Section 50 Inspection of Church in Wales Schools Report Proforma

St Paul's C.W. Voluntary Aided Primary School

Oakley Place
Grangetown
Cardiff
CF11 7EU

Diocese: Llandaff

Local authority: Cardiff Council
Dates of inspection: 22nd September 2026
Date of last inspection: 2017
School's unique reference number: 401652
Headteacher: Ruth Wiltshire
Inspector's name: Jennie Downes

School context

St Paul's Voluntary Aided Primary School has served the Grangetown community since its foundation as a National Church School in 1864. The number on roll (NoR) is 216, including nursery provision. The school is a richly diverse community, with 155 multilingual learners and 29 languages represented. A total of 31% of pupils are eligible for free school meals (eFSM), and 10% have additional learning needs (ALN). No learners are currently withdrawn from collective worship.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Paul's VA Primary School as a Church in Wales school

The school's vision of a diverse family of learners who believe, belong and succeed together is evident across all aspects of life at St Paul's School and is lived out through the school's contribution to and participation in the Grangetown community. The school's inclusive ethos fosters a strong sense of family and values community relationships, which are central to the creative learning environment. The school's theological vision, centred on faith being "at the heart of everything", provides a source of connection and encourages members of the school family to care for one another, the wider community, and the environment.

The school embraces its Christian heritage alongside the rich 'tapestry' of faiths and beliefs within the Grangetown community. Faith is described as a "golden thread" that binds the school community and strengthens its identity. This idea comes to life in the Tapestry of Life mural, created in collaboration with a local Welsh artist. The school describes the artwork as "pulling the community threads together". This reflects the school's values, rooted in a Christian foundation and the community's diverse heritage.

The school has built positive connections with the wider community. These partnerships enrich school life and help learners understand their role and relationships beyond the classroom. Belonging extends beyond school; learners are supported to see themselves as members of the school family, the local community, and the wider world. Through its faith-centred vision, inclusive practice, multicultural heritage, and the community and global connections, St Paul's Primary School seeks to help its learners Believe, Belong, and Succeed together.

Drawing on the skills, knowledge, and experiences of the whole community, the school family provides positive role models. The distinctive ethos of St Paul's Church in Wales Primary School is built on shared values, strong relationships, and a belief in collective potential and the contribution of all towards building a successful future. The vision is evident in the opportunities learners and staff have to learn and succeed beyond the classroom.

Established strengths

Equity & Inclusion: Explicitly embedding anti-racist principles and rights ensures a pluralistic approach to the curriculum. All staff are committed to ensuring that diversity is recognised, respected, and celebrated.

Learner Agency: The learner-led, class inquiry approach successfully empowers learners to investigate their own identities, values, and strengths while providing opportunities to explore the diverse cultural contributions that shape contemporary Wales.

Recommendations

Continue to develop connections between the school's evolving vision for a global future to the Llandaff Diocese's deeply rooted cynefin and Welsh Christian heritage.

Support parents and carers in understanding how this vision is realised through Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE), and demonstrating how the deeply Welsh understanding of cynefin can be identified through the stories of place.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is meeting the needs of all learners including the contribution of Religion, values and ethics to the Christian Character of the school

St. Paul's Primary School draws on its distinctive Christian character and the core values of Believe, Belong and Succeed to create an inclusive, safe, and nurturing environment for all learners. By translating the foundational theological vision, based on the scripture to "live by faith, not sight," into everyday practice, the school community supports both spiritual growth and academic purpose. St Paul's School celebrates its place within the richly diverse, multicultural community through commitment to meaningful interfaith dialogue that honours each learner's unique sense of cynefin.

The school community is strongly anchored in its core values of Believe, Belong and Succeed, which cultivate a safe and nurturing environment. Learners arrive at school and are greeted by staff, creating a welcoming, family atmosphere. The school environment is well cared for, and the innovative use of outdoor spaces connects learners to the natural world through dedicated green spaces and regular opportunities for learners to experience and spend time in nature.

Every space in the school is treasured and respected, and learners are taught to care for and to value both the built and natural environments. Items such as found, upcycled, and natural objects serve as learning resources in both the outdoor learning areas and the classrooms. The children have ownership of the school vision, an ethos reflected in the mosaic positioned in the school foyer; the artwork demonstrates how the school is: A family of learners who believe, belong and succeed together.

These values of respect and care underpin St. Paul's School as a place that promotes healthy, confident learners and highlights the significance of spiritual well-being. Parents/carers share that the school values the children's personal character as much as academic achievement.

Daily routines include collective worship, prayer, and reflection, offering learners throughout the school day opportunities to develop emotional regulation, self-awareness, a sense of personal worth, and identity. The school values time for spiritual flourishing, and every classroom has a welcoming Prayer Space and reflection area that embraces diverse religious traditions and reflects the community's rich diversity. Parents/carers value the supportive and caring environment this provides. They want to understand how the school's Christian foundation is expressed and maintained within this richly multicultural community. This recognition provides an opportunity to explore the school's Christian foundation as part of Grangetown's and the Diocese of Llandaff's unique cynefin.

