

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

## St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

### Vision

'Let the little children come to me' (Matthew 19:14a)

We are all equally important, listened to and loved by God.

### Strengths

- Vision and values are lived out at St Paul's School. As a result, all pupils and adults are 'equally important, listened to and loved by God'.
- The Christian vision shapes the curriculum so that it is wholly inclusive. Staff are fully committed and equipped to meet the specific needs of pupils.
- Leaders, including governors, are committed to securing positive wellbeing and mental health of pupils and staff. Families are extremely well supported when facing challenging times.
- The exceptionally strong partnership with the local church enriches the work of this school.
- Leaders at all levels support the development of religious education (RE). The subject is well led. As a result, teacher subject knowledge and confidence is developing effectively.

### Development Points

- Develop and embed a shared understanding of spirituality. This is to ensure that pupils increasingly deepen their awareness and ability to relate to others.
- Embed a rigorous system for assessment in RE to reflect the new religion and worldview curriculum. This is in order to enable pupils to accelerate their progress.



## Inspection Findings

As the vision is well understood and embedded, pupils and adults are embraced and accepted at St Paul's School. One pupil explained that the school welcomes everyone regardless of background. Values infuse the school's determination to build positive relationships. Pupils and their families are treated with kindness. Staff are thoughtful and encouraging. This culture is underpinned by respect for diversity, equality and inclusion. Effective leaders, including governors, know their school well. They strive to ensure that pupils and adults are enabled to flourish.

The curriculum is shaped by the vision, ensuring that it caters for pupils of all abilities. Staff take care to meet the needs of all pupils, including those considered to be vulnerable. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and English as an Additional Language have their needs met well. Staff endeavour to involve all pupils in lessons. This includes the extra-curricular activities, such as clubs, visits and overnight extended trips. Specific pupils with SEND benefit from a bespoke curriculum to ensure that they are able to experience success. Leaders have considered how spirituality can be developed within the curriculum. They identified opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship, as well as in lessons. However, leaders have not established a shared understanding of spirituality. Consequently, this limits the potential for spiritual flourishing, both within the curriculum and collective worship. A number of clergy and church volunteers regularly support the school. In addition to leading worship, they work in partnership with the staff team. They provide practical support for the curriculum, including offering after school clubs and providing additional staffing for activities. They access charitable funding to support purchasing curriculum resources and also use this to subsidise the Year 4 residential trip.

Collective worship is valued highly by both pupils and adults at St Paul's School. Members of staff benefit from coming together with the pupils as a school community. Pupils describe collective worship as 'the best time of the day'. They enjoy actively participating in worship, and particularly love singing their school song. They value being worship leaders and contributing to planning and leading daily worship. Consequently, they are enriched spiritually as a result of these leadership roles. There are a range of impactful opportunities for spiritual development, including singing, reflecting, discussing and moments of stillness and prayer. During worship, the Christian vision and values are effectively instilled within members of the school community. The exceptionally strong partnership with the local church strengthens worship and provides additional opportunities for spiritual flourishing. The school makes good use of the local church for several special services through the year, providing additional opportunities for spiritual development. Parents and pupils are welcomed and become well known to the church team. This results in invitational opportunities for families to engage with the church outside of school. The school offers mutual support for the church through participating in events, such as the church's recent 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary festival.

As a result of the vision, leaders ensure that pupils' wellbeing is prioritised. Pupils build strong trusting relationships with staff. They are well cared for and feel safe. One pupil reflected, 'People will always come and see if you are okay. There is lots of support for mental health.' Leaders invest in an effective pastoral team, which includes a school counsellor and thrive practitioners. The pupils find spending time with the pastoral team's gerbils, Flapjack and French Fry, calming and enjoyable. Trained staff take a mindful approach developing social, emotional and mental health in lessons, strengthening the support for pupils. If required, individual and group interventions are available and matched to pupils' carefully assessed needs. School leaders established strong partnerships with outside agencies to ensure that the needs of their pupils and families are met. Parents are universally grateful for all that the school does for them. There is excellent support available when a family is facing a challenging time. Staff are also well supported. Leaders are mindful of wellbeing and workload when introducing new initiatives. They have created a culture of kindness and thoughtfulness, which includes 'treat



Friday' and a range of staff clubs to foster wellbeing. They also ensure that staff are supported if they are working in a challenging context. Leaders are flexible to prioritise staff's wellbeing. For example, they authorise absence for important appointments and events. Governors and the church team also provide support to leaders and members of staff during difficult life events, such as bereavements.

Pupils regularly learn about taking responsibility and how to respond to injustice. In collective worship, they are introduced to world news and events. Pupils reflect on natural wonders and the responsibilities they have as citizens to care for our world. St Paul's School is also connected to an international partner school in Sierra Leone. This partnership has enriched the pupils' understanding of inequalities. For example, pupils recognised the injustice of their partner school's lack of access to fresh running water. Consequently, they made an ethical decision to raise money to build a well for their friends in Sierra Leone. In addition, pupils recently got involved in monitoring the use of disposable plastic in school. They took responsibility for writing to and meeting with their catering providers to discuss reducing the amount of plastic waste. One pupil commented that this includes removing single use milk cartons at lunchtime. They now have access to milk in reusable cups. The school is currently involved with a food bank charity. Pupils have committed to packing 5000 meals to feed children in Zambia. This project is further increasing their awareness of inequalities and need to respond to injustice. This combination of opportunities allows pupils to learn to take responsibility and to become positive agents of change.

Senior leaders at St Paul's School make RE a priority in their curriculum. They ensure that that the subject leader has time to lead effectively, and provide access to professional development for staff. RE is treated as a core subject and has protected time each week on the timetable. The school has recently adopted a new locally agreed RE syllabus. RE leaders have worked in partnership with colleagues from the diocese to create a new religion and worldviews curriculum. This reflects their context and is appropriately challenging with high-quality resources for teaching Christianity woven in. The curriculum is well-sequenced, and includes units of work, which are diverse and relevant to pupils. Leaders are providing ongoing support to teachers to ensure that they are able to deliver this ambitious curriculum confidently.

Teaching and learning in RE at St Paul's is effective. Teachers use the syllabus to plan interesting and engaging lessons. Pupils enjoy their learning and believe that RE is an important subject. The pupils make progress through acquiring knowledge about Christianity and other faiths over time. They also develop a good understanding and respect for a range of worldviews. Teachers and leaders use pupil voice and book scrutiny to assess progress. However, currently assessment in RE is underdeveloped. Leaders have identified improved strategies for assessment, but these have not been implemented consistently alongside the new curriculum. This limits the potential for further pupil progress.

Information			
Address	Upper Holly Walk, Leamington Spa, CV32 4JZ		
Date of inspection	15 October 2024	URN	125701
Type of school	Maintained Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	320
Diocese	Coventry		
Headteacher	Matthew Bown		
Chair of Governors	Jan Pringle		
Inspector	Claire Platt		

