



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Alderman Cogan's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Whitworth Street
Hull
HU9 3HJ

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: York

Local authority: Kingston Upon Hull

Date of inspection: 23 October 2015

Date of last inspection: July 2011

School's unique reference number: 118053

Headteacher: Jeanette Sutherland

Inspector's name and number: Lizzie McWhirter 244

School context

Almost all of Alderman Cogan's 411 pupils are from a White British background. In addition, 41 pupils are currently on roll in the nursery, which opened in 2013. This inclusive school is recognised by the local Autistic Society as providing high quality education for children on the autistic spectrum. Thus, the number of these pupils is higher than average. Since the last inspection, there have been changes amongst the clergy, governing body and staff. The school is a member of the East Hull Collaborative Trust.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Alderman Cogan's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The unswerving Christian vision of the headteacher and senior leaders is lived out and valued by everyone. This ensures the Christian character of the school permeates all school policy and practice.
- The nurturing and inclusive environment in this welcoming and worshipping community is supportive of all, regardless of faith background.
- Strong leadership and good governance is rooted in the mutual and substantial partnership between church and school.

Areas to improve

- Ensure pupils grow in their understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith and encounter people of other faiths. This includes learning about the saints, such as St Aidan and what it means to be part of the Anglican family outside their own community.
- Enable children and adults to deepen their knowledge and understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit to nurture their own personal and spiritual growth.

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

The strong Christian character which is indicative of the excellent spirit which Alderman Cogan's embodies is embedded in every aspect of school life. This school sustains an exemplary and inspirational learning environment where the whole curriculum is presented within a Christian world view. This gives perspective and meaning to all learning and enables pupils to flourish. Furthermore, everyone's God given talents and gifts are nurtured for the service of each other, the school, the community and the glory of God. Consequently, relationships are excellent and attitudes to learning are very positive. This is because the school follows Jesus' example. In addition, staff go the extra mile in genuinely caring for, and respecting, parents and their children as part of the school family. They provide support where it is most needed. Good examples include staff working closely with parents to support good attendance. As a result, attendance is above the national average. Pupils speak with pride of this community, especially the friendships they enjoy. Pupils new to school say they feel accepted here where there is no bullying and 'we all belong to God'. Alderman Cogan's is seen as a school which does not exclude children. Pupil progress rapidly from their individual starting points. The school attributes this to having a nursery on site as well as governors funding extra staffing, with a focus on what the children need. Consequently, all groups of children achieve well and academic standards are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. This includes pupils with special educational needs and complex difficulties. They also make good progress within a culture of praise where the school's Christian ethos is made explicit. Christian values of perseverance, trust, forgiveness and respect are positively encouraged. Consequently, children develop a sense of who they are and the difference they can make in the community. For some, their aspirations include becoming people who uphold the law or teaching assistants because of the good role models they experience. Pupils experience their Christian value of service through their charity fundraising activities. They enjoy learning about different cultures through their worship and religious education [RE]. This includes learning Mandarin as part of the school's China link. In addition, the recent Big RE Day had a focus on Sikhism, which affirmed the faith of a small number of pupils.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Integral to the worship at Alderman Cogan's is the building of a sacred space into which adults and children can step together daily. This is richly enhanced by the strong partnership between St Aidan's Church and the school. The school is therefore a welcoming and worshipping community, where prayer features strongly, contributing significantly to the spiritual growth of the whole community. The vicar of St Aidan's is a welcome and regular visitor to school, leading worship four times a term. The school equally enjoys going to church termly. Pupils enjoy responding at the start of worship to the question, 'What does God require of us?' by saying, 'Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God'. Pupils say they would like to see other people leading worship and welcome more worship outdoors. They recall 'Jesus ascended to heaven' when each Ascension-tide they release balloons on the school field. Pupils are growing in their understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They explain, 'Jesus died for us. He shows us what to do. We see him in our hearts. The flame of the Holy Spirit helped the disciples to talk in different languages'. Pupil voice is valued as part of on-going evaluation of worship. Pupils too value such experiences to share their views on worship and to 'talk as it comes from your heart'. However, the school acknowledges that further work to enable pupils to understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity as part of their worshipping experience would further support their understanding of Christian belief and practice. Also deepening pupils' knowledge of the saints, such as St Aidan, after whom their church is named, would nurture their personal and spiritual growth.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE consistently enjoys a high profile at Alderman Cogan's and is much enjoyed by its pupils. This is because Big RE days are now a strength of the school. The excellent leadership of RE continues to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently of a high standard. Consequently, results in this subject are above average. Tracking and assessment is embedded, with all groups of children making very good progress. Children know how to improve in their work. They ask important questions such as 'What happens when you die?' Year 6 pupils ask 'How might faith be expressed in music?' They are able to cite 'Amazing Grace', showing how John Newton's life was saved by God. They reflect that this hymn 'really gets to you' and say that 'it is a beautiful song that shows how John Newton changed his life when he gave up slavery and became a Christian'. In contrast they discuss a more recent song, 'Down to earth', which couches incarnation and salvation in their own words. They explain this as a song showing how 'Jesus wore a crown of thorns to make friends with the poor and lame.' Year 1 pupils are beginning to find out about St Aidan and enjoy their visits to St Aidan's Church. Equally pupils value visiting other places of worship and extending their knowledge. They are less secure in what they know about Pentecost, but plans are in place to address this at the next RE day. The school has also identified that learning more about Christianity as a worldwide faith would strengthen pupils' spiritual and cultural development and their understanding of global communities.

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

Leadership at Alderman Cogan's is strong, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This is because the headteacher, senior staff and governor all have a strong and unswerving Christian vision which is embraced by everyone. They all work hard to ensure the school's Christian values underpin all the school embodies. Governance is also strong. The wellbeing and subsequent achievement of all pupils is a priority for governors. They have a firm commitment to all people made in the image of God from all backgrounds and abilities. Consequently, they want the best for every child. Excellent examples include the learning pod with its dedicated staff nurturing those with special educational needs. Here, one such pupil was able to make a video diary of The Good Samaritan with lego models. Governors plan for and monitor the development of the school's Christian ethos, ensuring that prayer and Christian policy and practice underpin their work. Importantly, this includes the monitoring of RE and worship. These key areas are reviewed by the Foundation Values group, chaired by the vicar. As a result, their robust and regular self-evaluation continually and consistently informs the school's performance. The governors support new leaders amongst the staff and have invested in developing succession planning. Good practice is shared with other schools. This is especially seen through the East Hull Collaborative Trust where the headteacher is instrumental in leading the leadership development programme. Staff are continually improving their practice. Coaching and training is provided for all new staff by the RE subject leader. Consequently, RE and worship, which are well led, managed and resourced with passion and enthusiasm, more than meet statutory requirements. All areas from the last inspection have been successfully addressed with clear priorities identified for action. There is a real sense of identity and belonging with church and school working closely together. Very good community links include fundraising for the local foodbank. Parental voice is strong. Parents are full of praise for this inclusive school, speaking highly of its 'closeness, openness, and friendliness'. As a result, Alderman Cogan's pupils become 'confident young adults'. It is very evident that parents value the school as a big family where supportive integration is a feature in all classes and the oldest children support the youngest. A hallmark of Alderman Cogan's is that everyone is accepted and all achievement valued. There is no gender discrimination for extra-curricular activities. Boys and girls play football together and poetry club is popular with all. Parents also confirm that their children get 'excited by religion' and Big RE Days as well as links with the church.