

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Philip's Church of England VC Primary School, Litherland	
Address	Church Road, Litherland, Liverpool, L21 8NZ
School vision	
'What God has created, we nurture and celebrate in His love', places Jesus as the heartbeat of our school.	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Philip's deeply cherished and embedded Christian vision shapes the life and work of this nurturing and aspirational Church school. The school sits at the heart of its community, embracing and motivating all, enabling pupils and adults to thrive. • The flourishing partnership between the school and its church inspires joint acts of worship that bind different generations together. Regular joint communion services foster the spiritual growth of pupils, adults and families. • Ignited by the school's vision of celebrating life in all its diversity, a tangible culture of equity and inclusion fosters strong relationships. Adults and pupils generously watch over one other with love and acceptance. • Driven by the vision of nurturing all that God has created, pupils have a strong sense of justice and responsibility. Carefully crafted opportunities within the curriculum and collective worship inspire pupils to reflect thoughtfully on global issues. Thus, pupils understand how they can make a positive difference within the world. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a whole-school, shared understanding of spirituality. Use this to plan opportunities across the curriculum that nurture pupils' spiritual development. • Broaden the range of opportunities for pupils to respond individually and spontaneously within the worship life of the school. This is to deepen and enrich the spiritual engagement of all. • Building on current good practice, extend the ways pupils explore their own thinking in religious education (RE). This is to deepen pupils' responses across the school. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>St Philip's is a thriving Church school, serving its local community with love and aspiration. The Christian vision of nurturing and celebrating all that God has created, inspires and sustains everyone at St Philip's. Leaders, including governors, know their community extremely well. They are passionately ambitious in securing the best possible future for everyone. They ensure the school's vision shapes and drives all school priorities. Governors understand their strategic role well and are a visible and supportive presence around the school. Consulting all, leaders insightfully monitor and evaluate their vision's impact, keeping it alive and relevant. The vision is meaningfully lived out through deeply cherished Christian values, which are tangibly woven through all aspects of school</p>	

life. As such, adults and pupils know what it means to place Jesus at the heartbeat of their community. They cherish and look after each other, building confidence, acceptance and self-worth.

The vision of perseverance and nurture underpins an innovative curriculum, driven by the aspiration for every pupil to succeed. Leaders understand the needs of their community very well. They constantly prioritise curriculum development, inspiring confidence and determination in every pupil. Recent priorities, involving developing pupils' thinking, speaking and listening skills, empower pupils to voice their thoughts confidently. Leaders tirelessly promote inclusion. More vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported well. As a result, pupils are active, confident and curious learners. They enjoy school and engage enthusiastically in lessons and the wider life of the community. Inspirational curriculum themes prompt pupils to explore human relationships and life's meaning as they arise. For example, in response to literature, older pupils reflect movingly on feelings of abandonment and loss. However, leaders are at the early stages of developing a whole-school, shared understanding of spirituality. Thus, opportunities that foster pupils' spiritual development are not fully utilised within the school curriculum.

Collective worship is the heartbeat of school life. The whole school community cherishes the daily time to come together to reflect, sing and pray. Leaders creatively marry the school's Christian vision and values, Jesus' teachings and current day issues. Adults and pupils compassionately reflect and pray, for example, for those caught up in global conflict. The school's vision of being made in God's image underpins collective worship themes that inspire spiritual reflection, nurturing feelings of empowerment. 'I can make a difference because God left a spark of His grace in all of us,' said one pupil. Invitational and inclusive, collective worship is enthusiastically led by a range of adults, with meaningful contributions from pupils. This deepens the engagement of all. Popular pupil groups contribute to planning, leading and evaluating worship, prompting improvements. A mutually thriving partnership between the school and local church joyfully nourishes spiritual growth. Several pupils have recently chosen to be baptised and make their first communion in school: an event celebrated by the whole community. The local vicar leads a monthly joint school and church communion service. Pupils and adults value different generations coming together to experience Holy Communion as a single St Philip's community. This fruitful partnership has encouraged several families to become actively involved in church life outside school. Reflection areas around the school encourage pupils to write prayers or thoughts about themes that are important to them. This nourishes the spirituality of those who engage. However, more diverse opportunities that engage all pupils in spontaneous prayer and individual reflection across the school are underdeveloped.

In nurturing and celebrating everyone as God's creation, leaders champion a transformational school culture of equity and love. Highly supportive and trusting relationships bind this aspirational school community together. Leaders prioritise wellbeing. Staff are encouraged and supported professionally, as well as personally. Thus, they are a committed and hopeful team, infusing their pupils with confidence and self-worth. A courageously inclusive curriculum recognises and celebrates diversity in all its forms. Pupils' infectious friendliness and a rich variety of displays around the school illustrate their commitment to upholding individuality. Parents and carers appreciate how leaders and staff positively embrace all families. They give many examples of how staff support them through difficult times with humility and compassion. The school holds the national School of Sanctuary Award in recognition of its inclusive and welcoming culture. As a result, pupils love coming to school. They feel safe and look after each other in friendship and respect.

The school's vision of nurturing all God has created underpins an outward looking community that generously takes responsibility for others. Adults are committed to developing pupils as global citizens. A wealth of themes, explored thoughtfully through the curriculum and collective worship, ensure pupils understand their place in the world. They reflect with empathy on issues arising from

global poverty, war and climate change. For example, in studying people who stood up for others during World War II, pupils recognise that anyone can challenge injustice. Active pupil groups make ethical choices in raising money for chosen charities, including sponsoring a Ghanaian child's schooling. Ongoing school support for the staff of a critical care unit within the local hospital is profoundly rewarding. Pupils and adults treasure the difference they make visiting the hospital with inspiring messages for hospital workers. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how, even young people, can be a positive force for change. For example, they organise projects that bring about improvements within the community, such as road safety and keeping safe online.

RE has a high priority in the school. It is extremely well-led, resulting in an innovative and effective curriculum. A wealth of guidance and training, including through the local diocese, leads to teachers who are confident in their subject knowledge. Lessons build effectively upon each other. As a result, pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a range of world religions and worldviews. RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' appreciation and respect for diversity. They thoughtfully consider themes across religions, such as pilgrimage, and feel safe to give their ideas freely. Where creative teaching approaches use techniques such as drama, music and art to explore themes, pupils reflect and respond more insightfully. For example, immersive experiences within lessons about Pentecost inspire older pupils to explore the nature of the Holy Spirit in Christianity. 'The energy makes you want to sing it from your core. It's so majestic, it can't be explained,' reflected one pupil. This good practice is at the early stages of development across the school.

St Philip's is a loving and generous Church school, deeply treasured by its community. Its heartfelt Christian vision radiates through every aspect of school life, empowering everyone to aspire and flourish.

The inspection findings indicate that St Philip's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	7 November 2023	URN	104898
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	201
Diocese	Liverpool		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Susan Sullivan		
Chair	Laura Broadway		
Inspector	Sue Mawdsley	No.	930