

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School

Vision

At the heart of everything is a personalised approach to each unique individual as part of our Christian Community. The strong family ethos ensures that all children and staff feel valued, respected and grow in self-confidence. Enthusiastic and caring staff with high expectations, demonstrate care of the whole child. Through God's guidance we encourage each and every child to let their light shine.

Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following strengths.

Strengths

- The Christian vision has been carefully crafted to meet the context and needs of the community. It drives decisions and actions, creating strong partnerships which enhance the life of the school. As a result, pupils and adults confidently 'let their lights shine'.
- The curriculum and enrichment activities enhance pupils' lives. Numerous opportunities are given to allow pupils and adults to discover and develop their talents. Because of this, they feel valued as members of this inclusive community.
- The Christian vision and associated values instil a recognition that everyone deserves to be cared for and celebrated for who they are. Therefore, an atmosphere of kindness and respect resonates throughout the school.
- Pupils have a strong voice and feel heard. They explore many worldwide issues in their learning and are encouraged to articulate their feelings and beliefs. Many are drawn to action. Consequently, pupils are shining lights for justice.
- Collective worship and spiritual reflection are at the heart of the life of the school. Worship is joyful and welcoming. The times of reflection enable pupils to consider questions about life and their place in the world. This leads to positive actions throughout the school and into the wider community.

Development Points

- Extend learning opportunities to explore the diversity of how worldviews and beliefs are lived out. This is so that pupils understand the range and variety of ways faith is experienced.
- Embed the school's shared language and vocabulary of spirituality. This is to enable pupils and adults to have a deeper understanding of their own spiritual development.



Inspection Findings

Bunbury Aldersey is a school filled with joy, where talents are discovered and people are loved for being themselves. Through the Christian vision, pupils and adults are actively encouraged to be the best they can be. They are challenged to 'let their light shine' in all that they do. Consequently, the school is a beacon of love, hope and aspiration, reflecting its Church school foundation. The carefully considered Christian vision is ambitious in its message. Together with the thoughtfully chosen associated Christian values, it is woven throughout the life of the school. It challenges leaders to know adults and pupils on a deep and personal level, proactively supporting them to thrive. Leaders recognise that success comes in many forms and are driven to discover the talents of staff and pupils. This creates a culture which offers a wealth of opportunities to succeed. The work of the school is rigorously monitored by governors and the Rural Church Schools Academy Trust. This ensures the school remains true to its Christian foundation. Strong partnerships have been developed with the village, local churches, Chester Diocese and the trust. These enhance the life of the school, injecting new ideas and providing support in times of challenge.

Leaders live out their belief that 'educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all'. Therefore, they have crafted a bespoke curriculum which enriches pupils academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Throughout many of the topics, pupils explore the school's Christian values. This enables them to understand the relevance of each value in the wider world. The curriculum is rich with opportunities to learn new skills. The annual School Fest and other extra-curricular activities, allow pupils to discover a range of adventure, sport and artistic pursuits. Pupils are encouraged to explore spirituality and their own sense of self. Reflection areas and journals are well-used as a way to be with one's own thoughts. These allow pupils to explore their thoughts and feelings in different ways. However, the extent to which pupils can express the impact of spiritual development opportunities on them is limited.

Leaders value religious education (RE) as a core, academic subject. The new RE curriculum is being implemented with support from leaders and the diocese. It is carefully and sequentially crafted, allowing pupils to build on previous knowledge and skills. Leaders ensure there are many opportunities for pupils to discuss big questions relating to ethical and moral issues. These prompt in-depth and thought-provoking discussions to develop pupils' thinking skills. Pupils learn about Christianity together with a broad range of faiths and worldviews. They learn about the importance of sacred texts and their relevance to believers' lives. Through the curriculum and events such as world faith days, pupils explore the ways views and beliefs are lived out. However, there is limited opportunity for them to discover the wide range of ways faith is practised globally.

Systematic assessment of RE enables staff to know how well pupils have understood each unit of study. They effectively target support for any pupil who may need it. This means pupils are given many different ways to succeed and so make good progress. Rigorous monitoring and regular training of staff means leaders ensure teaching is good. The carefully considered and well-implemented curriculum means pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and other faiths and worldviews. Their knowledge of how faith is lived out in this country is good. However, they have a limited understanding of how following a faith can be different across the world. Well-planned opportunities for meaningful discussions enable pupils to be confident and articulate in debating a range of issues. As a result of all of these elements, the quality of RE is good.

Pupils are constantly reminded that their voice matters and their opinions are important. There are many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, including the school council and ethos group. These provide



feedback and ideas to leaders who listen and often take action following discussions. This reinforces the belief that pupils have a voice that is heard. Through the curriculum, they explore issues such as freedom, conservation and climate change. This gives them an understanding of some of the problems faced in today's world. Pupils are encouraged to debate issues and to act on their concerns. As a result, they are self-assured and effective in using their personal responsibility to support others. They confidently tackle injustice through making their voice heard.

The Christian vision drives the culture that everyone is important. Pupils learn to live well together through the implementation of the positive behaviour policy. Restorative conversations help them to understand the feelings of others. As a result, pupils are kind and caring towards one another and their behaviour is exemplary. Staff are given many opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge. In addition, leaders promote positive mental health and a good work-life balance and so staff feel valued and appreciated. This culture filters throughout the school. It promotes the belief that everyone has the right to shine and that difference should be celebrated. The pupil special needs and disabilities (SEND) ambassadors encapsulate this belief. As part of the role, these pupils give talks about the challenges they face. This increases their confidence and their belief that they are valuable members of the community. The trust provides additional support for families. This enhances the way pupils who are considered vulnerable, including the most disadvantaged, have their needs met. Consequently, targeted support is given to help them to achieve their best. Therefore, this is a school where pupils and adults thrive.

Collective worship is at the heart of the life of the school. It is a joyful time, looked forward to by pupils and adults. The close partnership with both the local parish and Methodist churches further enhance worship. Both churches run regular worship in school, including a forest church. Pupils regularly worship at the local parish church. This includes celebrating Christian festivals such as harvest and Christmas. The 'call to worship' is a reminder that worship is a time for reflection, prayer, learning and celebration. This helps pupils and adults value the time spent considering their own spirituality. However, the way in which pupils articulate their spiritual experience is limited. Bible stories are shared, often with actions and sound effects. These allow pupils to not only remember the story, but to also understand the importance of these stories to Christians. The focus on Christian values enables pupils to appreciate how these apply to everyday lives. Those who have exemplified the values through their actions are celebrated. These 'let your light shine' awards are highly valued and reinforce the values and vision. As a consequence, the school lets the light of their Christian vision shine throughout all it does.

Information

Address	School Lane, Bunbury , Cheshire. CW6 9NR		
Date	19 November 2024	URN	143155
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	189
Diocese	Chester		
MAT/Federation	Rural Church Schools Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Nicola Badger		
Chair of Governors	Vanessa Greenbury		
Chair of Trust Board	Piers Bostock		
Inspector	Lesley Montgomery		