

Context and location

St. George's is an 11-16 Church of England VA Academy. It is an average size 11-16 mixed comprehensive school serving the community of South Blackpool, with 1014 pupils on roll. From September 2008, our Year 7 intake has been heavily oversubscribed. As a result from 2015 St George's increased intake numbers from 190 to 210 to accommodate our growing popularity in the local community. The school continues to grow with a similar intake in 2017 and once again oversubscribed in 2018 demonstrating positive reputation with local community.

The Academy is situated in the South East Corner of Blackpool in the district of Marton. It is within ½ mile of the M55 motorway and is well served by other routes. Since September 2002 St George's has been the only Church of England Secondary School on the Fylde Coast, serving the parishes of St Paul's, St Christopher's with St Nicholas' and St Wilfrid's. The new leadership team and Governors are determined to hold fast to the principles of a belief in the worth of each child and the worth of our work as educators in a Christian Academy.

St George's joined Cidari Multi Academy Trust in April 2014. Under the umbrella of the Diocese of Blackburn, the Cidari Education Board is managed by a board of directors. The Chair is an appointee of the Bishop of Blackburn. A central team provides operational support in all areas including finance, buildings, staffing and school improvement, whilst there is delegated responsibility to each individual Academy Local Governing Committee.

There are 72 teachers and 120 staff overall. The Senior Leadership Team is substantively the Headteacher, two Deputy Headteachers, the school Business Manager, and two Assistant Headteachers.

The school's commitment to learning extends to staff as well as pupils; there is a well-developed support structure for NQTs and other new members of staff, and a culture of ongoing professional development among our teaching and support staff. We are continually looking to develop innovative approaches to learning, with an increasing focus on collaborative learning in school and beyond. All classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards. Whilst we appreciate the contribution that technology can play in assisting learning, we remain committed to the idea that it is the teacher who makes the difference.

Staff development and well-being form a critical role in our renewed success. Our CPD programme, now supported by the teacher development trust (TDT) and CUREE is designed to ensure that teaching is at least good or better and responds to internal and external monitoring programme and our appraisal system. It is firmly based on the identified needs of staff and it is designed for staff, by staff. Staff are supported through NPQSL and NPQML.

Our Vision 'Outstanding
through the provision of
consistent
academic
excellence within a
caring Christian
community'

Vision & Values

Our vision at St. George's School is to provide consistent academic excellence within a caring, Christian community. Our faith nurtures a deep commitment to our town and its young people and the desire to see both succeed and flourish. A proven track record and strong relationships with our stakeholders encourages tremendous support and participation, especially from parents.

We see our purpose as inspiring and equipping our pupils with an education that provides the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life and become responsible local and global citizens. We help our pupils develop a clear sense of where they are now, where they hope to be in the future and the journey they need to take to get there.

During their time with us, we aim to instil in our pupils six key character traits that will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives:

- Determination – a commitment to hard work and the highest possible standards
- Consideration – respect for the views, values and cultures of others
- Confidence – a growing sense of self and belief in one's abilities
- Resilience – a willingness to learn from mistakes and maintain a positive outlook
- Independence – taking responsibility for oneself and one's learning
- Stewardship – accepting a duty towards the world and everything in it

Our philosophy

Spiritual, moral, cultural and social development underpins academic development at St. George's. Our philosophy can be summed up as "Believe, Achieve, Care".

Believe

As a Church of England school within the Blackburn Diocese and a member of the Cidari family, we encourage an understanding of the meaning, value, purpose and significance of faith, by worshipping daily and promoting Christian values in our life and practices.

Achieve

We believe in the limitless potential God has given to us all to achieve excellence regardless of our backgrounds. By offering our pupils a rich curriculum and excellent teaching, we seek to inspire them by opening up new horizons. We seek to create life-chances by challenging and encouraging our pupils to aim high in whatever fields they choose to pursue and setting ambitious targets for themselves.

Care

The St. George's family believes a harmonious and inclusive community, built on the values of respect, honesty and kindness, acts as a civilising influence for all. We aim for a safe, healthy and happy school, where people of all faiths, and no faith at all, are welcomed and valued; a school that pupils love and in which they openly speak about feeling loved.

Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly". John 10:10

The Journey so far...

At St George's the pace of change continues to accelerate because of the school's 'clear vision, drive and determination'. We set our standards very high in relation to academic and pastoral support and have core non-negotiables that help everyone thrive. The school is currently predicting its best set of GCSE results that it has ever achieved based on strong linear exam assessment system and benchmarked through PIXL at other schools. In addition to this attendance has improved, punctuality to school has improved, low level behaviour incidents have been reduced and exclusions and fixed term exclusions have dropped dramatically due to structural and system changes across school.

The school is now in a financially strong position. This current academic year we have spent an additional £300,000 recruiting the best teachers aligned to our 'vision and values' and drive to be 'outstanding'. In September 2017 every position was filled by a specialist and we currently have a waiting list of teachers that want to work at St George's due in part of our clear 5 year vision and promotion of staff well-being. For September 2018 all positions are once again full.

