



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School	School Lane, Bunbury, Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 9NR
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese/Methodist District	Chester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Cheshire East
Name of federation	The St. Oswald's Worleston and Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School Federation
Date of inspection	29 September 2016
Date of last inspection	6 December 2011
School's unique reference number	111344
Executive Headteacher Head of School	Fiona Todd Nicola Badger
Inspector's name and number	Anne B Woodcock 445

School context

The school serves the village of Bunbury and surrounding area on the border between Cheshire East and West. The vast majority of the 167 pupils are of White British heritage and they come from mainly affluent backgrounds. The proportion of pupils attracting the Pupil Premium grant is lower than average. The school supports a lower than average number of pupils with additional needs. The executive headteacher was seconded to the school in March 2015 when an Ofsted report resulted in the school being placed in special measures. An interim executive board of governors was appointed at the same time. The school was federated with St. Oswald's Worleston in January 2016 and a joint governing body was appointed. The school achieved a good Ofsted report in January. The executive headteacher spends two and a half days in school. The head of school is full time.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bunbury Aldersey as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The outstanding Christian leadership of the executive headteacher, ably supported by the head of school, dedicated staff and skilled governors, has unified the school community and brought about rapid changes which have strengthened all aspects of church school distinctiveness and effectiveness.
- Explicitly expressed and displayed Christian values impact strongly on pupils' excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes to life and learning.
- Extremely strong, mutually beneficial links with the church contribute significantly to the school's Christian character and to pupils' spiritual growth.

Areas to improve

- Secure assessment procedures in religious education (RE) to track pupil progress and standards and support continued improvements in teaching and learning.
- Engage parents more fully in the church school self-evaluation process so that their shared opinions can influence improvements and support the Christian character of the school.

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

Extremely well-established Christian values are explicitly expressed and displayed across the school. Children talk confidently about the way in which they use the core values, which they helped to choose, in their everyday lives. A Year 4 child explained, 'You will always make the right choice if you think about and use our Christian values. We know what they mean.' As a result, children's behaviour is excellent and their attitudes to life and learning are extremely positive. Children say that they feel safe and cherished in school. They have great trust in and respect for their teachers, explaining that they make learning fun, challenge and support them and are always there to listen. The vast majority of parents agree. One parent stated, 'This is a nurturing school. Children are the top priority. They are happy, cherished and secure.' All pupils are well-supported because they are valued as unique children of God. They make very good progress from their starting points. Standards of attainment have remained consistently high throughout a difficult period because teachers prioritise pupils' welfare and achievement. Children are reflective and thoughtful learners. They express their ideas and opinions articulately within an atmosphere of trust and acceptance. They are excited and inspired by the creative, well-balanced curriculum which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development extremely well. Strong church links make a significant contribution. Vibrant, high quality art work, prayers and prose displayed around the school reflect the depth of children's responses. Older pupils debate issues such as refugees and war in Syria with impressive maturity. One Year 6 pupil explained, 'It wouldn't be possible to give them all a home but we have to do something because they are all God's children.' Christian values are woven seamlessly through the curriculum, so pupils refer to them naturally when talking about wider world issues. Children's understanding of diversity is ably supported by their work in RE and through cross-curricular themes, such as those linked to the Unicef Rights of the Child project. As a result, children are increasingly aware of the different ways in which people worship God and live their lives. They recognise that they share God's gifts and love by supporting those less fortunate than themselves, raising money for a range of local and national charities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Children value and enjoy collective worship. A Year 5 school council member explained, 'We have Fruits of the Spirit and our Christian values like peace, hope and forgiveness to think about in worship and we learn about God and Jesus,' Children experience a range of different worship styles and settings. They are inspired and feel included because levels of participation are high. Pupils plan and lead worship regularly. Worship is well-planned and recorded and is firmly based on Bible teaching. As a result, children's knowledge of Bible stories and the life and teaching of Jesus is sound. A Year 1 child confidently declared, 'Values come from God. They come through Jesus his son. He told stories about them for us to learn.' Older pupils explained the link between parables such as the Good Samaritan and Christian values. The extremely strong relationship with the church makes a very significant contribution to the worship and spiritual life of the school. The vicar and other church workers are regular visitors, supporting planning, leading worship and running clubs. Children relish the worship led by church leaders. Regular multi-sensory worship events are held in church, supported by clergy and members of the church. These explore themes such as the Lord's Prayer and Fruits of the Spirit. They are inspirational for all who attend and are now being extended for use by neighbouring schools. Pupils experience Anglican traditions such as the Eucharist. These are held termly in church together with members of the congregation. Children have a mature understanding of the nature of God as Trinity. They talk confidently about God as a loving father and of the Holy Spirit as a powerful helper. Prayer and reflection are key features of worship. Children know traditional prayers and responses. They write and use their own prayers which are displayed around school. The school prayer was written by a Year 3 pupil. Worship is effectively monitored and evaluated by governors, staff and pupils and feedback leads to ongoing improvements

