

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Church of England Primary School

Address	Delph Road, Denshaw, Oldham, OL3 5RY		
Date of inspection	6 February 2019	Status of school	VC primary
Diocese	Manchester	URN	105693

Overall Judgement	Grade	Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgement		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Christ Church is a primary school with 96 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The religious background of the majority of pupils is Christian. The school is an active member of the Dovestone Learning Partnership of nine local schools and the headteacher co-ordinates the diocesan Oldham religious education (RE) hub.

The school's Christian vision

We have **Faith** in each child's potential to become conscientious, caring citizens.
 'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.' (1 Corinthians 13)
Faith: 'I can do it'; **Hope:** 'Our future dreams, aspirations and achievements';
Love: 'Treat each other as you would yourself'.

Key findings

- The school's loving and nurturing ethos exemplifies biblical teaching about the inestimable worth of every person. All understand that they are known by God, made in his image and therefore of infinite value.
- Strongly motivated by the school's Christian values to want to work hard and succeed, all pupils make good or better progress from their individual starting points, as they strive for success.
- Inspired by the thoughtful, supportive teamwork of the staff, older pupils take real responsibility for supporting the learning of their younger peers. This develops friendship between the age-groups.
- RE is an influential core subject, providing thought-provoking learning challenges that stimulate pupils to discuss and debate religious belief with respectful, articulate tolerance.
- The headteacher has recently worked with governors, staff, pupils and parents to refresh the school's Christian vision. This has already brought about significant, positive change, but the school recognises that further developments are necessary to ensure the chosen vision underpins all aspects of its life.

Areas for development

- Enrich and further embed the renewed Christian vision by ensuring that stakeholders understand its importance within all areas of school life because it is inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.
- Inspire and enable pupils to look beyond their own lives to become global agents of change that support social action and strive to make a positive difference to the lives of others or the natural environment.
- Broaden the scope of long-term worship planning to ensure the continuity and breadth of coverage fully amplifies its emphasis on the meaning and impact of the school's Christian vision and core biblical values.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Christ Church is a school that values each pupil as an individual, nurturing all within its caring Christian ethos. Because a significant number of pupils have emotional or social difficulties, the school ensures that teaching groups remain smaller than average in order to address individual needs. The school's learning programme utilises the core Christian values of faith, hope and love in ensuring all pupils thrive. They are helped to appreciate how their personal effort can lead to academic success, so living out the core value of faith. An older pupil explained, 'Some of what we do in class is hard for me, but I know if I keep trying, I will succeed. That feels great!' Reflecting the biblical worth of every individual, teachers have ambitious expectations of all pupils, recognising and praising their achievements, which inspires them to aim high. Learning is tailored to particular needs, including those of pupils working in greater depth and those for whom aspects of learning are difficult. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils' academic achievements are in line with or above national standards, reflecting the core value of hope which inspires this aspirational goal.

The school's governors are proactive in their systematic evaluation of the impact of the school's revised Christian vision and core values. With the headteacher, areas for future development of the faith ethos are already in focus as essential aspects of the school's forward planning.

RE is a core curriculum subject that inspires pupils' enthusiastic study of a range of world faiths. The use of the locally agreed RE syllabus is augmented by the 'Understanding Christianity' learning resources. These ensure pupils develop appropriate theological language and understand key Christian faith concepts. The use of floor books to record learning outcomes demonstrates the subject's range and impact and shows that all pupils, irrespective of ability, are able to succeed well in this subject.

Pupils also live out the school's core values in their kindness, concern and respect for others. These attributes are promoted by adults modelling this behaviour, which pupils emulate. The resulting harmony of school life inspired a parent to comment, 'You can feel the Christian vision as soon as you walk into the school'. Behaviour is exemplary, with older pupils able to help in resolving minor disagreements. Pupils connect biblical teaching with the need for apology and forgiveness, and are ready to use restorative justice approaches with adult support. Bullying is almost unknown at the school, but staff are ready to support and resolve such issues, should they arise.

Because the school wants every person to flourish as a child of God, it carefully structures support for emotional health and well-being. Alongside in-school expertise, appropriate use is made of external agencies for additional guidance. Every pupil follows a personalised, open-ended 'footsteps of faith' spiritual exploration. This enables them to reflect on their own belief, religious or otherwise, whilst gaining insights into living a life of faith from worship and RE. *Philosophy for Children* approaches enable older pupils to question and debate both religious and secular belief and to form their own views as to what they wish to take from their spiritual journey. Spirituality is also systematically linked into the wider curriculum, with teachers actively providing regular opportunities for pupils to experience inspiration, awe and wonder.

Beneficial ongoing professional development for all staff is provided through links with the diocese, the local authority and increasingly with the local learning partnership of schools, particularly its Church school members.

Successful links with other local schools also enable pupils to build wider mutual friendships and to discuss and experience contrasting life-styles and beliefs. These approaches support the school's emphasis on pupils being 'comfortable as the person that God made them to be'. This includes consideration of ethnicity, identity, disability and religion, as well as gender and sexual orientation. The resulting open acceptance for all embraces Christ Church's core values and ensures no-one experiences discriminatory treatment at the school.

Pupils are keen to help in school and to display their Christian stewardship of resources in supporting a wide range of carefully chosen charitable causes. However, pupils do not have age-appropriate opportunities to become involved in practical action that brings about positive change and improvement that benefits others.

Daily worship at Christ Church is highly valued as the 'heartbeat of school life'. Its messages and approaches are inclusive, inviting all present to take part in its affirmation of the Christian faith as the foundation of school life. The Bible has a central place in worship as the principal source of knowledge about God and Jesus, providing clear inspiration and guidance. Pupils understand and value the relevance of the Bible in their lives. They do not, however, fully appreciate that biblical teaching is also the inspiration for their school's Christian vision and core faith values.

Worship is usually based around Christian teachings but also includes due mention of other world faiths represented in the community and wider locality. This ensures that pupils understand and respect the significance

of other faiths' festivals alongside the Anglican calendar of Christian events, observed and celebrated in school. Worship's relevance to everyday life is also emphasised in its themes and responses to national and international events and issues. Pupils benefit from worship taking place in the nearby parish church each week. It enables them to experience aspects of clergy-led Anglican worship in a traditional setting, alongside their parents, who also appreciate attending these services.

Adult leaders of worship, including the staff and curate, have recently been augmented by pupils. These young volunteers relish the opportunities they are given to share their views and thoughts on faith during worship. Evaluation of worship by a range of stakeholders indicates the clarity of religious insight gained by all age groups from pupil-led worship. In addition, other pupil volunteers promote faith values within school life. Whilst these pupils are very clear about sharing the Christian vision, worship themes do not sufficiently support and enhance the faith messages they strive to share with the school community.

Invitational prayer and reflection are integral to school life and key ingredients of daily worship. Pupils are keen to write and share their own prayers. These are used alongside traditional prayers and the liturgical responses that recount the Christian teaching of the Holy Trinity. This public collective prayer and quiet individual contemplation deepens pupils' spirituality. A pupil explained, 'Praying helps me to share my quiet thoughts and my work with God.'

Headteacher	Susan Callaghan
Inspector's name and number	Nigel Castledine 652