



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Carnforth Christ Church Church of England VA Primary School

Address North Road, Carnforth, LA5 9LJ

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

Overall grade **Excellent**

The impact of collective worship **Excellent**

The effectiveness of religious education (RE) **Excellent**

School’s vision

The school is a vibrant, stimulating and caring educational community that exists to celebrate the uniqueness of every person made as they are in the image and likeness of God. With God as our guide, we live by the Spirit, for the Spirit and with the Spirit. This is at the heart of our school.

Key findings

- The school’s inclusive and deeply embedded Christian vision forms a firm foundation for the whole school community. This is enhanced by a clear understanding of the importance of Christian values based on the fruits of the Spirit. This results in excellent behaviour within lessons and around the school.
- Ambitious and inspirational leadership of this Church school drives exceptional opportunities, experiences and achievements for all pupils.
- There are extremely strong partnerships with the church and community groups. This results in pupils identifying ways in which they can live out biblical teaching with their deeply rooted desire to support those in need.
- Collective worship is vibrant, fully inclusive and memorable. This inspires pupils and adults developing their personal spirituality.
- Religious education (RE) is rigorously planned and challenging, giving many opportunities for pupils to think about life’s ‘big questions’. While pupils’ understanding of world religions is not quite as strong as other areas of RE, they still make excellent progress overall.

Areas for development

- To further enhance pupils’ knowledge and direct experience of world religions and cultures, so that they gain a greater understanding.

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 school's inclusive Christian vision, underpinned by Christian narrative, is at the heart of all aspects of school life. The vision is fully embedded within, and treasured by, the whole school community. As a result, pupils and adults are confident in knowing that they are cared for and loved. The fruits of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-23, weave their way explicitly through all aspects of school life. The natural way pupils articulate and link their actions to them is inspirational. They are, as the Christian vision states 'at the heart of our school'. Excellent relationships ensure that all pupils flourish and have confidence in the adults who teach and care for them. Parents speak highly about the school and with justification. A parent enthused as to how their 'child had blossomed' because of the love and care the school had given to them. They spoke of 'lives being changed,' as a result of the Christian values of the school. Parents feel proud to be part of the school community. Pupils love school and care about each other.

Leadership and governance are strengths of the school. Leaders have created a harmonious staff team, where morale is extremely high. In recent years a number of colleagues have moved from the school to leadership posts in other Church schools. Governors are extremely proactive and know the school well. They deploy their role to both support and challenge effectively. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation ensure that needs of the pupils are being met and the Christian vision remains at the heart of school improvement. Governors make strategic financial decisions in the best interests of all pupils. They carefully target funding to ensure that all pupils have every opportunity to make the best possible progress. Christian love and care radiate from all decisions. During the pandemic, staff worked tirelessly to meet the needs of the pupils and the school's community. Supported by the Christian vision the curriculum was delivered online. Each day started with an act of worship which parents and pupils found hugely comforting and supportive of their mental wellbeing. The impact school had through showing Christian care and compassion during this time was outstanding.

The curriculum effectively supports the learning and spiritual needs of pupils in a Church school. By celebrating the uniqueness of every person, the school skilfully deploys interventions and support to all. Pupils work hard and enjoy learning in the calm and purposeful environment. Pupils behave well and feel safe. They understand and value the behaviour policy articulating how the spiritual fruits of love, kindness and self-control are important parts of behaving well. The quiet reflective spaces in the school grounds are appreciated and give everyone somewhere to think and pray. Being able to reflect on the love of God, seen through the beauty of nature and feeling closer to God, helps them to become a better person.

Inspired by the Christian vision, links between the school, the church and the local community are extensive and exemplary. All are proud to be part of a family who love and care for each other. Growing and thriving is not just what leaders want for their pupils but for everyone. Instigated by the pupils' acute awareness of both local and global issues, they work together to make a difference in the world God made. Pupils demonstrate this desire to make a difference in many ways. As one element of their pupil leadership they value and enjoy being part of 'Rota Kids'. This group are closely and proactively linked to the local Rotary club. The pupils are very eager and inspired to identify projects often linked to themes highlighted in collective worship or from the news; most recently supporting a local project transporting aid to the Polish border. The pupils explicitly link the projects undertaken, to their living by the fruits of the Spirit. Pupils' extensive knowledge of Christianity around the world is enhanced by a weekly lunchtime club led by the international students from a local Bible college. Pupils have an assured understanding of world religions and different cultures. However, in recent times, and due to the pandemic, pupils have not had frequent opportunities to visit other places of worship and experience cultural diversity. This places a limitation on their understanding. The school, sensibly, has realistic plans to resume these experiences. Curriculum enriching activities

give excellent opportunities for pupils to identify, develop and celebrate other skills and talents. Excitement around a recent dance competition and the beautiful singing of the choir demonstrate the love, care and quality of provision.

The highly inclusive and enjoyable collective worship, makes a significant difference to the lives of pupils and adults. It is invitational, inspirational and thought-provoking. Knowledgeable staff also confidently lead worship ensuring opportunities for spiritual development are at its heart. Each theme is carefully planned. Reflection and prayer are important parts of each act of worship. Pupils value the power of prayer and are regularly given opportunities to pray spontaneously. This they embrace with eagerness. Designated areas of each classroom reinforce the themes and give impressive opportunities for response and further reflection. Links to the church are strong and supportive. The vicar regularly leads worship, and the Eucharist is celebrated with the older pupils at key points in the church's calendar. The impact of collective worship is evaluated by the headteacher regularly. The evaluation takes many forms and involves different people. The positive impact collective worship has on personal spiritual development is a recurring theme within discussions. Adults attending the worship speak of 'a spiritual and positive school' that 'supports through the darkest of times, with love, understanding and spiritual guidance'.

The RE curriculum provides the foundation for the whole curriculum. RE makes a very significant contribution to the school's distinctiveness and pupils' spiritual growth. Teachers enjoy delivering an extremely creative curriculum. RE lessons are exciting and stimulate discussion. Teachers access a wide range of high-quality training, that ensures they have an excellent understanding of the RE curriculum. Clear links are made to prior learning and well-constructed questioning challenges understanding. Pupils eagerly embrace the many opportunities they are given to explore life's 'big questions'. As a result they think deeply and are eager to question and challenge. Pupils' knowledge and deeper understanding of Bible stories is impressive. They make links and ask questions resulting in personal beliefs and convictions being explored and developed. The highly effective and skilled leaders ensure links to the Diocese are strong. The monitoring and assessment of RE is robust. The school contributes significantly to local and diocesan projects, ensuring that the excellent practice is shared with others.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Teaching and learning in RE is consistently good with a high proportion that is better than good. All pupils, including the most able and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) make the best progress that they are able to. The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	19 May 2022	URN	119522
Date of previous inspection	26 March 2015		
School status	Voluntary aided	NOR	116
Name of MAT/Federation	n/a		
Diocese	Blackburn		
Headteacher	Catherine Prince		
Pupil profile	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 above national averages.		
Inspector's name	Angela Knowles	No.	497