

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Ryhope	
Address	Waterworks Road, Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0LW
School vision	
<p>Our vision at St. Paul's is to inspire even the smallest seeds to flourish. We do this in a safe, happy, stimulating environment where wildest dreams will be encouraged whilst staying rooted in God's love. Through our broad, creative curriculum, pupils will have the opportunity to grow many different branches, each unique in their own way.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurturing relationships, rooted in God's love enhance the lives and wellbeing of pupils and adults. This creates a safe and caring culture where all have the opportunity to grow and flourish as the unique person they are. • Ambitious leaders, including governors are invested in this as a Church school and understand its context well. Guided through the lens of the vision their decisions and actions ensure the words of growth are a lived reality for all. • Worship provides a valued space for 'something special to happen'. It creates a sense of unity where all are included and pupils and adults gather as one. Meaningful moments of stillness, singing and reflection enrich opportunities for spiritual development. • Looking within and beyond the school, pupils and adults serve their local community through positive actions. This enhances lives through the love and respect they show to others. • Positive relationships with the local church strengthens the foundation of this as a Church school. This provides valued support for adults, pupils and families throughout their time at St Paul's. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the robustness of leaders' monitoring of this as a Church school. This is to further strengthen the way the Christian vision enables all to grow and flourish. • Extend pupils and adults' shared understanding of spirituality. This is to broaden the way they express how a sense of something bigger than themselves can enrich their spiritual growth. • Develop adults and pupils' knowledge of the teachings and stories found in the Bible. This is to enhance their confidence in describing how they impact on Christians today and how they shape the school's vision. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>The school's Christian vision creates a culture where flourishing is a reality for pupils and adults at St Paul's. Rooted in the biblical story of the mustard seed, the accessible language of the vision is known and lived out. The images of the tiny seed and strong tree branches holding others up, provides leaders with a shared language of growth. They know their school well and share how their</p>	

core purpose of enabling all to grow and shine links to the teachings of Jesus. However, the depth of how this understanding is articulated with the wider Christian story is at an early stage. Governors are highly invested and many have personal areas of expertise such as Early Years and Christian distinctiveness. They take their role seriously and are ambitious for the ongoing development of this as a Church school. Routine monitoring positively supports growth at St Paul's. However, the extent to which the explicit impact of the Christian vision is reviewed and formally evaluated is less robust.

Shaped by the Christian vision, the curriculum opens pupils' horizons beyond their local area. Carefully selected reading books and learning topics ensure they develop knowledge of the diversity of the world they live in. School strives to ensure the needs of pupils considered vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are met. Additional resources such as a sensory area highlight leaders' drive that the vision of growth should be a reality for all. Governors speak with clarity about how this links to their understanding of Jesus' love for everyone. 'Awe and wonder' moments are celebrated within the curriculum including noticing the growth of flowers and observing eggs hatching. These are just some examples of how the school enables pupils to experience a sense of 'wow' in the natural world. Parents enhance this by sending photographs of the beauty of creation that creates a gallery of images for all to appreciate. Consequently, the curriculum ensures all have opportunities to develop spiritually. However, the extent to which pupils and adults' understanding is wider than an appreciation of 'awe and wonder' moments is less secure. Leaders rightly evaluate their sense of 'being on a journey' with their understanding of spirituality and are ambitious to develop this further. School celebrates pupils' gifts and talents through their 'glimmer awards'. The personalised nature of these enhances the way that all feel a sense of being known as the unique person they are. This was exemplified by a pupil's pride at receiving an award 'just for being me'. All are valued and loved at St Paul's.

Collective worship is a special time for the whole school to gather as one. Through the use of images of 'awe and wonder' coupled with gentle music, a feeling of calmness is created. This enables a sense of stillness and peace that is appreciated by adults and pupils. Planned moments of silence to reflect on Bible verses and the core theme of the day effectively provide opportunities for spiritual growth. Worship is enhanced through pupils' unscripted and spontaneous sharing of prayers. This also has a positive impact upon adults alike. The variety of quiet reflection time together with moments of joyful singing offers a breadth of nourishing spiritual experiences. The 'mustard seeds' pupil group actively enhance worship through their enthusiastic leading of areas such as prayer spaces. Those who have SEND are well-supported by adults and peers during worship. This enriches the way it is inclusive and creates a powerful sense of togetherness for the school community. Parents and families enjoy the opportunity to share worship with pupils. Exceptionally strong partnership with local clergy strengthens the Christian foundation of the school offering knowledge and wisdom in areas such as spirituality. New staff benefit from observing other teachers leading class worship that supports the consistency of the way this is delivered.

A nurturing culture of care permeates throughout the school. Parents champion the way staff support families during difficult times. Leaders accurately share how this love is rooted in the Christian vision as the 'branches of the tree support others'. Pastoral care is warmly and freely shared. Good mental health and the wellbeing of pupils and adults are priority areas. Investment in training ensures specialist staff are available to listen and offer practical help such as counselling. Pupils demonstrate compassion in their relationships with one another. The Bible character in the story of the Good Samaritan is seen as a positive role model. Pupils champion the positive culture in the school, making it 'cool to do the right thing'. They talk freely about the need to forgive others and the way this enhances relationships in school. However, the way they link this to what they have heard in worship and Bible teachings is less consistent. Staff feel listened to and supported by leaders, including governors. Opportunities for them to develop professionally ensures the school's

vision of growth is equally for adults as it is for pupils.

Pupils demonstrate their sense of responsibility towards others in the school. This creates an atmosphere of mutual respect enriching relationships. They are eager to demonstrate this beyond school through actively considering the needs of others in the local community. Links, for instance, with a local hospice, enable pupils to be the ‘branches’ of the mustard tree, thereby living out their vision. In a recent change, pupils now choose which organisations to support. This ensures such links are more meaningful to them. Pupils articulate how people such as Rosa Parks and Jesus inspire them to look at how they can be agents of change. Leaders and pupils' plans to further extend opportunities to challenge injustice are at an early stage of development.

Active partnerships with the local diocese and clergy strengthen staff confidence in RE. Professional development opportunities and investment in new resources extend adults' knowledge and positively impact on the effectiveness of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils encounter a well-balanced breadth of experiences in considering world religions, including Christianity. This is enhanced with visits to places of worship such as a nearby mosque. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about RE and demonstrate a good knowledge of a range of beliefs. They understand how Christianity is a global and living faith. However, their breadth of knowledge of the teachings and stories from the Bible is less consistent. Monitoring has positively impacted on RE, for instance the move towards reflective questions. However, the wider impact of leaders' evaluation of RE is at an early stage.

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

Information			
Inspection date	5 February 2024	URN	108836
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	301
Diocese	Durham		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Lisa Quinn-Briton		
Chair	David Chadwick		
Inspector	Paul Rusby	No.	938