

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

### Wallsend St. Peter's Church of England Primary School

North Terrace, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, NE28 6PY

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Good**

**Diocese**

**Newcastle**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Local authority

North Tyneside

Date of inspection

9 July 2018

Date of last inspection

19 September 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

108626

Acting Headteacher

Elizabeth Bilton

Inspector's name and number

Alan Baker 903

#### School context

St Peter's C of E Primary School is of average size, with 196 on roll plus 26 children in Nursery. It serves an urban, socially disadvantaged area of North Tyneside. Pupils from backgrounds of social deprivation are in the top 20% nationally. Pupils in receipt of free school meals is above the national average. Pupils with special educational needs are also significantly above average. Those from minority ethnic backgrounds and with English as an additional language have risen significantly to 23% and 18% respectively. Staff changes have been frequent and the school currently has internal acting head and deputy head teachers.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wallsend St. Peter's as a Church of England school are good

- Leaders of the school articulate and model a vast range of Christian values which impact positively on the thoughts and actions of pupils.
- Strong and beneficial partnerships exist with the church offering an environment of Christian growth and development.
- The Christian character of the school supports an inclusive, respectful environment where children can fulfil their potential.
- Each pupils is given great value as a child of God and they appreciate the opportunities they receive and the care they are given.
- Religious education (RE) supports pupils' knowledge of Christianity as a multicultural world faith and gives them a strong respect for cultural and religious diversity.

#### Areas to improve

- Increase opportunities for personal prayer as a tool for emotional support and spiritual development.
- Build on pupil enthusiasm to offer further child leadership of worship so that pupils build strong relationships and a growing personal spirituality.
- Make more extensive use of parental and pupil voice to influence the direction of the school.
- Support the new RE coordinator in the development of the RE curriculum in order to develop creative recording and consistent marking systems.

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

A large and varied range of Christian values are lived out by the whole school community having significant impact on the Christian character of the school. Pupils demonstrate love, care, compassion, thankfulness, friendship and service for others in abundance and are clear in their understanding of the purpose and impact of the each value. The impressive working environment, which these values create, ensures improvement in pupils' attainment and achievement. The high proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals often work in-line with or ahead of their peers. The behaviour of pupils is excellent and they enjoy coming to school. Parents clearly link this to the ability of their children to reflect upon their actions and take guidance from the Christian character of the school. One parent discussed how the values which guide pupils' actions in school are 'a constant part of my child's everyday language'. Because so many Christian values, such as forgiveness and honesty, are of such great importance, relationships across school are able to flourish. All members of the community are keen to celebrate the warmth and love which all who enter the school receive. Higher than average absence figures are improving due to the supportive and inclusive actions taken by the school. Leaders determination to serve the needs of the community has led to breakfast clubs, weekly attendance 'reward shops' and local authority supported meetings which are slowly supporting families in need, to engage with the school. The impact of these positive steps were clear to a parent who felt the systems meant her daughter had a renewed determination to not miss a day of school. All pupils enthuse about the opportunities to spot and reward Christian values in other pupils. This has created a school where pupils show great empathy for each other and are proud of the community they have created. Staff see the impact this had on the positive relationships between pupils and their empathy towards members of the school and outside community. Classroom reflective areas display a range of prayers and Christian guidance, as well as links to other religions. This supports pupils understanding and awareness of their own spirituality and their place in a multicultural world where pupils were clear that 'every single one of us is just as important as the other'. Older pupils shared with pride the reflection book which allowed them to articulate their thoughts and concerns, through prayer and poetry. These opportunities for reflection, combined with the 'big questions' which are evident in all RE books, are allowing staff and pupils to articulate and understand the positive impact of the curriculum on their social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) development. Work in RE equally stimulates a great respect in pupils for other religions and the diversity of the wider world community. Similarities and differences between Christianity and many other faiths, particularly as part of 'Multi faith week', are investigated and this strengthens pupils understanding of the world as a multi-faith society.

