

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Philip Westbrook Church of England Primary School

Address	Westbrook Centre, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 8UE		
Date of inspection	7 February 2019	Status of school	VA Primary
Diocese	Liverpool	URN	111385

Overall Judgement	Grade	Excellent
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgements		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent

School context

St Philip Westbrook is a primary school with 512 pupils on roll. When compared with national averages, the school has a low level of religious and cultural diversity and few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. Since the previous inspection the school has appointed a new headteacher.

The school's Christian vision

'Together we aim high, and with God's love we can fly' (Isaiah 40:31)

We aim to create a loving community, enfolded by Christian values. Here children can develop their God given potential in a secure, nurturing and happy environment that enhances excellence and enables children to live life in all its fullness.

Key findings

- All leaders, especially the head teacher, demonstrate a drive and passion for implementing a steadfast Christian vision that profoundly transforms the lives of its pupils academically and spiritually, whilst being totally welcoming and inclusive to those of other faiths and none.
- This strong, inclusive and aspirational Christian vision ensures every pupil is revered, respected and loved, becoming the best they can be.
- St Philip's has developed a unique, close partnership and vision with the Warrington 'Transform' church team ministry. Together they holistically seek to nurture the educational and spiritual needs of the local community.
- St Philip's embraces excellent academic rigour by working with all pupils to achieve their God-given potential within a bold, exciting curriculum. This is especially apparent in religious education (RE) where pupils develop a remarkable level of spiritual understanding of major world faiths.
- All pupils, without exception, are involved in leading inspirational collective worship which encourages a deep level of personal engagement and spirituality.

Areas for development

- Devise a more succinct process for senior leaders' effective evaluation of the impact of the school's Christian vision, in order to further develop the school's exceptional provision.
- Follow up the remarkable success and empathy achieved by pupils in their vision to be global citizens, by aiming for national recognition through Christian Aid's 'Global Neighbours' silver accreditation award.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

St Philip's is an exemplary Christian school within Westbrook community. It offers a warm inclusive welcome, reflecting the light of Jesus. It is the school of choice for many parents, whether they have a faith or non-faith background because of a belief in shared core principles. Christian values of fairness and fellowship, carefully selected by the pupil ethos team, exude an uncompromising mission for Christian compassion. Pupils are impressive in their ability to quote biblical references relating to their school's vision and values. They apply these beliefs to all relationships and attitudes to work. Consequently, behaviour in school is excellent and academic standards in all subjects are high.

School leaders are passionate about aligning the vision to all their decision-making and development plans. Teachers nurture pupils as individuals and as one staff member said, 'Through God's love we are able to challenge the children and encourage them to aim high.' Staff benefit from on-going professional development such as the recent 'Alpha' course which gave rich opportunities for theological study. This approach enabled staff to grow in understanding of the faith distinctiveness of a Church school. The teacher with the role of RE subject champion, has been a huge inspiration in the development of 'Understanding of Christianity' resources.

School leaders work closely with the diocese and take a leading role amongst Warrington schools, sharing their exceptional practice. They have a unique vision with the Warrington 'Transform' team ministry to develop a new church congregation within the community. St Philip's was chosen by the diocese for this pioneering project because of their excellent Christian ethos and desire to work in partnership with the local church. The school also has close liaison with the local missional leader, who offers valuable support through prayer and counselling.

The head teacher is meticulous in reviewing the effectiveness of St Philip's as a church school. She does this in great depth, involving every person in the school community. However, a more concise system of evaluation would be beneficial in ensuring effective Church school evaluation becomes less onerous. Governors are very astute in probing for detailed information about the school's vision. As a result, they are exceptionally well informed about the school's strengths and areas for future development.

Driven by the Christian vision and dedication of staff, the learning needs of vulnerable pupils are sensitively and closely supported to ensure all make at least good progress. Pupils frequently speak of the Christian value of perseverance which keeps them focused on learning. Biblical references are made wherever possible, resulting in insightful pupils who can make cross-curricular links with Christianity. One pupil said, 'RE lessons are inspirational and help us to understand Christianity and other faiths and apply this learning to our lives'. Planned curriculum debates are stimulating and afford pupils the opportunity to discuss different viewpoints in a safe environment. This facilitates good listening skills, learning to disagree with faith-inspired compassion and consideration.

The Christian value of fairness motivates pupils to be actively involved in a wide range of social action projects. Pupils confidently campaign for justice through letter writing, local raising-awareness marches and eloquent debates. Issues include food poverty, modern slavery and the natural environment. In celebration of their remarkable global learning journey, pupils are seeking national recognition through Christian Aid's accreditation scheme. This goal is a beneficial way of emphasising the importance of pupils seeking to influence solutions to international concerns. Pupils are also extremely generous in their charitable giving. St Philip's school and church jointly have links with a school in South Africa. In addition, the school has excellent global connections with two schools in China. These sustainable overseas partnerships are opening pupils' horizons to greater tolerance and understanding of different worldwide communities.

An outward, forward thinking culture, inspired by respect and dignity, results in an inclusive school where everyone is cherished. Relationships at the school are precious and even though it is a large school, a strong family ethos is tangible. Pupils take a lead in challenging any rare cases of prejudicial behaviour and language. Prompt reporting enables staff to swiftly address any issues, guided by their Stonewall strategies.

Invitational worship is integral to the daily rhythm of life at St Philip's. The tone for inclusive worship is set by the headteacher and exemplified creatively by the Warrington ministry team. Worship is the heartbeat of the school bringing hope, peace and calm for all pupils and adults. The school environment is beautifully and sensitively immersed in Christian values encouraging deep spiritual contemplation. Pupils enthusiastically lead worship using the engaging resources available in every classroom. Teachers say that pupils 'just get on and do it!'. Pupils of all faiths and beliefs have collective worship training through an after-school club, 'Worship Warriors', which fosters their spiritual interest. Key Stage 2 pupils have recently developed a spiritual garden which promotes spontaneous prayer and reflection. One member of staff explained, 'The garden helps everyone to touch base

with God.'

RE is a safe place for pupils to explore religious thinking. Lessons are used effectively to engage in a range of learning experiences which deepen pupils' understanding of Christianity and other major faiths. With support from the RE champion, staff have gained the ability to use the 'Understanding Christianity' learning approaches alongside other aspects of RE. This has ensured pupils' learning in the subject is enriched by being able to use theological language appropriately, especially in their debates. Pupils who find other academic subjects challenging often thrive in RE, where they can be critically reflective and express their views through the arts. Consequently, the school vision of encouraging pupils to learn to 'fly' is especially poignant within RE.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Pupils are stimulated by high quality RE because teachers have designed a relevant, interesting curriculum which challenges their thinking. Pupils frequently say that teachers also make these lessons fun! The teachers plan debates within RE which enables pupils to critically reflect on important ethical concerns. Pupils say that as a result, it makes them courageous advocates for change as they explore issues of injustice and inequality.

RE books and class logs indicate that all pupils are flourishing academically and spiritually. Inspired by the RE subject champion, staff frequently engage in sharing and discussing pupils' work which ensures consistently high expectations and standards.

Headteacher	Jacqueline Wightman
Inspector's name and number	Ann Lock 919