

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Oswaldtwistle St. Paul's Church of England Primary School				
Address	Union Road, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 3DD			
Date of inspection	16 January 2020	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary	
Diocese	Blackburn	URN	119451	

Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent

School context

St Paul's is a Church of England primary school with 146 pupils on roll. Whilst the majority of pupils are of White British heritage, a significant group are of Asian heritage. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. Since the previous denominational inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. However, due to her secondment to other schools, the deputy headteacher has been acting headteacher since 2018.

The school's Christian vision

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young but set an example for the believers in speech; in conduct; in love; in faith and in purity." (1 Timothy 4:12)

Key findings

- Exemplary leadership ensures that the clear and firmly embedded Christian vision has a significant and life-transforming impact on the life of the whole school community. Governors ensure that highly effective systems of monitoring are exceptionally rigorous and involve all stakeholders. Parents see the school as a centre of compassion, guidance and support. As a result, pupils and adults flourish and thrive.
- The experiences provided through the highly creative and personalised curriculum, religious education (RE) and collective worship result in outstanding spiritual development for pupils.
- The Christian vision is exceptionally supportive of pupils' character and moral development. Consequently, they have very high aspirations, are extremely resilient and passionate in their determination to make a difference and bring about change.
- The deep-rooted partnership between the school and the local church community provides inspiring and inclusive collective worship. Pupils are excited to take an extensive and innovative lead in planning, leading and evaluating wide and varied acts of worship.
- Inspirational RE teaching results in pupils confidently engaging in discussion about Christianity and other religions. They eagerly express their own views about diversity in their own society and further afield.

Areas for development

- Sustain and extend the current excellent practice in the area of collective worship in order to share more widely the remarkable work being undertaken in this field with other schools.
- Deepen pupils' understanding of the different ways in which Christians across the world worship in order to develop their global perspective of Christianity.

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

The strong Christian vision, firmly grounded in Christian theology, is clear in its great relevance to daily life. St Paul's words underpin an unwavering Christian ethos which inspires and enables the diverse community to flourish and achieve their aspirations. Pupils and adults report that both the Christian vision and the motto 'Working, Learning, Playing and Worshipping Together' shape their lives and are central to school life. Leaders have secured high-quality leadership of RE and collective worship resulting in very high standards. Church and diocesan leaders have established a very supportive relationship with the school which reflects the inclusive and compassionate nature of the Christian vision. Governors are a visible presence and committed to the success of every pupil. Inspired by the vision, they work rigorously with senior leaders to produce exceptionally incisive self-evaluation which is intrinsically linked to improvement planning. Strong and supportive systems exist for professional development in church school leadership and RE involving partnerships with other schools, the church and the diocese which have led to innovative practice.

The Christian vision underpins an imaginative and personalised curriculum. The school strives to educate pupils in many inspirational ways such as the enhanced experiences provided through the St Paul's Passport. Parents confirm that their children are extremely happy and excited by their learning. Every child is seen as unique and loved. Curriculum design is successful in ensuring that pupils from diverse backgrounds shine and become active global citizens. For example, as a UNICEF 'Rights Respecting School', St Paul's ensures that the Rights of the Child articles are deeply embedded in the curriculum. This results in discussion of real-life contexts and opportunities for pupils to apply their curiosity and express their deeper thinking and questioning skills.

Spiritual development is the golden thread that runs through the curriculum and beyond. Leaders ensure that opportunities for spiritual development are wide and varied. For example, the way in which the prayer garden is also used as a gardening area ensuring that children can gain an appreciation of God's creation. Staff actively promote spontaneous prayer and reflection at unplanned moments throughout the day.

Pupils, many of whom are disadvantaged, make extremely good progress from their starting points because leaders have successfully reduced barriers to learning. This can be seen in the impact of the work of the family support worker and the learning mentor in improving achievement, attendance and parental engagement. They work relentlessly to ensure that their work reflects the school's vision and its firm commitment to forgiveness and reconciliation.

Pupils exemplify the Christian vision in their actions. An impressive range of excellent opportunities provides a framework for pupils to make a positive impact in their community and beyond. Inspired by the Christian vision to challenge injustice and inequality, they are excellent ambassadors of social action and charitable works. Christian values such as compassion, perseverance and generosity are the foundation for initiatives such as 'The Compassion Experience' and 'Aspirations Week'. Pupils in the R.E.A.C.T. group are highly articulate and active in their willingness to engage in issues which they have identified. Their work is seen as exciting and innovative by the school, the wider community and the diocese.

Parents and the wider community believe the school to be a centre of empathy and steadfast support. They frequently refer to it as a family where diversity is welcomed and celebrated, and everyone is seen as precious to God. The Christian vision is lived out in the frequent acts of kindness which families greatly appreciate. Adults readily acknowledge the difference the school makes to their lives. One parent commented that 'The support that the school gives goes beyond education. Everyone is very tolerant and approachable.' Pupils report that they are being true to God through their exemplary behaviour and are proud of the 'Duty Bearer' certificates which recognise their significant contributions to the Christian vision.

The school's Christian vision is strongly reflected in relationships which have dignity and respect at their core. Exemplary leadership has resulted in bold decisions that have created posts of responsibility and developed the environment both of which have impacted greatly on the emotional and mental health needs of adults and pupils.

Staff work flexibly and creatively to ensure that pupils have a deep understanding and respect for difference and diversity. Well-Being Ambassadors frequently offer support to other pupils and successfully improve their well-being. Leaders acknowledge the importance that the exceptional school environment has on mental health. Everyone works tirelessly to ensure that it reflects the Christian vision through its vibrancy and inclusivity as in the case of the Reflection Prayer Garden which demonstrates a culture where every pupil is loved as the person God made them to be. RE is also celebrated uniquely in a thought provoking and stimulating series of panels on the playground depicting God's Big Story.

Collective worship is rooted in the school's strong Christian vision and is a vital feature of daily life. Meticulous planning results in a varied, sincere and spiritual experience. Adults and pupils participate with energy and report that it makes a significant impact on their spiritual growth. Pupils of different faiths speak confidently about the central role that Jesus Christ plays in worship, the Christian faith and their lives. They speak with equal clarity about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils take great pride in the worship that they lead. In particular, the Daily Broadcast is exceptional in the way in which, using modern technology, pupils spread God's message across the school. Pupils and adults are inspired to pray and reflect on biblical texts, Christian values and the school's vision. Enduring links between church and school have resulted in the Eucharist being explored in a creative and age appropriate way.

RE meets statutory requirement and the recommendations of the *Church of England Statement of Entitlement*. Highly skilled staff teach RE creatively. Consequently, pupils are inspired to explore deep questions without inhibitions and apply their learning exceptionally well. Pupils have an exceptionally wide knowledge of and understanding of other faiths. Whilst they speak knowledgeably about Christianity as a living and diverse faith.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

RE is monitored and evaluated rigorously so that strengths and areas to improve are clearly identified.

Very effective systems of assessment result in pupils and staff having a clear understanding of progress.

All pupils, including those that are vulnerable and those with special educational needs, flourish academically in RE. As a result, standards are high. RE successfully enables pupils of all ages and abilities to flourish through exploring religious, spiritual and philosophical thoughts and ideas.

Headteacher (acting)	Gina Smith
Inspector's name and number	Ann Aspden 858