



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St George's Central Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Darlington Street

Tyldesley

M29 8DH

Previous SIAS grade: Good

Diocese: Manchester

Local authority: Wigan

Dates of inspection: 8 December 2014

Date of last inspection: November 2009

School's unique reference number: 131331

Headteacher: Mark Grogan

Inspector's name and number: Gail Fullbrook 530

School context

St. George's Central is situated in the centre of the town of Tyldesley and serves pupils from a wide range of backgrounds. The school is larger than average with just over 300 children on roll. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average and the majority of children are from White British backgrounds. The current headteacher and deputy headteacher joined the school in 2012.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St George's Central as a Church of England school are good

- Relationships, based on Christian love and respect, between children, parents and staff are strong and contribute to the well-being and happiness of the children.
- Religious education (RE) is taught in a creative and interesting way and children are enthusiastic and eager to learn.
- The school promotes good social, moral and cultural development in line with its Christian ethos. Children are kind and respectful of each other and enjoy taking part in local community events.

Areas to improve

- Strengthen marking and assessment procedures in RE so that children are clear about their next steps and make good progress over time.
- Develop a consistent understanding of spirituality across the school that will enable children to express their thoughts clearly and with confidence.
- Increase the involvement of children in the leading of worship to give them greater ownership and deepen spiritual understanding.
- Develop parental evaluation procedures to invite specific responses to questions relating to the school as a church school. This will ensure that the school has an accurate and informed understanding of its strengths and areas for development.

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

The Christian ethos of St George's Central has a good impact on the well-being and academic development of all children. Academic achievement is closely monitored and all children, including those who are vulnerable or eligible for pupil premium, make good progress over time. The school is happy and welcoming and in line with its Christian ethos, offers very good care, guidance and support to the children and their families. Comments such as 'there's a focus on academic achievement here but mostly the school gives every child the opportunity to shine' and 'welfare at St George's is second to none' sum up the school's commitment to ensuring that each child thrives. Good attendance is promoted well and is celebrated through well placed displays. This contributes to effective learning and supports the development of a sense of individual and team responsibility. All members of the school community know and understand the importance of the school's core Christian values. Children understand their relevance to daily life and make links between the values and stories from the Bible. A wide range of active learning opportunities are built into the curriculum which support good moral, social and cultural development. These include assembling a collection of war poetry written by the children and endorsed by the Secretary of State for Education and exchanging materials, including letters, with children in The Gambia. Opportunities for spiritual development are less well-structured and consequently the children's spiritual awareness and development is not as strong. Collective worship and RE have a good impact on the choices children make and on the quality of their relationships towards all members of the school community. The school's core Christian values contribute to the good behaviour of the children and the courtesy they show to their peers. Relationships are a strength of the school and are based upon Christian values and teaching. Parents know that their concerns will be dealt with effectively and promptly saying that, 'there is always someone you can go to'. They comment on the friendliness and kindness of the staff who 'live out the Christian values of the school.' Children have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures and understand that Christianity is one of a number of faiths represented in the UK. They speak with respect of the similarities and differences between the faiths they learn about. Children show Christian stewardship based on care and compassion in their support of local and international charities.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. Children enjoy meeting together and talk about their response to the different types of worship during the week. In class worship, the symbols of a mirror, a window and a door are used effectively to give the children a sense of themselves, the world and how they can make a difference through their actions. Children offer thoughtful responses when thinking about what Jesus would want them to do. For example, one child suggested that Jesus might want him to do something about litter being dropped whilst another was, 'reminded of Scrooge who goes from only thinking about himself to wanting to do things to help other people'. A number of images are used to encourage reflection, ranging from a candle being lit to stones being held as children think of things they can do to make life smoother. Worship is distinctively Christian and the theme for each week is introduced through a Bible story, a linked Christian value and an aspect of social or emotional development. The school has good links with the local Anglican church and the Methodist church. The vicar supports the planning of collective worship and leads school worship regularly both in school and at church. Older children are familiar with the pattern of Eucharistic worship. Parents are regularly invited to collective worship, both in church and at school. Older children represent the school at specific civic services such as on Remembrance Day. Reflection areas are in place around the school and children are encouraged to leave personal prayers and responses. Verses from scripture are used to stimulate thought and provide a focus for reflection. In one area a child, in response to the verse, 'Love one another as I have loved you', left a prayer about the, 'warm fuzzy feeling I have when I think about friendship'. Children are familiar with the Trinity and older children are able to share their understanding. Worship is planned around the church year and has a strong focus on

Christian beliefs, values and festivals. Children are involved in the delivery of worship and frequently read from scripture and share their prayers. This involvement however does not extend to the planning and leading of worship. A system of monitoring and evaluating worship is in place and is beginning to inform future planning and practice.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards in RE are in line with national expectations for the majority of pupils by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils appear to make good progress over time although current assessment procedures are not sufficiently robust to enable the school to track the progress children make in an accurate way. Marking does not always relate to the objective of the lesson and rarely challenges children's understanding or offers direction about their next steps. Teaching is good and has considerable strengths. Learning activities are creatively presented and children enjoy responding to such activities as developing a catalogue of 'God's Priceless Gifts' and contrasting the purpose of Luke and Matthew in their description of the nativity story. Children are confident when discussing their work. For example, a Year 6 child shared that, 'Luke believed that everyone was equal, the poor, women, outcasts, whereas Matthew told the story from the point of view of a Jew'. A Year 2 child talked of, 'cherishing things people give us that are very precious to us', and said that, 'we should cherish Jesus too'. Children have a good knowledge of biblical teaching and of important aspects of Christianity. By the end of Year 6 they talk with confidence about the other faiths and cultures that they have learned about. This learning is sometimes reinforced during themed weeks such as the multi-cultural week and spirituality days. Opportunities to relate RE to the school's core Christian values and to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children are identified in planning. Parents talk of the way in which children, 'learn to be respectful of other cultures'. The quality of teaching and learning in RE is regularly monitored. The newly appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about her subject and has good plans to address the areas identified for development.

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

The Christian ethos and vision of St George's Central is shared, modelled and understood by the senior leadership team, the staff team and governors. Children are proud that their school is a church school and know that this contributes to the way in which they are taught and cared for. Parents praise the school's involvement in the life of the church and the local community and comment that the school 'builds Christian values'. The school believes that children learn best when they are happy and healthy. A counsellor, a learning mentor and well qualified support staff are all outward signs of the school's commitment as a distinctively Christian school, to the well-being of all children. The school has some mechanisms in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school as a church school. Governors contribute to the evaluation process and talk of times, when appointing new staff, when they revisit the school's purpose as a distinctively Christian school. Responses to parent questionnaires, whilst not including a specific question relating the effectiveness of the school as a church school, do give valuable feedback about relationships, children's well-being and the range of opportunities offered. The school improvement plan gives high priority to the development of the school as a church school and the areas for development from the last inspection have largely been addressed. Governors and the senior leadership team recognise the importance of staff development and encourage participation in local church school cluster groups and diocesan training. The headteacher is involved in the planning and delivery of the Christian Leadership Course, a course the deputy headteacher has previously undertaken and the RE leader is currently taking. The vicar liaises closely with the headteacher and is involved in the life of the school. Joint events such as the summer fair, the community Christmas Carol service and the shoe box appeal strengthen links between church and school and contribute to the children's understanding of the wider Christian community. Parents are keen to commend the leadership team, saying that they feel welcome and well supported and know that their

viewpoint will be listened to and respected.

SIAMS report December 2014 St George's Central CE Primary School, Tyldesley M29 8DH