

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

<b>St Aidan's Church of England Primary School Billinge</b>			
<b>Address</b>	London Fields, Billinge, Wigan, Lancashire WN5 7LS		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	7 March 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Voluntary Aided Primary School
<b>Diocese</b>	Liverpool	<b>URN</b>	104798

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
<b>Additional Judgements</b>		
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

<b>School context</b>
St Aidan's is a primary school with 208 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The headteacher is longstanding. A part-time chaplain was appointed in September 2018 to work in the school.
<b>The school's Christian vision</b>
A school of Hope...small enough to care; big enough to inspire 'Let your light shine'. Matthew 5:16
<b>Key findings</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's loving and nurturing ethos is underpinned by their Christian vision 'Let your light shine'. This is rooted in the Bible and is well understood by all. Exceptionally personalised care for vulnerable pupils ensures that all flourish.</li> <li>School leaders understand the needs of the community extremely well. Pupils and staff live out the school's Christian vision and values. The school provides strong support for the social and emotional wellbeing of pupils and adults.</li> <li>The local Church is having a positive impact on the development of collective worship. Worship provides strong support for spiritual development through rich opportunities for prayer and reflection.</li> <li>Effective teaching in RE results in pupils gaining a clear understanding of important Christian beliefs and of a range of other world faiths. However, assessment systems do not effectively track and support progress.</li> </ul>
<b>Areas for development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrich, further embed and share the school's Christian vision and values so that the wider school community understand their biblical roots.</li> <li>Further develop assessment in RE, including the use of feedback focused on supporting progress in RE related skills. This is so that assessment effectively supports pupils' progress.</li> <li>Further develop pupils and staff as leaders of worship. This is so that a wider range of worship leaders are supported in leading worship effectively.</li> </ul>

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### Inspection findings

St Aidan's values each pupil as an individual. The school offers nurturing support to all within its caring Christian ethos. Their Christian vision incorporates the biblical text, 'Let your light shine,' Matthew 5:16. The desire to enable every pupil's unique light to shine drives forward the work of the school. All members of the school community confidently talk about the importance of their Christian values. They are able to talk about how they help them to show respect and care for each other. However, they are less able to link Christian values to their roots in the Bible. Teachers have ambitious expectations for all pupils, including their personal achievements, which inspire them to aim high. Because staff are committed to enabling every pupil to shine, pupils achieve well by the end of Key Stage 2. Learning is extremely well tailored to meet particular needs, including those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Christian vision is well established. However, not all policies currently reflect the Christian vision. The addition to the vision of, 'A school of Hope,' has a deep and profound meaning for the school. It is reflected in the work that the school does in supporting vulnerable pupils and their families within the community. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of everything provided by the school. A parent described the school as a 'family' and 'bursting with love.' The school supports vulnerable pupils exceptionally well and secures the dignity of all pupils. This means that all are able to flourish. A parent explained, 'Every child counts and is made to feel special.'

School leaders place significance on supporting the wellbeing of all. This is valued by both the school and church communities. Because the school wants every person to flourish as a child of God, it carefully structures support for emotional health and wellbeing. It provides targeted support through activities such as art therapy. It also offers support for all through the wellbeing 'drop-in' sessions. These are run by the recently appointed part-time chaplain, who has also further enhanced the opportunities for spiritual growth for both pupils and adults. Hope's Garden is a special place for the whole school community. It is valued as a place set aside for personal reflection and prayer. Invitational prayer and reflection are integral to school life. Many pupils are keen to write and share their own prayers through the chatterbox prayer group. One pupil commented, 'It makes me happy because I'm praying for others.'

Pupils are enthusiastic about RE. It is a high priority for the school. However, RE assessment systems do not fully support teachers in determining the progress pupils are making. Pupils have a good understanding of different world faiths with a wide range of faiths studied across the school. Inter-faith weeks are appreciated by both parents and pupils. These weeks support learning and provide pupils with an opportunity to talk about their own faith and its traditions. The use of the locally agreed RE syllabus is enhanced by the 'Understanding Christianity' learning resources. These materials support pupils in understanding key Christian concepts. Pupils in Year 6 have expressed their interpretation of these beliefs in the beautiful artwork covering the 'big story' of the Bible.

Staff know that they are supported personally and professionally, at all levels. Induction processes ensure that all staff and governors are equipped for working in a church school. RE training is given high priority. Staff have recently been supported by the diocese to enable them to teach the updated RE curriculum effectively. However, there has been no recent training regarding collective worship to support staff in leadership of collective worship. Governors are fully involved in the process of evaluating the school as a church school. They regularly receive reports about collective worship and RE. They also complete shared learning walks with leaders. This helps them to evaluate the effectiveness of the school as a church school. Governors ensure that senior and middle leaders are provided with opportunities to explore leadership within a church school through training.

Links with the local Church community are increasingly strong and very supportive. Many pupils and parents speaking positively of the monthly Church family service that is held in the school and led by the Church. Many pupils value class worship where they learn about worldwide issues and are provided with opportunities to pray. The school appreciates the contribution made by members of the local parish church worship team. This team works with pupils to evaluate worship. This is positively impacting on the involvement of these pupils in the planning of worship. However, there are limited opportunities for other pupils across the school community to contribute to worship planning and delivery. Worship in Church provides rich experiences. This, and celebration of the Eucharist in school, means that pupils have a good understanding of Anglican traditions. Pupils speak knowledgeably

about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explain important Christian beliefs with understanding. The school inspires others through the lead role they take in the diocesan bereavement working party, supporting other local church schools.

Pupils live out the school's core values in the care and respect that they show for each other. Adults model Christian values. Pupils aspire to live their lives by these values. As a result, standards of behaviour are very high, with forgiveness and reconciliation accepted as common practice. Pupils try hard in all that they do. They talk about their desire to try their best and how they are encouraged to learn from their mistakes. Staff are ready to support and resolve bullying issues if they arise. This means that bullying is almost unknown at the school. Fundraising for charities encourages service and an understanding of the need to act where there are inequalities in the world. Pupils speak passionately about the difference they can make by raising money to support others. Some pupils have challenged injustice through personally raising money for charities that they have learnt about through school. Pupils are provided with opportunities to ask questions throughout the wider curriculum. They discuss worldwide issues, share different viewpoints and learn to disagree well. Pupils develop their understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith through fundraising involvement with Jeel al Amal School which is based in Israel. The school is looking to develop this partnership as it looks to the future.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Learning activities are well-planned to create lively, imaginative lessons. RE lessons offer pupils the opportunity to ask and answer searching questions which promote good pupil progress. Most pupils make good progress. Teachers plan work for different needs well, helping pupils to be supported and challenged in their learning. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning. Monitoring of RE takes place and this makes a good contribution to improving standards.

Headteacher	Melanie Ravenscroft
Inspector's name and number	Rachel Pimblett