

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

<b>St Wilfrid's Church of England Aided Primary School</b>	Patterdale Road Northenden Manchester M22 4NR
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese/Methodist District</b>	<b>Manchester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 July 2016
Name of multi-academy trust	<b>The St James and Emmanuel Trust</b>
Date/s of inspection	13 October 2016
Date of last inspection	December 2011
School's unique reference number	142936
Head of School	Helena Miller
Inspector's name and number	Gail Fullbrook 530

### School context

St Wilfrid's is a larger than average primary school with 313 children on role including 37 nursery children. The proportions of children eligible for free school meals, with English as an additional language and with special educational needs are all just below the national average. In May 2015 the school was placed under special measures by Ofsted. In January 2016 the deputy headteacher was appointed acting head of school and in April 2016 she was appointed as head of school. The HMI report of March 2016 found the school to be taking effective action towards the removal of special measures. A new incumbent joined the parish in August 2016.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Wilfrid's as a Church of England school are good

- The vision statement, 'Belonging, Believing, Becoming,' is widely acknowledged and understood by children, staff and parents. It is having a transformative impact on the Christian character of the school.
- Christian values are woven across the life of the school and have a significant influence on the very good behaviour and attitudes for learning of the children.
- The accurate and informed self-evaluation of the school as a church school provides a clear and aspirational plan for future developments.

### Areas to improve

- Develop a shared understanding of the nature of spirituality and a range of experiences that will support the children on their spiritual journey.
- Introduce a range of Anglican greetings and prayers that will support worship and bring depth to the children's experience of worship.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation of worship in order to maximise its impact on the school community.
- Increase the involvement of children in all aspects of worship to support their spiritual development and understanding of faith.

## **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners**

The school's clear and widely understood Christian vision is embedded within the life of the school. It has provided the springboard for the rapid improvement in achievement, attitudes to learning and behaviour. As a result, achievement is now in line with national expectations and all children, including those with specific needs, make good progress. A parent commented that the school is 'brilliant with children who have barriers to learning'. This is attributed to the value placed on each child as a child of God. Attendance, once a concern, is now good because children want to come to this vibrant and happy school. They have a good understanding of the school's core Christian values and can relate them to Jesus' teaching and to their relationships and behaviour. One child was keen to share that 'the values make our school', a statement endorsed by staff and parents. The school's curriculum supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development through a strong emphasis on first-hand experience and a wealth of opportunities for discussion and reflection. SMSC is further strengthened through the wide and varied range of extra curricula activities offered. Children learn of the importance of making wise choices through drama and discussion within worship, and in Religious Education (RE) lessons. They feel a strong sense of belonging to the school community and older children aspire to be good team players, true to the Christian value of koinonia. They recognise the importance of being there for each other and of always doing and being their best. Relationships are strong and firmly rooted in the school's Christian foundation. Staff talk of the ways in which they support each other and of their strength as a staff team. Parents welcome the many opportunities offered for them to meet with staff and to share any concerns they may have. One parent spoke of the head of school 'being present' when talking with parents. Another parent referred to the openness of the school, saying that there was always someone around to talk to. Children have a deep respect for their peers of other cultures and faiths. This is reinforced through RE and the wider curriculum, and in worship when time is given to reflect on stories drawn from other cultures.

## **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Children enjoy worship because they recognise that it is making a real difference to their lives and to their school. Worship is seen as a time to gather together in the presence of God. Through story, prayer and time for reflection, it makes a significant contribution to the children's spiritual development. Drama, art and discussion are used within worship to help children to engage with and respond to the worship theme. Children know that prayer is a time when they are reminded of God's presence with them. They welcome the opportunities offered during the day to pray and many enjoy writing prayers for the class prayer corners. Many children are excited that they will soon be able to hang personal prayers on a new prayer tree being established in the library. A significant number of children talk of times of prayer in their lives beyond school. Reflection is an integral part of worship and times of reflection are incorporated within many lessons during the school day. Children have a good knowledge of biblical stories and of a range of other stories which strengthen understanding of the school's core Christian values. One child told of a story which helped her to understand that the hurt we feel when someone upsets us doesn't always heal quickly. Another child, recounting the story of Jonah, shared, 'We have to keep on trying to find our answers. We learn not to give up.' He then linked this understanding to the Christian values of endurance and resilience. Children have a good understanding of theological teaching. They recognise the Trinitarian nature of God and older children are keen to share the images they have of each aspect. They understand God 'as the perfect father' and know that 'the Holy Spirit helps you through hard times'. Worship is carefully planned to reflect major festivals within the Christian calendar and to develop awareness and understanding of the school's core Christian values. Evaluation of class worship is imaginative and purposeful. This involves a time of reflection by children from other classes following the worship, where thoughts and questions are posed. The children's reflections are then used to inform future plans. The monitoring and evaluation of worship other than class worship is an area for future development, as is a greater involvement of children in planning and leading worship.

