



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

The Beacon Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Heyworth Street
Everton
Liverpool
L5 3QG

Previous SIAS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Liverpool

Local authority: Liverpool

Dates of inspection: 17 March 2016

Date of last inspection: September 2010

School's unique reference number: 131311

Headteacher: Sally Aspinwall

Inspector's name and number: Gail Fullbrook 530

School context

The Beacon School is adjacent to St George's parish church and to Everton Park. The school serves one of the most deprived parishes in England. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals and for special educational needs support is amongst the highest nationally. Almost a quarter of children are from ethnic minority backgrounds and this proportion is rising. Most children live locally although a small number travel to the school because of family links or the school's reputation. Ofsted judged the school to be outstanding in February 2014.

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

- Christian values are deeply embedded within the life of the school and have a profound influence on relationships, attitudes and behaviour.
- As result of a carefully structured approach to prayer within worship and across the curriculum, the children's spiritual maturity is exceptional.
- The school's Christian vision prioritises the emotional well-being of the children and supports exceptional academic achievement.

Areas to improve

- Extend the range of opportunities for prayer and reflection into the external school environment to further develop the children's spiritual awareness.

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

The Beacon is a warm and exciting school where the Christian values of respect, compassion and perseverance pervade all areas of school life. The commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors ensures that all children receive the support they need to achieve their best results in high academic standards. The school's vision of 'Learning Together, Following Jesus', is important to the children. They readily talk of the ways in which they try hard to translate the vision into practice. The school is recognised locally as being a 'School of Sanctuary' for children, including refugees and their families. Staff say that their approach to attendance is 'determined and dogged'. Practical support is given to parents to ensure that absences are minimised. The school environment is rich with words and art work that encourage Christian reflection. A group of children shared their unfaltering opinion that, 'Everywhere you go in school you see things that remind you about Jesus and God'. Personal spirituality is well developed and children comment that, 'Jesus told his disciples they must go and do kind things so we should too'. Children refer to their Christian values when explaining why behaviour is good and talk of the importance of letting go of hurt when forgiving someone. They recognise the importance of being resilient and courageous when something is difficult. Teachers skilfully acknowledge times of awe and wonder across all areas of the curriculum and encourage personal reflection. As a result children show maturity when expressing personal thoughts and beliefs. Ethos afternoons, planned by the school ethos group, support the children's understanding of each Christian value and the Biblical teaching that underpins it. Children learn of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith from their peers and from visitors to the school. They have a deep respect for difference and enjoy finding out from their friends about other parts of the world. Children say they like learning about amazing things in school and talk of religious education (RE) as being an exciting subject. During one RE lesson children applied their understanding of the crucifixion and their knowledge of theological terms to religious art works. They confidently share their responses whilst listening sensitively to the views of others. RE is taught through art, drama, investigation and discussion and supports and develops the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is an important part of each day. Children comment that it is a time when they stop and think, and when they feel happy and joyful. Singing is enthusiastic and thoughtful and is enriched by vocal and instrumental soloists. Worship has a Biblical foundation and features of Anglican liturgy and practice form its structure. The beautiful worship table forms a focus for worship and candles are lit as a reminder that Jesus is present. The children have an age appropriate understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Familiarity with a wide range of Bible stories deepens the children's understanding of the impact Christian values have on their lives. The school's approach to encouraging personal prayer is exceptional. School terminology for types of prayers include cuddle, bubble, teaspoon and thankful playdough prayers. The children understand what is meant by each type and talk with sincerity about their favourite ways of praying. Prayers spoken during worship are meaningful and show spiritual maturity. Children show their commitment to reflecting on what Jesus would do by raising money for a number of local, national and international charities. Recently children have donated teddy bears to Project Paddington. They talk of the sacrifice of passing on a favourite bear and the joy of knowing that their bear would be rehomed with a Syrian child. Worship is planned to reflect the church year and worship leaders include many adults and children. Younger children confide that worship led by their peers is fun. They say that it helps them to understand what stories mean when older children tell them about Jesus. The children worship regularly in St George's church. They say that they know members of the church ministry team well and appreciate the times when they have informal contact with church members. Worship

is effectively monitored and evaluated and through surveys of parents, staff and children and the information gained supports the development of future worship plans.

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

Staff and governors articulate and implement a clear and explicit Christian vision that is securely embedded in Christian values. Expectations are high for the children and they, in turn, strive to do their best. School leaders are keen to ensure that the impact of any economic or social deprivation is minimised. Parents reinforce the children's understanding of Christian values at home and appreciate the ways in which the school involves them in their children's education. The school is committed to a cycle of effective evaluation of all aspects of school life. Leaders are visionary in their approach to strengthening and deepening the impact of the school as a church school. Actions focussing on aspects of Christian distinctiveness are built into the school's development plan and lead to new and exciting ways of sharing the teachings of Jesus. The foundation of the wider curriculum is underpinned by Christian principles. A clear understanding of the school's vision statement and the Christian values that support it, leads to excellent attitudes to learning and behaviour, both within classrooms and at playtimes. A child's wise statement, 'Peace blossoms when there is no conflict', exemplifies the maturity children show in their moral and social development. Parents comment that the children enjoy learning about different religions and are accepting of the different ways in which others live. The children's understanding of the society in which they live, locally, nationally and internationally, is well supported by good contacts with local dignitaries and visitors from overseas. Links with the church of St George's are mutually beneficial. The ministry team make a strong contribution to the distinctiveness of the school. Links with the Diocese, the North Liverpool Teaching School Partnership and local faith schools support the professional development of staff. They allow teachers to share their good practice as a faith school and to learn from others. Worship and RE are vibrant and creative experiences for the children because they are led by teachers with a passion for their area of responsibility. This passion for providing the very best of learning and nurturing experiences runs through all aspects of life at The Beacon School.

SIAMS report March 2016 The Beacon Church of England School, Everton, L5 3QG