

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

### St Aidan's Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

'I have come that you might have life: life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

'We shine like lights in the world as children of God'

St Aidan's Church of England 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.

#### Notable Strengths

- The school's clearly articulated Christian vision underpins the life and work of the school. It empowers pupils and adults to live out the values of courage, forgiveness, love, hope, respect and wisdom. Through the mission, this enables them to 'shine like lights in the world' within a highly inclusive and welcoming community.
- Collective worship is thoughtfully planned to provide meaningful daily reflection that strongly shapes the community's spiritual and personal growth. This supports regular reflection, enabling pupils to confidently understand and express their spiritual development.
- Inclusion is central to school life, where pupils are warmly welcomed and supported through nurturing, vision inspired learning opportunities. Staff strongly commit to supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enabling them to flourish and achieve their full potential.
- A deeply supportive ethos permeates the school, guided by thoughtful decisions that sustain a strong culture of care, compassion and respect. This is clearly reflected in the positive, respectful relationships and behaviour demonstrated across the school community.
- Religious education (RE) is led effectively, providing a well-structured and balanced curriculum that supports high-quality teaching and learning. Pupils enjoy their learning, show pride in their work and appreciate the importance of the subject.

#### Development Point

- Broaden pupils' understanding of worldviews and world religions, including Christianity as a global faith. This is so that pupils have a deeper appreciation of diversity in beliefs and practices.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

Rooted in John's Gospel, the Christian vision of 'live life in all its fullness' shapes a nurturing, purposeful and inclusive school community. This vision sustains a culture where individuals receive encouragement, support and flourish daily through their interaction with others. The school's values of courage, forgiveness, love, hope, respect and wisdom guide relationships and inform leaders' decisions with clarity and deep understanding. These values remain central to daily life and shape attitudes, actions, and expectations across the school. They influence practice in meaningful and consistent ways, showing sustained impact on behaviour and learning. They unite pupils, staff, and families, creating belonging and a shared purpose across the community. Leaders and the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust promote a culture where individuals are known and valued. Strong partnerships with parents strengthen this inclusive environment and deepen family involvement in school life. Academy council members visit regularly, offering support, providing challenge and engaging positively with pupils and staff. Their commitment ensures the vision remains active, visible, and influential in daily practice. As the vision is lived out consistently, pupils are inspired to 'shine like lights in the world.' They show compassion and thoughtful action in their daily choices, reflecting the school's deeply held values. Leaders, supported by the trust, champion the vision with conviction and ensure it shapes teaching, relationships and wider school culture. Pupils and adults speak confidently about the vision and show pride in belonging to a community shaped by kindness and diversity.

### Vision and Curriculum

Inclusion sits at the heart of St Aidan's, where pupils, including those who have SEND, are welcomed and encouraged. The Christian vision inspires learning through a nurturing environment and carefully planned lessons. This curriculum celebrates individuality, difference, and diversity, recognising these as strengths within the community. Thoughtful planning ensures topics and activities remain relevant, engaging and appropriately challenging for all learners. Pupils speak enthusiastically about outdoor learning, the whole-school Holy Island visit and the variety of leadership roles they have. These encounters broaden horizons, enrich learning and strengthen pupils' spiritual development. Spontaneous spiritual moments are valued and supported across the school day. These opportunities equip pupils, including those who have SEND, to live life in all its fullness.

### Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship shapes daily life at St Aidan's and creates a calm rhythm for the school day. Worship is planned thoughtfully and rooted firmly in the Christian vision. It provides rich opportunities for reflection and spiritual growth. Partnerships with local clergy deepen worship and offer varied ways to explore scripture, while leaders nurture strong church links that enrich unity. Without compulsion, worship invites adults and pupils, including those with SEND, to participate fully in the school's spiritual life. They think deeply about biblical themes and relate them confidently to their lives. Prayers and reflections are shaped and led by pupils with maturity and insight enhancing the diet of worship. Reflection spaces invite pupils to explore ideas, offering tranquil places for prayer and thoughtful stillness. 'Pause for thought worship,' in the school chapel, offers opportunities for quiet prayer and contemplation. These experiences help pupils and adults grow in empathy, confidence, and spiritual understanding.

### Vision and School Culture

A deeply nurturing ethos permeates St Aidan's, shaped by decisions that promote compassion and respect. Behaviour reflects the Christian vision and fosters joyful relationships where pupils and adults feel known and valued. The school is calm and purposeful, with pupils showing kindness and understanding towards one another. Pupils with additional needs feel supported because provision reflects their circumstances with dignity. Warm partnerships with families strengthen this culture, as parents are welcomed and valued. Christian values guide a supportive approach to behaviour that encourages forgiveness, growth, and new beginnings. Pupils



contribute meaningfully to school life, demonstrating empathy and compassion daily. They confidently talk about their responsibilities in the community and as a result have a positive influence. Leaders inspire high aspirations, enabling pupils and adults to be the best versions of themselves. Consequently, pupils leave St Aidan's carrying values that guide choices beyond the school.

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils show deep care for their community and engage enthusiastically in community projects. Driven by the vision and 'shining as lights in the world,' they participate in meaningful projects, including intergenerational work with local care home residents. These experiences help pupils demonstrate compassion in practical and thoughtful ways. Leadership roles, such as those on the school council, allow pupils to influence change and shape school life. Through worship and learning, pupils explore justice, fairness, and responsible citizenship. They support charities and foodbanks through events that pupils plan and lead throughout the year. These actions nurture empathy and strengthen pupils' sense of responsibility. Pupils speak confidently for others and work to improve their school and community. With trusted adults beside them, they grow into reflective leaders committed to a kinder world.

#### Religious Education

The leadership of RE is strong and effective, giving the subject a high profile at St Aidan's. It is treated as a key subject and has a structured and balanced curriculum. Engaging lessons and resources help pupils enjoy learning, and their books and responses show the pride they take in their work. Professional learning through networks with the diocese and trust strengthens staff expertise, supporting consistent practice and deepening the overall RE provision. Arts, crafts, and drama enrich lessons, making learning engaging and memorable. Younger pupils learn through storytelling and creative exploration, while older pupils explore ethical issues with accuracy, maturity, and insight. Visits and visitors, including church, temple, and synagogue experiences, strengthen learning through meaningful and lived encounters. Lessons encourage thoughtful discussion about belief and life in a diverse world. However, the wider context of worldviews and world religions, including Christianity as a world faith, lacks breadth.

In RE, teachers check what pupils already know and what they need to learn next. They regularly revisit key vocabulary and ideas so that pupils build a strong understanding of their learning. Trust and diocesan networks develop staff knowledge and expertise and support consistent practice. Leaders assess pupils' work regularly, make accurate judgments, and offer helpful advice. This means that pupils know what progress they are making and how to improve their work. Clear expectations help pupils share their ideas confidently and think more deeply. They are able to explain key beliefs with maturity and give thoughtful reasons for their views. Pupils use their learning in different situations and show respect for a range of beliefs through careful listening and clear explanations. Activities are adapted so that pupils with additional needs can take part fully and succeed in RE.

## Information

Address	Derwentwater Road, Gateshead, NE8 2HQ		
Date	27 January 2026	URN	132145
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	213
Diocese	Durham		
MAT	Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust		
MAT Chair	John Taylor		
Headteacher	Cheryl Lain		
Chair of Governors	Joseph Merritt and Ayo Akin		
Inspector	Steve Whelerton		