



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Oxton St Saviour's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Holm Lane
Prenton
Wirral
Merseyside
CH43 2HT

Diocese: Chester

Local authority: Wirral

Date of inspection: 8th May 2014

Date of last inspection: 12th March 2009

School's unique reference number: 105066

Headteacher: Ms Gill Pritchard

Inspector's name and number: Robert Haigh 660

School context

Oxton St Saviour's is an average-sized and over-subscribed primary school. The proportions of children eligible for the pupil premium and those supported by school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well below average. Children are admitted from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds and a wide area. Data indicates that children on entry are of broadly average ability. Almost all are White British. The school has experienced an increase in the proportion of children eligible for free school meals and those with English as an additional language in recent years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Oxton St Saviour's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Christian values underpin and inspire all the school does. The vision, commitment and example of the headteacher, supported by all staff and governors, ensure that they are deeply embedded in the life of the school, made explicit daily and make a significant impact on the personal, spiritual and academic development of all pupils.
- Outstanding relationships amongst all members of the school community are based on trust, respect and Christian love.
- It is a school where the children's views are valued, listened to and acted upon. As a result children are confident learners who respond enthusiastically and conscientiously to the numerous and varied opportunities they have to contribute to the life of the school.
- Excellent and mutually beneficial relationships within the community draw school, families and church together in harmony. The strong contribution of clergy is recognised and appreciated by families and the school.

Area to improve

- In religious education (RE), link feedback more consistently to learning outcomes to ensure comments always show children what they need to do to improve their work.

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

Love for children is at the heart of St Saviour's. Its life is rooted in Christian values and beliefs which inspire and inform its distinctive vision and mission. The school's motto 'Let us live in peace with each other' and Christian character show in the kindness, respect, love and empathy of adults and children alike. The inclusive ethos which values aspiration, nurtures God-given potential and celebrates the achievement of all has an impact on children's academic development. A Year 5 boy said 'God made us so it is important we do our best.' Parents believe children mirror the Christian example of adults in the school. Children trust those who teach, aim high and are excited by the teaching which promotes curiosity and enquiry. They feel safe, accepted and willing to take risks. A Year 6 girl stated that 'Teachers help us in our learning, encourage us to improve and push us beyond our limits'. Rates of progress and standards of attainment and achievement are high compared to LA and national levels. Pupil premium interventions are closing the attainment gap and improving children's social and language skills. Progress is monitored rigorously but staff, governors and parents affirm that children living harmoniously and demonstrating compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation in school and beyond is also evidence of their well-being and achievement. Behaviour is exemplary. Children help each other as play leaders, buddies and reading assistants. A Year 3 girl said, 'We are kind and caring because Jesus wants us to be' and a Year 5 boy added, 'We learn about the way Jesus forgives us so we can forgive.' These are typical of children's comments in linking their conduct to the school's values. Anti-social behaviour is rare and problems are resolved speedily by very effective staff. The school's Christian character supports children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The reflection areas and spiritual gardens are valued as sacred spaces where 'we can be quiet and calm to think and pray' as a Year 6 girl said. Children enthusiastically support charitable causes recognising this as Christian service rather than simply being a good thing to do. This was summed up by a Year 6 boy who said, 'We like to be generous because one of our Christian values is to be charitable.' The link with a Uganda school fosters cultural understanding. The eco-committee encourages stewardship and a sense of caring for God's creation 'because', in the words of a Year 5 boy, 'God made everything for a special reason'. Children express their spirituality through art, creative writing and design projects.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Great importance is attached to collective worship and a strong tradition of distinctively Christian worship exists in the school. It is highly valued and enjoyed by all members of the school community. During the daily whole school worship observed children engaged positively, listened attentively, responded thoughtfully, sang with enthusiasm and spoke afterwards about what they had learned and the difference it will make in their everyday experience. Worship is rich and varied, extending well beyond the daily act to activities such as Messy Church, Holy Communion, the series of 'Experience' events, classroom devotions and church services at Christian festivals. It is well resourced, planned, organized and monitored. The school's values, the Bible and the person of Jesus are paramount. As a result children talk confidently about Christian belief in practice, their knowledge of Bible stories, the life, teaching and example of Jesus and the inspiration they draw from worship. Their clear understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is developed by the use of the symbols of the Bible, cross and candle, appropriate greetings and responses, the language of prayers and the choice of worship songs. Children are confident with Anglican liturgy in both school and church worship. They take seriously the opportunities for prayer, reflection and silence which nurture their spiritual development. A Year 4 boy commented 'Assembly is important to us because it gives