What the recruitment meant for the school was:

- Establishment of a new leadership team and re-structured Governing committee
- Recruitment of new heads of English & Maths
- Additional teachers recruited in English, Maths, Science, Ebacc and RE to make class sizes smaller.
- The number of college tutor groups increased with fewer pupils in each to support those important pastoral relationships.
- Teachers have additional protected planning periods to allow for quality marking, feedback and implementation of our re-teach philosophy.
- A team of excellent classroom practitioners (Lead Practitioners) have been recruited to support whole school teaching & learning initiatives.
- Pastoral & SEN support was enhanced and a new SENCO appointed

The school continues to engage with the local authority and other schools. Historically St George's is a very inclusive school with low turbulence. In the current year no permanent exclusions have happened, which is significantly different to the secondary Blackpool context. This is a result of the changes in the behaviour system in school and a maintaining of the high standards set with the appointment of the new head teacher in April 2016. The school has now taken the lead in the Blackpool Family of schools in leading inclusion across Blackpool as part of the Blackpool School Improvement Board. The school also has strong links with the Blackpool Research School and meet half-terminally to strategically plan together.

Our Ethos

Our Christian Ethos underpins all aspects of our well-resourced and valued learning community. The Academy has recently undergone a vision exercise with all stakeholders and developed a clear vision from September 2017 of 'Outstanding through the provision of consistent academic excellence in a caring Christian community'.

The school's mission is '**Believe, Achieve and Care**' and the overarching aim is to be a fully inclusive school where pupils reach their potential. In all our recent inspections the harmonious and work-like atmosphere was noted:

"The academy presents a harmonious and well-ordered community. Pupils talk and engage in a relaxed and respectful way with each other. They make a strong contribution to a very supportive and inclusive community" & "The school is harmonious and the pupils relate well to each other" Ofsted

Community Cohesion is central to our mission and as a learning community we live out our mission statement striving for excellence through these values. Although we are a predominately mono-cultural school, our beliefs, values and attitudes enable our learners to embrace and celebrate differences.

"Everyone is accepted without question" (SIAMs) & "pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is of the highest quality" Ofsted

Our distinctive but inclusive ethos has personalisation at its core and pursues excellence in learning and teaching with rigour and determination. The school has a culture where change is embraced and creativity and adaptability are central to all aspects of our work.

"Pupils are proud to attend school, wear uniform with pride and assemblies and form time are used to promote an understanding of Christian values" Ofsted

We work hard to remove many of the social injustices faced by the majority of our community due to the high rates of income deprivation, crime and poor experiences of education. Many of our pupils are young carers and supported by our young carer champions in school. We instil high aspiration in our pupils and their families:

"Pupils receive good careers education, information, advice and guidance" Ofsted

We are pursuing this area further through the development of our initial work with LPPA 'leading parent partnership'. Our pastoral team deals with a significant number of safeguarding referrals and works to reduce an increasing amount of tensions and conflicts between families and within families. As a result, we are the stable factor in a large majority of our pupil's lives.

Our wrap-around support, enrichment and holiday programmes enable us to positively impact on pupils outside school hours. Shine Saturday school targets effectively Yr 7 PP pupils and is one of only three secondary schools in the north-west of England working with the Shine Trust.

Curriculum

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum to all year groups. Pupils acquire the skills, concepts, knowledge and skills necessary to prepare them to take their place as active and successful citizens of the 21st century.

At Key Stage 3, subjects are taught according to the National Curriculum guidelines. We set pupils according to their potential in KS3 across English, Mathematics and Science and gradually moved to a setting curriculum through the rest of KS3. All pupils follow a pathway model which allows them to make more than expected progress on their starting points. Targets are aspirational in line with 'academic excellence' as stated in the vision.

In Years 9 to 11, all pupils follow a core curriculum of English, mathematics, science, RE, PSHE and PE. In addition, pupils select courses from a wide range of GCSE options. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to study the EBacc suite of qualifications, with the most able following separate science courses.

The curriculum is based around five sixty-minute periods per day, organised as a one-week timetable.

Extra-curricular activities

Pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities in what we are developing and calling the St George's experience. Opportunities for foreign travel are numerous, including, in the last year, visits to Europe & America. All staff are encouraged to participate in the extra-curricular life of the school and contribute in any way they can. Extra-curricular activities occur in the morning, lunch and after school. Our Learning Hub for study is open from 8.00am in the morning until 5.00pm in the evening.

Pastoral care

The Heads of Year, Pastoral assistants and College Teachers have responsibility for the welfare, academic progress and discipline of the pupils in their care. Time is set aside each morning to enable form teachers to get to know each pupil as an individual.

Pupils are offered many opportunities to accept positions of responsibility in addition to the senior roles of prefect, Head Boy and Head Girl. Pupil Voice is important at St George's and we have an active School Council.

Spiritual care and worship

Since September 2002 St George's has been the only Church of England Secondary School on the Fylde Coast, serving the parishes of St Paul's, St Christopher's with St Nicholas' and St Wilfrid's. The new leadership team and Governors are determined to hold fast to the principles of a belief in the worth of each child and the worth of our work as educators in a Christian Academy.

The school motto of Believe, Achieve & Care informs all that we do. We try to establish caring attitudes and lasting values through worship and work done in the classroom, as well as, on a more practical level, supporting charitable appeals.

Each school day begins with an act of worship within the Anglican tradition. A Chaplaincy Team supports our worship and pastoral work.

At the last SIAMS inspection (2016) the school was judged Outstanding in all areas.