



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church**

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Farnworth Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School

Pit Lane
Widnes
WA8 9HS

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Liverpool

Local authority: Halton

Dates of inspection: 16 May 2016

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 111394

Headteacher: Jackie Stillings

Inspector's name and number: Jean Forward (625)

School context

Farnworth is a larger than average-sized primary school. Most children are of White British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs is below the national average as is the proportion of children known to be eligible for the pupil premium.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Farnworth Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The extremely strong Christian leadership of the headteacher and her vision for the development of the school ensure that the Christian ethos is at the heart of daily life.
- The school is extremely successful in creating a loving, caring and inclusive Christian environment which has a direct influence on children's well-being and academic success.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is excellent and is rooted in the school's Christian ethos. Children are confident and courteous.
- The governing body provides highly effective support and challenge through commitment and expertise. This results in strong Christian leadership and self-evaluation.
- Extremely strong links between the school and St. Luke's church facilitate dynamic spiritual and social development within school and in the wider Christian community.

Areas to improve

- Involve pupils in planning and leading worship in order to deepen their spiritual awareness and their understanding of the key elements of worship.
- Introduce a variety of greetings and responses for all acts of worship so that children are familiar with this aspect of Anglican tradition.

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

A strong commitment to its Christian ethos and the development of the whole child underpin the school's work. All members of the community know they are valued and the ethos of trust and respect is clearly evident. Children talk confidently about the importance of the school's Christian values in their daily life. They understand that Jesus shows them how to live through these values. Positive relationships across the community are a key element in the school's success and are rooted in a Christ-centred approach. Parents say that children are able to discuss the explicit Christian values and that they take these into life beyond the school. Children's SMSC development is excellent as a result of the focused Christian ethos and the emphasis on nurturing and meeting the needs of every individual. Consequently, children demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and awareness of others. They feel safe and their behaviour is excellent. Children are extremely courteous, friendly and responsible. They enjoy being members of the school council and ethos group. They see this involvement as a way of contributing to the life of the school community. Children are able to share concerns with their teachers knowing that these will be addressed in a sensitive and caring way. Parents comment that their children are happy and enthusiastic about learning and school life. They say that staff, governors and members of the church work together for the children and their families. The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship, supporting a range of charities including Halton Haven Hospice, Children in Need and Sports Relief. Children speak of the importance of showing generosity and compassion for those in need. Displays and Christian symbols emphasise the school's distinctiveness and support the children's spiritual development extremely well. Reflection areas are a feature of every classroom. The school provides highly effective teaching about faiths other than Christianity through religious education (RE). This contributes well to children's cultural knowledge and positive attitudes towards the diverse nature of society. Data for 2015 shows that the number of children achieving Level 4 and above in reading, writing and maths was in line with the national average for children at the end of Y6. Progress was broadly in line with the national average. Attendance is above the national average. The school's Christian ethos shapes children's positive attitudes and behaviour in order to secure these positive results.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

The act of collective worship is central to the life of the school. Planning incorporates themes based on the school's core Christian values, the Bible and major Christian festivals. As a result, children are constantly reminded of the ways in which they can lead a life rooted in Jesus. The school places Christ at the centre of all it does and collective worship enables children of all ages to understand how the teaching of Jesus guides Christians in their daily lives. The children enjoy worship and engage well with questions which explore values and beliefs. Children enjoy times of silence and reflection which are an important part of the school's approach to prayer. Following a period of silent reflection on the theme of Pentecost, a child said, 'I know the Holy Spirit is with me'. Another child said, 'We can talk to God and follow Jesus's ways'. Children become familiar with Anglican practice through the use of traditional prayers. As a result, they understand that worship plays a key part in the life of faith which the school and the church foster. Anglican greetings and responses are not used on a daily basis. The team rector and congregation of St. Luke's church play an important role in the worship of the school. The team rector is involved in the termly planning and she leads worship which explores Christian values and the church's calendar. The school worships in the parish church for major festivals and this enables children and their families to feel part of the wider worshipping community. Members of the congregation lead the children through the Experience Easter stations, playing an important part in the development of children's ability to reflect and pray. They also lead worship with Key Stage 1 using Open the Book. Children in Y5 and Y6 experience eucharistic worship on a regular basis and they have the opportunity to be prepared for confirmation. In this way, they demonstrate their commitment to the life of faith which the school fosters. Children have a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The school has systems in place to monitor and evaluate worship. The ethos group meets regularly to evaluate whole school worship and staff, governors and parents also contribute to the process. This results

in positive developments which extend children's experience of the variety of worship. Children are not yet involved in planning and leading worship in an independent way.

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

The headteacher has a clear and strong vision for the school based on Christian principles and values. She takes every opportunity to promote the school's distinctive Christian character. She speaks of God carrying the school community and enabling everyone to do their very best. Staff and governors are committed to fostering all aspects of children's development and well-being through Christian care and love. In doing so, they recognise the importance of the school's Christian character in creating an ethos which supports effective learning and the promotion of equal opportunities. Christian values are incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum, reinforcing the importance of the values in daily life. The strong senior leadership team is highly effective in identifying clear priorities for the development of the school's Christian vision. The headteacher attributes children's successful learning and personal development to the Christ-centred qualities of the school. The school knows its children and their families extremely well and meets individual needs through a culture of Christian nurturing and support. Parents recognise the distinctive Christian qualities of the school and speak highly of the respect with which they and their children are treated. Foundation governors are knowledgeable and experienced. They have a clear understanding of their role. As a result, they support the school in a variety of ways and provide a high level of challenge. Action plans for RE and worship are included in the school's improvement plan. This ensures that aspects of church school distinctiveness continue to contribute to the development of the school's Christian foundation. The experienced RE co-ordinator ensures that the subject is taught to a high standard and there are clear processes in place to monitor and evaluate the school's provision. The team rector of St. Luke's church provides a strong pastoral presence in the school and presents a positive image of the church for the children and their families. The school is outward looking and it supports other schools in matters of teaching and learning. A strong partnership with the diocese has resulted in highly effective development of church school distinctiveness through discussion and training. The school is committed to fostering opportunities for church school leadership.

SIAMS report May 2016 Farnworth C of E Primary School, Widnes WA8 9HS