The effectiveness of the religious education (RE) is outstanding

Pupils are inspired and excited by RE. They thoroughly enjoy their lessons. 'There are no right or wrong answers in RE. We think about important questions, debate our ideas and learn about Christianity and other faiths,' explained a Year 5 pupil. The enquiry-based approach suits children's learning styles. The range of creative approaches used in lessons promotes enjoyment and fosters key skills. Children are active and reflective learners. In the lessons observed, all pupils were able to contribute using music, discussion and group activities to explore themes and achieve the learning objectives. As a result, pupils make very good progress and the standards achieved are at least equal to those achieved in other core subjects. The depth of knowledge and thinking is reflected in the high standard of work displayed in pupil workbooks and in the exemplary class scrapbooks. These emphasise the way in which RE supports children's spiritual development as well as the range of work undertaken. RE makes a significant contribution to children's SMSC development. 'Even if you don't believe in God, you can learn about faiths and respect what others believe,' explained a Year 6 pupil. Older pupils have a developing knowledge of faiths such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. They identify key facts, similarities and differences. For example, a Year six pupil described the link between the Old Testament and the Torah. Visits to places of worship, such as a synagogue and Christian churches provide first-hand experience. RE is very well-managed and led by an experienced and dedicated leader who ensures that staff are well-supported and resourced. Highly effective monitoring procedures ensure that teaching and learning are of the highest quality. Governors observe lessons and scrutinise books alongside the subject leader and their feedback informs action planning and development. Although assessment procedures are in place to track pupil progress and standards, the systems are yet to be refined so that they more accurately identify gaps in learning and inform future planning.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding

All members of the school community agree that the purposeful, explicitly Christian leadership of the executive headteacher has unified the school and brought about rapid change. This has had a very positive impact on all aspects of church school leadership and management. Challenges have been met with dignified resolve by senior leaders, governors and staff. Their levels of commitment cannot be overstated. Skilled and highly effective governance has secured the safety and well-being of pupils and staff, demonstrating genuine Christian compassion. The recently federated governing body provides excellent support whilst setting challenging targets which raise aspirations and promote the raising of standards. They monitor and evaluate the work of the school effectively, visiting regularly and meeting with staff, pupils and parents. They ensure that the needs of all pupils are met and that funds, such as the Pupil Premium grant, are used appropriately. Church school self-evaluation is robust and effective, involving members of the school family. However, although the parent council offers parents and carers the opportunity to meet, discuss and participate in school improvement, a limited number of parents are engaging with the self-evaluation process. All issues from the previous inspection have been addressed and the impact of changes continue to be monitored, leading to sustained improvement. Governors prioritise and support the high quality leadership of collective worship and RE, ensuring the continued improvement of both. The impact of the federation with St. Oswald's Church of England Primary School can be seen in curriculum leadership, professional development, governance and teaching and learning. It also supports the strategic development of both schools. The strong support of the diocese and church have been crucial in meeting recent challenges and developing the effectiveness of the school. Leaders have sought ways to extend children's knowledge and understanding of diversity and wider world issues through a recently established link with a school in the Solomon Islands and participation in the global learning programme. The school is well-placed to move confidently into the future as leaders have the capacity, motivation and determination to do so.

SIAMS report September 2016 Bunbury Aldersey CE Primary School, Bunbury, Tarporley CW6 9 NR