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22 December 2016

Dear Parent / Carer

SIAMS Inspection Outstanding in all Areas

Please find attached a copy of our recent SIAMS inspection. This inspection focuses upon faith within our school, what makes us a distinctive Christian school, the leadership and management of our school and the teaching and assessment of Religious Education. Once again the inspection outcome is Outstanding in all areas.

Many people have contributed to the success of this inspection – Miss Wilkinson has tirelessly given of her time, our Vicar, Mrs Gibson, Mrs Cooke, Mr Rigby, Miss Fletcher, Mrs Rigby and Mrs Vernazza to name but a few. As a staff we will continue to strive to ensure that we educate your children in a Christ-centred environment.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very peaceful Christmas.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A E Jackson

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Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Paul's Church of England Primary School	
Warrington Road, Goose Green, Wigan, WN3 62B	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Liverpool
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Wigan
Date of inspection	15 December 2016
Date of last inspection	3 October 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	VA106453
Headteacher	Alison Jackson
Inspector's name and number	Lisa Horobin

School context

St Paul's is a smaller than average aided primary school with 207 pupils on roll. The school is situated in a suburban area of Wigan. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and live in the local area. The quality of outcomes for learners is good. The number of pupils entitled to pupil premium is low. The percentage of SEND pupils is above average. Due to various issues relating to staffing there are at present three supply teachers in school. The headteacher is covering the position of religious education co-ordinator. Since the last inspection the governing body has been reconstituted.

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

- The passionate and distinctly Christian leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by dedicated staff and governors, inspires all aspects of school improvement. This has a direct and positive effect on the wellbeing of the school community.
- Christian values are lived out across the school in all aspects of daily life and decision making. This is demonstrated through pupils' exemplary behaviour, relationships between all stakeholders and the content of collective worship.
- The strong links between the school, church and local community are vibrant and dynamic. They have a significant impact on the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Pupils and staff pray with confidence and in a variety of circumstances. As a result prayer is an integral and natural feature of school life.

Areas to improve

- Extend the religious education (RE) curriculum in order to develop further pupils' knowledge and understanding of faiths other than Christianity.
- Review policies to ensure that the mission statement and school practice are reflected more clearly in documentation.
- Broaden pupils' view of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith in order to enrich and extend their knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs.

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

The school benefits from inspirational and supportive leadership that is deeply rooted in a distinct Christian vision. This ensures that the school is continually improving and outcomes for pupils are at the highest possible levels. All members of the school community enthusiastically talk about the Christian characteristics and values of the school. The school's mission statement 'Learning and Living through Jesus Christ' is fully lived out and evident from the moment you enter the school. Pupils are polite, well behaved and very proud of the Christian character of their school. Pupils commented that 'God is in this school' and 'we follow in Jesus' footsteps'. They are very eager to share their knowledge and understanding of Christian values and the ways in which the school community puts them into action. 'When we fall out we get back together and forgive each other.' The recognition of values in action during the weekly celebration assembly is of utmost importance to the pupils and staff.

The school environment reflects the prominence that the school places on the SMSC development of the children. Amazing art projects, charity fundraising, prayer corners, vegetable plots, Eco club and a successful choir are celebrated and promoted. The members of the school council recalled many instances when the school leadership has responded to their ideas such as the introduction of play leaders and walking week. Pupils and parents comment that the curriculum and learning opportunities offered to the children raise aspirations and give them the confidence to take on responsibilities. After a short training course pupils are qualified to become peer mentors giving advice and help to fellow pupils in need.

Attendance is above national expectations. Parents expressed the view that their children are happy to come to school and feel safe and valued.

RE is creative and challenging, playing a significant role in enhancing pupils' sound knowledge of Christianity. Pupils now need to increase their awareness of diversity within Christianity and their understanding that it is a worldwide faith.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Planning is detailed but still allows for spontaneity and response to events. The responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship is shared by a range of stakeholders including pupils. 'Worship is important because it is when we welcome God into the room and learn new things.' Members of the school ethos committee are very proud of the contributions they make to ensure that worship is central to the life of the school. 'We encourage everyone to use the prayer corners.' The children are extremely proud of the outdoor worship area and describe with enthusiasm the prayer spaces activity days. These events take place three times a year. Displays and pupils' attitudes clearly demonstrate the huge impact these occasions have on pupils' understanding of prayer and its place in the life of a person with faith.

