

# Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

## Eccleston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

### Vision

At Eccleston C of E Primary School, we believe that every child is known and loved by God and is made in the image of God. We are united in our vision of every child fulfilling their God-given potential as they are nurtured to reflect the example Jesus set in all they do. We aim to achieve this through instilling a life-long love of learning and development that is rooted in Christian Values. We strive for excellence in all we do enabling all members of our school to flourish. "Let your light shine" - Matthew 5:16

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

### Strengths

- Highly committed leaders, supported by their staff at all levels, ensure that the Christian vision, underpinned by clearly expressed Biblical values, inspires their actions. There is a deep and ambitious determination to ensure the school community embrace the vision. As a result, pupils and adults are able to flourish.
- The school's vision statement that 'every child is known and loved by God' drives its work. This means that staff get to know pupils as individuals, striving to care for them and meet their individual needs. Consequently, they flourish at this school, including those deemed to be vulnerable or disadvantaged.
- Leaders have planned an exciting and well-resourced curriculum that motivates pupils and captures their imagination. Through this, pupils' needs are well provided for, including those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged.
- Religious Education (RE) is skilfully and passionately led and is a strength of the school. A highly effective curriculum makes a significant contribution to the understanding of religious literacy. RE lessons are enjoyed by pupils who regard the subject as important. This supports good progress.
- There are many rich opportunities at Eccleston that enable pupils to develop a sense of their own spirituality. This is because it has a high priority in the school and opportunities for spiritual growth are planned.

### Development Points

- Simplify collective worship to ensure there is sufficient time and space for pupils to meaningfully reflect on more focused content. This will enrich their spiritual flourishing.
- Build on the current strengths of RE by ensuring that pupils further extend their understanding of the global nature of world faiths.



## Inspection Findings

Eccleston Primary School is a place where leaders and staff are inspired by the belief that 'every child is known and loved by God.' This motivates their daily work to ensure pupils and adults are empowered to 'let your light shine'. It creates a school that is very special and greatly appreciated throughout its community. In consultation with pupils, staff, parents and governors, leaders have carefully reviewed the vision. This ensures it is relevant to the needs of those it serves. The carefully selected Christian values of thankfulness, love, respect, forgiveness, perseverance and kindness are understood and embraced by adults and pupils. Through the sharing of relevant Bible stories and key scriptures, pupils are encouraged to reflect the example of Jesus in their lives. The tireless commitment to nurturing the 'God-given potential' of those in their school community, ensures that pupils feel loved and cared for. Governors take inspiration from the vision, know their school well, and are active in their roles. They are positive and encouraging as they support and challenge leaders. Their decisions, along with well-targeted monitoring and evaluation, enhance the flourishing of the community. A highly effective partnership with the church enriches the life of the school with active involvement in worship and RE. Leaders have readily embraced support from the diocese which enables richer opportunities for spiritual growth.

Pupils are at the centre of curriculum planning where their individual needs, interests and any barriers to learning are carefully accounted for. Skilled staff ensure the curriculum is both engaging and inclusive. Materials are sensitively adapted and interests followed to ensure accessibility for pupils with special educational needs (SEND). Imaginative curriculum planning means that music, art and drama enrich the learning experiences and provide creative opportunities for pupils to flourish. They enjoy taking their learning outside and draw inspiration from nature and the extensive grounds. In the words of one pupil, 'It allows me to be free.' Moments of stillness and reflection balanced with times of celebration and joy all contribute to their spiritual development. Highly trained staff deliver specialist support sessions such as art and play therapies. These nurture wellbeing and enable flourishing. There are a wide range of responsibilities for pupils to embrace. Examples include school council, ethos group, sports ambassadors or junior safety officers. Pupils greatly value these opportunities that develop their confidence and leadership skills.

