



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Paul's CofE First School, Coven	
Address	School Lane, Coven, Wolverhampton, WV9 5AD
School vision	
<p>Here at St Paul's, we show that we CARE by fostering a Christian community that enables children to flourish, follow in Christ's footsteps, become independent learners, and lovingly respect each other in order to achieve their God-given potential.</p> <p>At St Paul's, we dare to CARE: C – Community A – Aspire R – Respect E – Endurance</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The well-established 'CARE' school values underpin the work at St. Paul's. As a result, care and respect shapes the inclusive, nurturing environment. • Leaders ensure pupils gain a wide range of learning opportunities that foster their thinking and understanding of justice and responsibility. Staff encourage pupils to act on this, enabling them to be agents of change. • Wellbeing is prioritised by leaders and is reflected in the support offered to the community. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and trust leaders have not ensured that there is a theologically rooted Christian vision for the school that is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Therefore, leaders should develop and embed a vision deeply rooted in biblical teachings, that reflects the school's Christian foundation. • Leaders should ensure robust systems are in place to evaluate the impact of the Christian vision on the work of the school. This is to ensure the vision is having a positive impact on the school's strategic decisions and direction. • School and trust leaders have not ensured that collective worship enables spiritual flourishing. Therefore, leaders should broaden prayer and spiritual reflection opportunities to enable pupils and adults to develop their understanding of spirituality. This is to enhance personal spiritual growth. • Embed planned opportunities for spirituality across all areas of the curriculum. This is to ensure spiritual development is an intrinsic part of pupils' learning experiences. • School and trust leaders have not ensured that the provision, profile, and priority of religious education (RE) result in an effective curriculum. Therefore, leaders should ensure the religious education curriculum is effective in securing long term outcomes for pupils' learning. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>St. Paul's Church of England First School is a welcoming place where pupils and adults feel a sense of belonging. The underpinning biblical teachings selected by the school are not clearly connected to the school's Christian vision. However, community and the values of care, aspire, respect and</p>	

endurance, 'CARE', are well established. These embedded values positively impact on the way in which the whole community treat each other with care and respect. However, the CARE values are not recognisably Christian. As a result, the chosen Christian vision is not well known or fully understood. The school's new leadership team work well with the diocese and actively engage with support and training. This enabled leaders to realise the need to ensure that the vision has clear connections to its biblical roots.

The school is a member of the Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT), whose values of community and aspiration align with the school's values. The partnership supports school leaders and school improvement through shared best practice across all schools. As a consequence, staff expertise and curriculum opportunities have been enhanced. However, the collaboration has little impact on the Christian distinctive nature of the school. There are not effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate how the Christian vision is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. This has significantly contributed to leaders inability to articulate how the vision's Christian distinctiveness impacts on flourishing. As a result, the Christian vision is not contributing to the lived experience within the school.

Decisions are shaped by the CARE values, creating an environment where all are mutually respectful. Regular celebration assemblies reward pupils for demonstrating these values. As a result, there is a calm learning atmosphere and pupils behave kindly towards one another. Committed governors work hard to support the school. They are very visible in school and know the pupils and staff well. They have a joint desire to ensure the pupils are at the centre of every decision and policy. During monitoring update meetings governors regularly challenge leaders to ensure financial decisions support pupils in the school.

Through the creative, inclusive curriculum, leaders are driven to ensure learning is enjoyable and memorable. Therefore, curriculum subject planning and extra-curricular activities offer a breadth of experiences. In addition, CARE values are promoted throughout the curriculum, fostering positive relationships. Staff recognise pupils' different needs and nurture and support them through individualised provision, enabling access to learning. There are some spontaneous spiritual moments. However, spirituality is not identified and planned for across the curriculum, thus restricting opportunities for spiritual development. Leaders rightly recognise how their small village context impacts on pupils, by limiting their understanding of diversity and the wider world. Consequently, investing in considered resources has resulted in a curriculum that inspires curiosity beyond their locality. Books have been specifically selected to reflect diversity and difference and many focus on broader global issues. A global news resource provides pupils with a greater view of what is happening in the world. They understand injustice and take responsibility to advocate for others. Facilitated by staff, pupils lead opportunities to be 'World Changemakers', for example by recycling plastic and fundraising for international disasters. The school community generously supports many different charities both locally and nationally. This has led to pupils developing a respect and willingness to care for those whose lives are difficult. As a result, pupils are empowered, through these learning experiences, and by making a difference to the lives of others.

Mental health and wellbeing for the whole community is prioritised by leaders. Relationships between staff, pupils and parents are valued. The community are supported through their most difficult times by receiving practical guidance and counselling. Parents describe the positive impact this has had on their family's healing process. Staff enthusiastically say how 'staff wellbeing days' impact on their good mental health. 'Mindfulness' times have been developed to offer a wellbeing opportunity for calmness and reflection. The school's commitment to wellbeing has been rightly recognised through an award for their provision supporting emotional health and wellbeing. As a result, staff and pupils recognise the impact on their mental wellbeing. There is a breadth of pupil leadership roles available, including 'wellbeing monitors', who support pupils' wellbeing. Monitors

proudly discuss how they help other pupils to feel safe and happy. There is not a clear connection between the Christian vision and wellbeing. However, the positive impact the school's work has on the community's wellbeing demonstrates how the CARE values are lived out .

Adults and pupils appreciate the opportunity to come together in collective worship. Older pupils contribute responses, although the majority of pupils take an observational role. The worship monitors are enthusiastic about their responsibilities and enjoy leading the welcome. They say they would like to offer their own ideas to be more involved. Singing and the school prayer are regular features of worship. A weekly prayer on the school newsletter is also available. However, there are missed opportunities in collective worship to live out the vision. This in turn, limits the impact on spiritual development. The community discuss the importance of the church in village life, with the church warden supporting school services. Parents say they are invited to church events and feel welcome. Sharing worship in school and in church is valued by parents. As a result, special services, run by the school, are attended well. This supports the school and church bond to grow.

Leaders attend and engage with RE diocesan training and trust network meetings. The RE curriculum is planned in a way that the overall time allocated is appropriate for a Church school. Supported by a published resource, philosophical questions give pupils the opportunity to be reflective and consider their own views. Consequently, pupils draw on real life examples when reflecting. An interfaith week and celebrating religious festivals during RE weeks, offers creative experiences for pupils. However, the length of time between these weeks, reduces the impact of reflection and creativity on pupils' spiritual growth. Likewise, the organisation of blocked weeks for the subject limits pupils' recall of their learning. Therefore, the organisation of the subject is not effective on pupils' prior learning.

The inspection findings indicate that St. Paul's Church of England First School has strengths as a Church school but that there are issues that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. These relate to the school's Christian vision, collective worship and religious education. These are listed in the areas for development.

Information			
Inspection date	17 January 2024	URN	147422
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	143
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT/Federation	Staffordshire University Academies Trust		
Head of School	Claire Richards		
Chair	Jo Sawyer		
Inspector	Beverley Roberts	No.	2122