The school accurately describes worship and prayer as 'the cement holding everything together'. Worship is integral to all aspects of school life. The school's values displayed on the walls are visible in the behaviour and reactions of the school community to the ordinary and extraordinary events of life. The children recalled praying for the bereaved people of Paris and for their hope for the new school year. Collective worship provides an inspirational spring board that develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Biblical source of the values that they put into action. There are opportunities for pupils and staff to have moments of personal prayer throughout the day. In each classroom there are interactive prayer displays linked to Gospel values. Pupils are encouraged to have an attitude of thankfulness which they explain balances the view of today's society that 'stuff' makes you happy.

The children are confident when speaking about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The ethos committee consider it to be their job 'to spread the Holy Spirit around school'. One pupil commented quite naturally that 'God is involved in all our lives'.

The local vicar Neil regularly leads worship which he concludes with a blessing. He invites the whole school to raise their hands and reach out to pray for one another. This demonstrates that this school is an authentic worshipping community living out the whole school value of koinonia. Their relationship with Neil and James, a past pupil and vicar in training, is one of respectful friendship. An appropriate atmosphere is created daily for worship and pupils have high expectations of content and participate fully in a variety of ways. Pupils give thoughtful responses to challenging questions that illustrate the depth of their spiritual development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education is recognised by the school leadership as making a substantial contribution to the Christian character of the school and holds a high profile in the school curriculum. The RE coordinator regularly reports to the governing body who take seriously their responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning in RE. The RE coordinator has attended diocesan training and been given opportunity to feedback to staff. Monitoring through lesson observations and workbook scrutiny show that standards have improved and teaching is always at least good.

Rigorous and detailed assessment records demonstrate a high level of achievement and progression across the school. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their learning and can make links between the curriculum content and their own experiences. In RE lessons pupils are asked challenging questions and given time to reflect before answering. Marking comments also contribute to deepening pupils' understanding and their spiritual development. Workbooks and scrapbooks demonstrate that a variety of activities and multi-sensory encounters are planned by teachers and described by pupils as 'fun' and 'helping us to understand how the world works'.

RE links to the pupils' understanding of Christian values and their Biblical knowledge is sound. They are able to connect Biblical teaching to the school's values and the golden rule 'treat others as you would like to be treated'. They recalled their 'Walk through the Bible' experience as brilliant. Pupils were eager to stress that they understand the true meaning of Christmas and work in their RE books supported this.

At present pupils have limited experience of studying faiths other than Christianity. Exploring the celebration of festivals and visits to the local mosque and synagogue has given them an awareness of the faith of others, however the RE curriculum now needs to be extended further to strengthen understanding.

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

The inspirational and dedicated leadership of the headteacher directly impacts on the spiritual and practical day to day running of the school. Members of the senior leadership team and governing body clearly articulate the Christian vision of the school which is firmly rooted in Biblical teaching. All decision making is underpinned by prayer and the school's Christian values.

Governors have a thorough knowledge of the school's effectiveness and performance which leads to accurate self-evaluation that drives the school forward. Despite difficult issues with regard to staffing the leadership of the school has been able to maintain standards and ensure that the flourishing of each child has remained paramount.

Relationships with parents are excellent and they say that they always feel welcome in school. One parent commented 'I feel really proud that my children come to this school.' Others emphasised that St Paul's is a very special school where everyone is loved. 'We are all part of a large family.' Parents feel very involved in the life of the school and speak of being 'one with the church' recalling the Easter and Christmas Experiences hosted by the church as having had an impact on family life.

The relationship with the parish church and local community is mutually beneficial and has been recognised by the Diocese through the presentation of two Church School Partnership awards. The Soul Jam and drop-in clubs, Youth Alpha and services in church fulfil the vision of both church and school to make sure that 'the Kingdom spills out beyond the walls of the church'. The pupils speak with zeal about these activities and a real sense of belonging to the life of the church. The voluntary faith advocate works tirelessly as a bridge between school and church and she is central to the planning of the prayer space activity days. The recent appointment of a teaching assistant with responsibility for enhancing the ethos and Christian character of the school demonstrates the school's wholehearted commitment to pupils' spiritual development.

Although the living out of the school's mission statement is evident through exceptional school practice the policy documents do not, in several cases, indicate this. Therefore, a review of the school's policies in the light of the mission statement would ensure that these documents truly reflect school practice.

SIAMS report December 2016 St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Goose Green, Wigan WN3 62B