The school translates the call to "live by faith, not sight" into practical classroom enquiry and ethical reflection. Through RVE learners are encouraged to develop,

demonstrate, and articulate their personal understanding of faith, beliefs, values and convictions. Collective worship fosters a sense of belonging rooted in the Christian tradition, while being sensitive to the faith traditions and values of the community. The whole school engages with the richness of belonging to an interfaith community. Celebrations of Eid, Diwali, and Lunar New Year promote deep understanding and respect for different faiths and perspectives. The annual community Iftar during Ramadan, led by local faith leaders, welcomes families and the wider neighbourhood to share in breaking the fast, demonstrating the school's deep commitment to hospitality, inclusion, and mutual respect.

During the annual summer celebrations, the St. Paul's community family comes together for their Great Get-Together picnics. These events focus on cultural sharing to foster belonging and highlight the school's place as a family within the community.

The school is highly involved in the community, celebrating each individual's right to their personal story. The school works productively with partner organisations such as the Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning (DARPL) and Grangetown Pavilion. Nearly all learners recognise the school's inherent value of helping and caring for everyone. Younger learners share that the school is a very happy place and agree that their teachers help them whenever they need support. Nearly all learners agree they feel safe and cared for and that they are encouraged to be kind and to help others.

The impact of collective worship on the school community

Collective worship is central to life at St Paul's Church in Wales Primary School. It is inclusive and invitational, bringing the whole school together. The worship table reflects the liturgical church year and represents the Season of Creation. Children lead the call to worship and welcome everyone to this special time in the school day. A candle is lit, and the response is offered in both Welsh and English. Worship begins with a lively song, creating a happy, child-friendly atmosphere. A member of the clergy, who regularly visits the school and serves as a governor, leads a time for thought and reflection. A story about King David prompts learners to consider how they treat others and care for the world. The children listen attentively and reflect together on sharing and working collaboratively. A prayerful hymn follows, during which the atmosphere is calm, and learners respond thoughtfully.

The school's caring ethos supports learning about God while respecting each person's expression of belief and faith. Leaders recognise that learners may belong to more than one community. Learners share "that children can think about God and other religions and other Gods" and "I like learning about God and other people's gods". Most older learners say that worship helps them feel part of the school family. Another learner shares, "We are kind because you can believe anything". Learners are encouraged to use their voice to share their understanding of faith, belonging,

identity, and justice. As Ambassadors, learners lead rights work across the school, such as Values-themed assemblies.

The school provides a safe environment in which children can explore their spirituality and, if they wish, develop a relationship with God. Learners understand that prayer can be both collective and deeply personal. They are encouraged to pray, if they wish, in ways that reflect their individual faith backgrounds, helping each child feel valued and included as an essential member of the community. The focus is on understanding identity rather than promoting religion.

This learner-led culture of prayer is embedded in the daily routine. It includes a special school prayer, written by the children and recited together. Learners demonstrate a high level of agency, developing confidence and a strong sense of belonging. Learners are keen to share their heritage, faiths and cultural traditions, as well as their class-based learning. The children's Easter Tree Art project, displayed in the local community, demonstrates the children's action on the right to follow one's own religion and beliefs. Children speak positively about special times in the school year, including the "Donkeys and Nativity Story" with puppets and a visit from a real donkey.

The school's cynefin is enriched by its active and visible partnership with local churches and wider community. Clergy from the Cardiff South Ministry Area provide a consistent, supportive presence across the school, church and local community, and are respected leaders of the Christian faith. This relationship provides a firm foundation for the school's liturgical life.

The school's diversity is a shared strength that helps learners develop as ethical, informed citizens. Within the school community, learners respect one another's beliefs and show a genuine interest in learning about them. Leaders and learners work together to understand the connections between their faiths.

This ethos is evident in the school's hosting of a community Iftar, which brought people together for a large, community-led feast centred on unity and shared values. These and other meaningful shared experiences deepen mutual respect and reinforce the school's commitment to a "more in common" connected and harmonious community.

By providing a safe environment where learners can ask and answer questions, the school fosters empathy, understanding and respect for their own and others' heritage, beliefs and traditions. In this way, identity and relationship contribute directly to the spiritual and social flourishing of the whole school community.

The effectiveness of religion, values and ethics

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) at St Paul's Primary School is integrated across the curriculum and aligned with the Church in Wales' supporting guidance. Learning development is mapped to the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE).

The school uses the Church in Wales concept of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond to plan holistic learning experiences from Nursery to Year 6.

Early learners explore the beauty of Creation by making collage from natural autumnal materials. They begin to consider the importance of conserving water by designing ways to collect rainwater in the outdoor learning area. Learners experience wonder as they contemplate the globe, create Big Questions such as “I wonder why a dolphin has a fin on its back?”, and consider that some questions may not always have answers. Older learners reflect on how they care for Creation, writing letters to a child in 2076 about actions taken in 2026 to help protect the future. They also engage with Psalm 8 and reflect on its deeper meaning.