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

Collective worship is an important part of the school day and has a positive impact on the whole school community. It is rooted in Christian values and biblical teaching. Collective worship has a clear structure, ensuring that all worship includes key Christian elements such as prayer, song and a Bible story linked to a theme. Pupils say that collective worship helps them gain a deeper understanding of their core values. It was clear to one pupil that 'hearing about people in the Bible being honest makes it more obvious when we see someone in school being honest'. The weekly, values based, rewards worship helps even the youngest pupils cement their understanding of the importance of showing Christian values in their life. All staff attend worship and are supported to deliver worship at different levels. Staff see the many positives which values based worship brings to the behaviour and attitude of the children they teach. Pupils' respond positively to adult led prayer and occasional opportunities for spiritual development through times of quiet reflection in worship. Personal prayers, although visible around school, are not regularly shared in worship. There are opportunities for shared prayers at set times in the school day and reflection through written responses to worship, however there are fewer occasions for pupils to engage with private prayer and reflection. Close relationships with St. Peter's Church, clergy and the diocese give strength to worship planning and delivery. Great enthusiasm is shown for this fortnightly mass, where confirmed pupils receive Eucharist alongside church members, and reflects the close link generated with the clergy and congregation of the church. This deepens respect and knowledge of how Christians worship where pupils 'love the quietness and calmness of being in our church'. These impressive links offer families regular opportunities to grow in their personal spirituality and a path towards Christianity. The growing number of christenings and confirmations of pupils, and their family members, are a clear result of these joint worship experiences. Pupils also enjoy the leadership and serving roles which are available in the church services and show enthusiasm to continue this leadership in school based worship. High quality worship is evident and monitoring is beginning to highlight areas of strength. Modelling of worship by school leaders and members of the church support all teachers to deliver worship. Pupils have a strong knowledge of the Christian calendar and Anglican traditions. They demonstrate a good understanding of the person of Jesus Christ and of God the Father, with recent work on the Holy Spirit now supporting pupils to articulate the Trinitarian nature of Christianity.

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

Children are enthusiastic about RE and understand its relevance to their own lives. Many view its importance in line with literacy meaning effort and standards are comparable in the quantity and quality of their work. Adoption of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource is developing a more enquiry-based approach. This, in turn, is creating more critical thinking, analysis and discussion, based in far more creative and inspirational lessons.

The subject supports pupils to listen to and respect each other's points of view. Consequently, RE makes a good impact on the skills and attitudes of learners. Pupils and teachers are adept at linking learning to their own Christian values, allowing studies in RE to support SMSC development in even the youngest children. A reception pupil linked the 'bug house' they were building to his need to 'look after little bugs because God made them'. The RE curriculum enables pupils to learn about and learn from Christianity and other major world religions. They speak with confidence about the key aspects of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and several other religions. 'We know that different religions believe different things, but all that is important is how good a person you are', were the thoughts of one group of pupils in particular. This multi-faith learning enhances pupils' understanding of and respect for diversity in a school with an increasingly diverse population. Pupils, staff and parents clearly shared a view that each person is of equal and significant importance, no matter what their heritage or religion. The headteacher has a clear vision for RE. She works in partnership with diocesan advisors to carefully moderate teaching and learning, with RE teaching across the school now being at least good. RE books show that children value RE and achieve well. Attainment and progress in RE is in line with other core subjects. Effective strategies, including pupil tracking and systems for assessment, are in place, with development already begun to ensure accurate assessment of the new school RE curriculum. The knowledge and vision of the headteacher, guided closely by the diocese, has created a positive climate of support in preparation for the newly appointed subject leader to continue to develop the subject in the new academic year.

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

The school's vision, to give pupils 'firm foundations for their future life' is built on a solid platform of Christian values. Pupils' clarity in understanding of the value of reconciliation clearly suggests that leaders of the school cleverly develop and model values that are relevant to support flourishing relationships. The headteacher, and other leaders of the school, exemplify the values which shape their school and pupils and parents appreciate the supportive and caring atmosphere this creates. Every member of the school family is valued and encouraged to be the best they can be. Leaders are driven to offer an experience based curriculum to 'give pupils opportunities which enthuse and inspire them'. Pupils enjoy visits in the local community and further afield which give them enriched experiences and raised aspirations. The school's distinctive Christian character has supported its members through recent times of adversity and staff are quick to point to the fact that the strong Christian ethos has been a pillar of support and a driving force for change. Several newly appointed senior leaders have been promoted from within the organisation, pointing to a powerful growth culture for future church school leadership. Several new and more long serving governors, including a high proportion of foundation governors, work hard to ensure that the Christian character of the school remains the focus in all decisions taken. They point to the supportive and guiding role which prayer takes in their decisions and speak with sincerity of offering 'their actions up to God' when tough decisions have been needed. They challenge and support the work of the school effectively and have addressed development points from the previous inspection. Governors visit regularly, meeting staff and pupils to participate in learning walks and RE book scrutiny. Feedback informs school development planning and leads directly to improvements, particularly in the development of teaching staff, which impacts positively on pupil outcomes. Recent school self-evaluation has been thorough and accurate and ensures that church school issues are prioritised within whole school improvement planning. However, although parental and pupil views have been sought recently, they are not regularly engaged in the process. This means that opportunities to develop the Christian character of the school are missed, as not all parents fully understand the relevance of being a church school on the education of their children. Leaders have worked hard to draw relevant support to develop a new RE curriculum and continue to give high importance to worship, particularly with support of the two governor members of the clergy. RE and worship meet statutory requirements. As a result, collective worship and RE make a significant contribution to pupils' SMSC and to the school's Christian distinctive character. The school makes very effective use of partnerships with the diocese, other local schools and the Christian community. Governors and staff benefit from diocesan support, which has led directly to improvements in RE and the development of the school's Christian character and governance.