Collective worship is carefully planned, drawing inspiration from Bible stories and key Christian values. An atmosphere of calm is created by carefully selected music, the lighting of Trinity candles and accompanying prayer. To ensure that pupils can meaningfully reflect on the messages of worship, key 'takeaway tasks' are designed to be completed at a later point. They enjoy engaging with these imaginative activities in their individual class reflection spaces or outdoor reflection area. However, the time and space for personal reflection within the act of worship itself is insufficient. Personal and collective prayer is an integral part of school life nurturing spiritual development. The local church works closely with leaders to enhance worship, regularly leading both in school and in church. Staff and governors support monthly Messy Church which is enjoyed by many pupils. These opportunities widen their understanding of different expressions of worship and strengthen the partnership between church and the wider school community.

Pupils and adults flourish at Eccleston because of the commitment to create a culture of compassion and love. Staff extend a warm and individual welcome at the gate each morning and parents highly value this personal approach. They talk of being well supported in times of crisis and are confident of the care their children receive. Pupils rightly describe their school as a kind place where adults help and support them. Staff model love and kindness in the way they speak and behave towards pupils and each other. They receive appropriate training to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils or those with SEND, ensuring a consistent approach. This helps pupils feel supported and secure. Parents describe their appreciation of the care and individualised attention their children with SEND receive. Leaders and staff work hard to model that everyone is 'known and loved by God' and celebrate difference and diversity. As a result, pupils feel safe and valued for who they are. They readily welcome and include new pupils, demonstrating kindness and love. Where any playground disagreements occur, staff use the school values to



restore relationships. A pupil illustrated the impact of this. They said, 'If someone has been unkind and staff have helped to sort it, but you don't forgive, then you are the one being unkind.' Staff create a warm and loving ethos in the school. This means there are many spontaneous individual acts of care and kindness shown to pupils and their families. They are equally supportive of each other and recognise that the leadership give a high priority to their wellbeing, enabling them to flourish. Consequently, they are proud to work at the school.

Pupils understand that they have responsibilities to each other and the wider world. The ethos group take great pride in the responsibilities they hold. Nominating and awarding certificates to those who have upheld the school values is a treasured honour. The work of the school council empowers them to give their voice to decision making. Examples include sharing ideas for the design of playground equipment and lunch menus. They greatly value these responsibilities. Through a curriculum focus on inspirational role models and relevant current affairs, pupils are motivated to be agents of change. Examples of this include raising parental awareness of the dangers of 'idling' car engines, and supporting a homeless charity appeal. They are well supported to recognise fairness and injustice in the world around them and relate this to the experiences of refugees. They show considerable compassion and care for those in need.

RE is well led and has a high status. The school works in partnership with the diocese, ensuring staff receive relevant training and have access to high quality resources. The recently reviewed curriculum, and time allocated to teaching, are fully in line with the requirements for RE in a Church school. Christianity is studied in depth along with a range of world views. Visits to church enrich lessons on the Christian ceremonies of baptism and Holy Communion. Cathedral and synagogue visits inspire a sense of awe and wonder.

Pupils recognise the importance of RE in helping them explore faith and ask big questions. They welcome the many opportunities to question and challenge in the safe environment of their classrooms. Authentic opportunities to meet and ask questions of people of faith are memorable experiences and deepen learning. Pupils enjoy a variety of approaches to both accessing the subject and recording their work which enhances understanding. For example, in describing the resurrection, a pupil referred to their collage depiction of Jesus on the cross, embellished with silver paper. She said, 'Jesus has so much love & light in him that he came back to life.' These rich opportunities, together with highly effective teaching, support pupils in making good progress.

## Information

|                    |                                         |               |        |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------|--------|
| Address            | Eaton Road, Eccleston, Chester, CH4 9HD |               |        |
| Date               | 2 December 2024                         | URN           | 111349 |
| Type of school     | Voluntary Aided                         | No. of pupils | 97     |
| Diocese/District   | Chester                                 |               |        |
| Headteacher        | Kathryn Rees-Wright                     |               |        |
| Chair of Governors | Nayland Southorn                        |               |        |
| Inspector          | Lynne Williamson                        |               |        |