The school promotes an objective, critical and pluralistic approach to RVE. Learners explore the world through reflection and enquiry shaped by curiosity, awe and wonder. Younger learners use “I wonder…why, if, how and what” questions to explore the mysteries of Creation. Older learners strengthen their critical thinking and oracy through philosophical enquiry. For example, they interpret the deeper meanings in the Parable of the Mustard Seed and consider the values needed to build a better and more just world.

At St Paul’s Primary School, a values-based curriculum supports learners in becoming ethically informed global citizens. Learners explore the impact of their actions and consider how their voices can inspire change. Class inquiries provide opportunities to plan and take practical action for the benefit of others in school, the local community and the wider world. These experiences provide learners with meaningful ways to put their values into practice and contribute positively to the communities they are part of.

Learners recognise the diversity of their community and share what they learn about the importance of cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices. The school celebrates everyone’s rights and encourages community members to share their stories. As a rights-respecting school, St Paul’s Primary School provides opportunities for all to explore and understand their rights and how they are shared across the globe. Learner voice is an important part of the school’s approach. Nearly all older learners agree that, in RVE, they can ask questions, share their ideas and listen to others. These opportunities foster respectful discussion and help learners engage with different perspectives.

The school embeds the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and DARPL in its approach. Anti-racist principles are explicitly embedded in RVE and in wider curriculum planning. This understanding enables learners to challenge stereotypes, recognise prejudice, and develop respect for all people and communities. It promotes respect for diverse faith and cultural backgrounds, building a proud sense of cynefin, heritage, and identity in every learner. All parents/carers who provided feedback agree that RVE helps their child understand Christianity and other world faiths and beliefs. They note that a clearer understanding of RVE could

help families have relevant conversations at home and encourage their child's deeper curiosity in their learning. Parents/carers would like to support their children's learning by viewing what is learnt in RVE through the lens of their own faith and by exploring connections between faiths.

The effectiveness of the leadership of the school as a church school

St Paul's Primary School is a collaborative learning environment that nurtures a lifelong love of learning. Staff are committed to continuing their professional growth and to working as a team to create a purposeful learning environment where everyone's contributions are valued. The child's voice is recognised as an important part of the school leadership, with pupil action groups supporting the school's work. Learners are encouraged to use their agency, work with the local community, write to public figures, and use their voice to highlight what matters.

Governors support the school's vision and are committed to the school's role in the community. The school strives to create a safe, nurturing environment in which every learner is respected and valued, and their dignity is upheld. It seeks to enable all learners to thrive academically, emotionally and socially. Parents/carers recognise the school's contribution to fostering kindness, respect, and compassion, as well as supporting learners' confidence, wellbeing, and personal development.

The school's work as a learning organisation is reflected in its culture of professional learning. Staff share their expertise through established links with Cardiff Metropolitan University, supporting and mentoring BA and PGCE initial teacher education students. The school maintains strong strategic leadership links, as demonstrated by its contributions to anti-racist teaching. This work has been featured in Welsh Government documentation and the national media. Furthermore, the school's dedication to an inclusive ethos and an anti-racist curriculum has earned both regional and national recognition.

As an anti-racist school, St Paul's hosts cluster learning events and supports professional development for schools and clusters across Wales. Learners act as the school's Ambassadors and speak with pride about their heritage and how they recognise, challenge, and actively dismantle racism within their school and local community. Nearly all learners agree "the school helps me to think about big questions in life".

St Paul's Church in Wales Primary School actively develops positive relationships with local Christian and multifaith communities, enabling learners to encounter a diverse range of teachings and expressions of faith. Learners also contribute to leadership and school life through roles such as Faith Friends, who help lead prayer and promote interfaith understanding across the school community. The school supports a cohesive local community through civic partnerships and events. It works closely with Cardiff University's Grangetown Community Gateway project

on a range of local initiatives. To demonstrate that the community has "more in common", the school hosts events including Great Get Together gatherings, community picnics, and the iftar during Ramadan. These events bring together families, the clergy, the local imam, and faith leaders from diverse backgrounds to share food and celebrate their shared cynefin.

School leaders develop strong working relationships with local community and faith leaders, councillors, Members of the Senedd, and Members of Parliament. By welcoming these civic leaders into the school, they share its work, inclusive ethos, and values, reinforcing St Paul's Church in Wales Primary School's contribution to building social cohesion and mutual respect.

Spotlight: Taking Action Against Racism and Celebrating Learner Advocacy

The Practice: St Paul's demonstrates how literacy and enquiry learning in RVE work in harmony to nurture learners as Ambassadors, effectively empowering learner voice to help build an inclusive, anti-racist community. Through this interdisciplinary approach, learners successfully develop the skills, confidence, and literacy required to actively recognise, challenge, and dismantle racism within their school, local, and wider community.

Lived Community Impact: This culture of advocacy extends beyond the classroom into the heart of the community. During the annual summer celebrations, the St. Paul's community family comes together for their Great Get-Together picnics. These events intentionally focus on cultural sharing to foster a deep sense of belonging, highlighting the school as an inclusive family within the wider community.

The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship	**Y**
The school meets the statutory requirement for religion, values and ethics	**Y**
Religion, values and ethics is objective, critical and pluralistic	**Y**