us time to reflect about the day, pray and be calm.’ Children lead prayers and create their own anthologies for use in worship. They know the Lord’s Prayer and understand its meaning and significance. The range of worship leaders from within and beyond the school has grown since the last inspection. Children plan and participate on a frequent basis which enhances their understanding of worship and their confidence and skill in leadership. They would like an even bigger role in the evaluation of worship. The creative and varied contributions of local clergy and other visitors are greatly appreciated. As a Year 5 girl put it they are ‘fun and thought provoking in bringing the Bible to life.’ Parents value how the school encourages children’s confidence to talk about matters of faith without embarrassment, their habits of personal prayer and Bible reading and enthusiasm for church attendance which, in the case of Year 6, includes preparation for confirmation.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE has a high profile at St Saviour’s, a proven track record of academic success and makes a significant contribution to children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the school’s Christian character. Achievement of children in RE is in line with that in other core subjects and above national expectations. Monitoring and evaluation includes scrutiny by a link governor. There are secure systems to track the progress made by children through all phases. The curriculum, based on the Chester Diocesan Board of Education scheme, is aspirational with an emphasis on Christianity throughout, the addition of other world faiths from Key Stage 1, links to collective worship and the development of concepts and values based teaching in anticipation of the new primary curriculum. Children have a secure understanding of a variety of Bible stories from both the Old and New Testaments and can relate Christian teaching and values to their own lives. However, the children are not always clear from the marking of their work as to how it can be improved. An observed Reception lesson on the friends of Jesus helped children understand how to be a good friend. Children also have a growing perception of other world religions, as witnessed in a Year 3 lesson on Hinduism. Interactive, creative approaches to teaching and learning are used. Children say the opportunities for independent research, group discussion and peer evaluation improve their ability to question, their awareness of the views of others and their confidence in the use of religious vocabulary. In an observed Year 6 lesson children were able to explain the impact of faith in adversity and the challenge and learning they drew from it. Children eagerly share their knowledge of Christianity and other faiths. They ask challenging spiritual and ethical questions and value the opportunity in lessons to ‘talk things through.’ (Year 6). The strong link with the church enables children to have positive views of the Christian church in the community and through discussions in RE there is a growing understanding of the church in a global sense. The subject leader is inspiring and well informed, with a strong commitment to high academic standards and an excellent understanding of the role of RE in a church school.

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

St Saviour’s is a distinctively Christian, high achieving worshipping community effective in fulfilling potential and influencing values, learning and lifestyle within and beyond the school. A shared Christian vision to secure the well-being and achievement of children and adults alike is paramount. The headteacher’s spiritual, moral, academic and pastoral leadership is exemplary and she enjoys the strong support of staff, governors, pupils and parents. Attention is clearly given to the spiritual and pastoral nurture of adults in their roles and the valuing of all members of staff and their professional development. Middle and senior leaders participate in development programmes to enhance church school leadership. RE and collective worship hold a central place in the curriculum, are very effectively led and statutory requirements regarding their provision are met. This is a school which knows itself well. Self-evaluation processes have become more robust and effective since the last inspection and involve representatives of the whole school community, including the school council. The impact of governance on strategic planning for improvement, data analysis and evaluation of church school development is strong. Governors are vigilant in offering challenge and support and

participate in training to enhance their knowledge and effectiveness. The school's collaboration with churches, the diocese, partner schools, the local authority and wider community is wholehearted and mutually beneficial. There is strong parental support for what the school is achieving. The links between school, parish and families are harmonious and contribute to an impressive sense of community. The alliance is outward looking and supportive of a variety of local, national and international projects.

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