## **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Teachers bring a high level of creativity to teaching and learning in RE which engages the children's curiosity and encourages a desire to know more. Consequently standards in RE are rising fast and achievement is now almost in line with national expectations. All children consistently make very good progress. Learning activities support

children in developing a thorough understanding of key concepts of Christianity. Key skills such as enquiry, interpretation and wonder are effectively taught and support the children's SMSC development. They are encouraged to ask probing questions and to critically discuss their learning. A Year 6 child, when focussing on the journey of faith, commented on the importance of 'being positive, overlooking the bad things that happen and of seeing good in everything'. Excellent use of open questions encourages a deeper understanding of themes being studied and leads to high quality responses. In a Year 2 class, children of all abilities were well supported as they wondered about the nature of friendship. Following a reflection on the story of The Good Samaritan, they considered what it feels like to be left out and how they might be good neighbours to one another. The RE scheme of work is well planned and follows a clear structure which integrates learning about Christianity with teaching about a number of other faiths. RE is effectively led and managed by the committed and enthusiastic subject leader who knows the curriculum well and gives excellent support and guidance to colleagues. Following meetings with local RE lead teachers, the subject leader then shares information and insights gained with colleagues. She monitors the children's workbooks to ensure progression and has set up a system to assess learning and monitor progress over time. Although still in its infancy, the system is already enabling teachers and the subject leader to strengthen teaching throughout the school.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good**

In a relatively short period of time the school has worked with staff, parents, governors and trustees to renew the school's Christ-centred vision and mission statements. These are now impressively well embedded and known and understood widely across the school family. The new mission statement accurately reflects the nature and ethos of the school. The happiness and well-being of children is the foundation upon which the school's success is being built. Relationships are strong and the atmosphere of the school is one of welcome and purposeful activity. Children thrive because they know that they are safe and well cared for. Self-evaluation of the school is accurate. It gives clear actions for development that will strengthen the school's Christian character even further. The school has robust systems in place to review the ways in which the Christian character is developing. Trustees and local governors are well informed about the Christian distinctiveness of the school through reports shared at governor and trustee meetings and occasional presentations made by key staff. They visit the school regularly and fulfil the role of critical friend effectively. As the school develops the role of middle leaders, staff with the potential to show leadership within church schools are being nurtured and encouraged. Appropriate professional development is given to staff, often through the Academy Trust, and the school has good procedures in place that enable key information to be widely shared. The school has a good relationship with St Wilfrid's church and has recently welcomed the arrival of a new rector. Plans to further develop the partnership between school and church are in place. This will support spiritual awareness and the ways in which class prayer areas can be developed and used. Good links made during the interregnum with neighbouring churches support the established links with St Wilfrid's. These partnerships, alongside work with the The St James and Emmanuel Trust and Manchester Diocese serve to enrich the children's awareness and understanding of the importance of their wider community. The partnership with parents is strong. The school's weekly newsletter is widely appreciated. In addition to information about school events it includes the theological background to the Christian values to support parents in developing their child's understanding. A parent commented favourably on the 'potential and momentum of the school' whilst another spoke of the school as being a 'safe place to believe or not to believe. Faith is respected here'. Through the experience of families within the school community children have insight into different ways of worshipping God. The need to expand that understanding further to encompass global Christian communities is recognised and planned for.

SIAMS report October 2016 St Wilfrid's CE VA Primary School, Northenden, Manchester M22 4NR