kaiyaba Christian school in Kenya enables pupils to understand Christianity as a multi-cultural global faith. Their study of Christianity and a range of world faiths in RE gives them a strong understanding of different religions, cultural diversity and shared values.

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

Worship is integral to the Christian character and life of the school. Imagination and creativity make it engaging, affirming and memorable for all. Pupils and adults alike speak about the inspiration, challenge and strength it provides. Worship themes are based on Christian values, Bible teaching, religious festivals and the church's year. Pupils are introduced to Anglican practice in school and church through a variety of greetings, prayers, readings, songs and the structure of worship. The liturgical colours on the school worship table help pupils understand the cycle of the church's year.

Pupils say that school worship and seasonal celebrations of festivals in church are thought provoking, build their faith or help them to think more deeply about what it means to be Christian. They approach worship with quiet anticipation. The contribution of music is particularly valued because it sets the tone for their thoughtful engagement. Pupils also sing joyfully with gusto which they say lifts their spirits as they praise God. Opportunities for silence and thoughtful reflection are incorporated. A Year 6 boy, for example, spoke movingly to the whole school about the resurrection of Jesus being 'like a fan of hope to blow away the fog of darkness and doubt'. Similarly, a Year 5 girl described discipleship as 'following in the footsteps of Jesus'. Prayerful consideration of global issues and current affairs is also included. Thus, through worship, a Christian perspective on the modern world is permeating pupils' developing thinking. Cross-curricular links mean that opportunities for reflection and response are extended beyond set worship times.

Pupils value the school's deeply embedded culture of prayer and contemplation. They explain that prayer, 'our one-to-one with God', in the words of a Year 5 girl, enables them to give thanks to God, say sorry and think about the needs of others as well as their own worries. They enjoy writing and contributing prayers to worship by using the prayer shed, interactive prayer wall or classroom resources. Worship enables pupils to develop an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit through the symbols on the worship table, the choice of prayers and songs and the themes included in the planning cycle. The leading of worship by Canon Helen and also by the Open the Book group deepens the spiritual experience of pupils. Pupils plan and lead worship regularly. The need to create more opportunities for them to do so is identified in the school's monitoring and evaluation. .

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

A high priority is given to RE as a core subject and all understand its importance in a church school. It is very well led and managed by the highly effective subject leader. Teachers share her vision of RE as a lifelong journey of spiritual discovery in which matters of faith, belief and meaning are encountered and explored. Pupils are encouraged to engage, reflect and become wise question askers. Thus they make links between the religious material they are investigating and their own lives which contributes greatly to their spiritual and emotional development. Pupils enjoy RE, are inspired to learn and achieve exceptionally well. This is evidenced in class portfolios, lesson observation and pupils' study books which are of exceptional quality. The school is regarded by the diocese and at a national level as a centre of excellent practice in RE teaching, learning and assessment. School data shows that RE teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. As a result, pupils' attainment and progress are at least in line with national expectations. The content of lessons is rich and varied. Using drama, art, craft, music and technology ensures pupils are imaginative in their creative responses. Standards are monitored and evaluated rigorously. Teaching in RE enables pupils to learn about and from religion and ponder on new experiences and knowledge. Links with the school values and pupils' SMSC development are explicitly planned for and taught. Pupils are confident to make these connections and apply the skills of enquiry, analysis and interpretation. Their teachers are adept at asking challenging questions and facilitating discussion to deepen learning. One Year 6 boy explained that in RE 'our thinking is pushed to the limit'. Teachers and their assistants work as a team. This is well planned and enriches the pupils' collaborative learning, which in turn promotes the skills of listening and empathy. Pupils have a strong knowledge of Christianity. The study of other faiths is provided for well, including through an annual inter-faith week and visits to places of worship. Thus, pupils are able to make comparisons between beliefs, practices and value systems across a range of religions.

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

The school's mission statement and core Christian values inform leadership and management. The headteacher, her deputy and the staff live out and promote a Christian vision which illuminates all aspects of school life. The headteacher's deep personal faith underpins her exceptional servant leadership. Teamwork is strong. Thorough and insightful self-evaluation is effective in informing the school's priorities as a church school. These are reflected in the school development plan at a strategic level and key policies refer to Christian values. Governors are dedicated, vigilant and have a strong presence in school. They know the school well and are effective in offering robust challenge and generous support which is enhancing the effectiveness of leadership in school improvement. Governors, with the headteacher, are leading the school's conversion to an academy adroitly. They are mindful of the need to retain its unique signature of Christian distinctiveness - the so-called 'Wybunbury way' - in the change process. Governors ensure that collective worship and RE are well resourced and retain a high profile. The RE subject leader coordinates worship planning, monitoring and evaluation very effectively. The area identified as needing improvement at the last SIAMS inspection has been successfully addressed. The culture of distributed leadership, trust and teamwork means that pupils are allocated responsibilities. All Year 6 pupils relish the roles they play as monitors, buddies, councillors or representatives. This delegation fosters their confidence, leadership abilities and commitment to the school's aims.

Links with the parish church represent a strong alliance. This influences the school's life and inspires its service at the heart of the community. It brings the church into contact with all the children and their families. Church groups use the school building and school worship, celebrations and RE lessons take place in church. The development of Christian leadership is receiving attention. The induction and ongoing support of new governors and staff into a church school is effective. Reception parents are introduced through Messy Church. The school has beneficial links with the diocese, local authority and its partner schools. Governors, leaders and teachers say this professional development enhances their expertise and effectiveness. The school knows the pupils and their families very well, supporting those in need through a culture of Christian nurturing. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and full of admiration and gratitude for what the school is achieving. They see that their children's happiness and success are rooted in its Christ-centred ethos and character.

SIAMS report April 2017, Wybunbury Delves CE Primary School, Wybunbury, Nantwich CW5 7NE