



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Hampton Dene Road,
Tupsley
Hereford
HR1 1UX

Diocese: Hereford

Local authority: Herefordshire

Dates of inspection: 9th June 2014

Date of last inspection: 4th April 2009

School's unique reference number: 116886

Headteacher: Mr A Teale

Inspector's name and number: Sue Blackburn 756

School context

St Paul's is a larger than average primary school which is one of two in the parish of St Paul's of Tupsley. There are 426 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are white British from Christian families. There are few pupils who are entitled to pupil premium funding and a minority of pupils of other faiths. The school converted to become an academy in March 2012.

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

St Paul's is a successful school where children are nurtured and achieve exceptionally well. Christian values are fully embedded throughout the school. The head teacher and governors together provide strong leadership and have high expectations of all staff and pupils. There are outstanding links with the church and clergy who are closely involved in the life of the school.

Established Strengths

- The outstanding Christian ethos and vision led by the head teacher and governors which are central to the school.
- Excellent relationships and exceptional behaviour of the pupils who exemplify Christian values.
- High quality acts of worship, clearly founded on Anglican traditions that contribute well to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure pupils have consistent opportunities to respond to marking to further enhance their learning and understanding of key ideas in religious education.
- Provide pupils with opportunities to visit places of non Christian worship in order to

broaden their understanding of the multi-cultural nature of modern society.

- Use pupils' reflections as a basis to evaluate and improve collective worship.

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

The school's mission statement and practice makes it explicit that Christian values are central to the work of the school and this has a significant impact on academic and personal development. One parent commented, 'Christianity and faith is something that can make a difference to your life. The school is a beacon for faith.' Standards and achievement of all pupils are high. Behaviour of pupils is outstanding and reflects gospel values. There is a high priority placed on anti-bullying and, as a result, pupils say they are safe and valued. Pupils commented that the 'worry box' provides an effective way of handling any personal concerns and positively contributes to their wellbeing. Parents say they are able to speak to a teacher if they have a problem and that everyone is approachable. Positive relationships reflect the Christian ethos of the school and parents believe the school brings out all pupils' qualities whether academic or otherwise. There is an excellent range of opportunities to support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Parents and pupils talked enthusiastically about the impact of the recent multi-faith day where Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to speak with children from Hindu, Sikh, Muslim and Jewish faiths. The healthy debate enabled pupils to gain an in depth understanding of a range of beliefs. Currently there are no opportunities to visit other places of non-Christian worship to build on this understanding. The vibrant displays around the school reflect the Christian ethos of the school. One display on the theme of 'Where is God?' provided opportunities for pupils to write reflective responses. The value of the month, 'Trust' was clearly promoted throughout the school and articulated by pupils. Religious Education (RE) makes a significant contribution to the Christian character of the school. 'The RE and Worship Survey' clearly reflects the extent to which pupils are excited by and engaged in RE. They comment that they enjoy RE lessons and that 'They help me answer or at least consider carefully, some of life's big questions'. Parents commented about the beautiful way in which their children are taught about Jesus. Recently the school personalised the story of Easter and parents commented that this develops empathy and understanding in their children. Pupils are happy and well cared for as a result of the personalised approach taken by the school to gain the maximum benefits for all pupils.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The school places a high priority on daily collective worship. Pupils are engaged, aware of the church year and knowledgeable about Christian beliefs. The weekly church based service founded on strong Anglican practice provides pupils with an understanding of Christian traditions. This is usually led by the clergy. During the inspection 'The day of Pentecost' was the focus for collective worship. Pupils responded to the greeting and prayer in a thoughtful and reflective manner and the animation, selected to reinforce the Bible reading, enhanced their understanding. The quality of singing was exceptional due to the high importance the school places on participation and planning is based on the quality of the music tuition. Worship is clearly linked to Christian values and to the teachings of Jesus. Children enjoy collective worship and the opportunities to lead whole school and class collective worship. Collective worship planning is based on the lectionary and pupils' views on worship are sought and recorded. Currently this is not being used as a way of evaluating collective worship in order to secure improvement. Parents and members of the community have opportunities to participate in and witness a variety of worship both in school and St Paul's church. This has inspired families to become regular members of the church.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The school places high importance on RE in development planning which contributes to the outstanding teaching observed during the inspection. This was very creatively planned and pupils were highly motivated, writing high quality reflective responses to the quotations they were exploring on the theme of 'What does it mean to shine?' Attainment is high and at least in line with other subjects. Pupils say they enjoy RE lessons and particularly the range of activities offered and variety of ways they are encouraged to record their responses. Year 6 pupils are taught RE by the vicar in the first half term as a pre-confirmation programme. Pupils say this has aided their understanding of Christianity. Pupils' work is marked in line with the school's marking policy and teachers have written very thought provoking comments to make pupils think and reflect more deeply on their understanding. There were many instances where time had not been given to children to follow up suggestions or questions, limiting the impact of this marking. Some pupils felt they were insufficiently challenged in some RE lessons. The development of the new Church School council provides an increased opportunity for foundation governors to monitor standards in RE.

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

School leaders have a clear vision which is effectively shared with all members of the school community. Partnerships between the diocese, church and wider community are very strong and mutually beneficial. Standards of achievement are high. The leadership team has implemented a successful approach to improving standards of behaviour, underpinned by clear Christian values, so that they are now outstanding. The school has taken clear and comprehensive actions towards the development points raised from the previous inspection such as joint RE teaching with the clergy and a whole school inset day so that staff are now more confident in teaching RE. The broad, creative curriculum has a very positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. One parent commented that her child had a thorough understanding of humility as a Christian value and how teaching pupils about values impacted positively on daily life across the school. Foundation governors are involved in monitoring and evaluating RE and collective worship and the school has put in place a new Church School Council to widen this role.

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