



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ince Church of England Primary School

Address Charles Street, Ince, Wigan, Lancashire. WN2 2AL

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

‘Let your light shine.’ Matthew 5: 14-16

Ince Church of England School is led by the light of Jesus within us all, guiding us on our individual journeys through life, so that we can grow and learn together to shine as one throughout our wider community.

Key findings

- The school’s vision for shining with the light of Christ is transformational for pupils and adults. It springs from leaders’ deep understanding of the needs of the town of Ince and their passion for enabling all to flourish. As a result, the school is a compassionate, vibrant community which shines a light into the local area. Relationships are excellent. Bold decision-making removes barriers to individuals’ ability to shine. The school is highly effective in working with a range of partners to support the most vulnerable.
- The vision for illuminating the local community drives a curriculum which gives pupils a pride in their heritage, alongside a deep understanding of national and global issues. They engage in innovative projects which have a profound impact on the local community.
- The vision for equipping all to be able to shine drives the commitment to supporting mental health and wellbeing for pupils, staff and their families. Leaders have prioritised the development of many members of staff as expert practitioners in mental health and emotional literacy.
- Inspirational collective worship has a transformational impact on pupils and adults. It is invitational and highly inclusive. It challenges pupils to let their light shine within school and in the wider community. It provided hope and strength for the school family during recent lockdowns.
- A balanced and progressive RE curriculum supports pupils in making excellent progress. The school’s strong practice in supporting excellent teaching and learning enriches RE provision. It ensures that learning for all pupils, including the most vulnerable, is tailored to their individual needs.

Areas for development

- Continue to share the school’s excellent practice. This is so that the light of Ince Church of England school and their deep, innovative understanding of what it means to be a church school, shine even more widely.

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 Christian vision drives transformational practice. It fuels determination to shine light into the lives of pupils and out into the town of Ince. Leadership of the school is excellent. The vision is shared effectively. All members of the school community, including pupils, articulate a range of biblical roots for the school's vision and its Christian values. Staff readily explain theological roots for their professional practice. Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Christian vision are embedded in systems for school development. These involve the whole school community, including governors. Self-evaluation secures highly effective practice.

Inspirational collective worship is at the heart of the school. Worship shared messages of hope and strength during lockdown and its inclusive approach engaged many families. Worship is enriched through the partnership with the local church and the diocese. Care is taken with lighting and the worship environment to ensure it is accessible to all. Pupils are excited about memorable worship experiences. They value the way staff share their own faith. Worship challenges all to reflect on the vision. During an Advent worship, following deep thinking about hope, pupils were invited to reflect on letting their light shine. Joyful singing in the light of the candles they held was deeply moving. A pupil responded, 'It made me want to let my light shine for the rest of my life.'

Time for spiritual development is integral to the life of the school, both within and beyond the curriculum. Collective worship regularly incorporates age-appropriate tasks for further reflection or creativity in classes outside worship times. Staff have a shared understanding of spiritual development which is implemented across the curriculum. As a result, pupils grasp moments of awe and wonder. They know how to reflect and be still. They explore big questions and express their thoughts through art and other creative activities.

The vision prompts a range of effective intervention to remove barriers to flourishing. During recent lockdowns, action included discreet provision of food parcels, investment in technology to secure access to remote learning and pastoral support for pupils and their families. Parents were impressed at the way staff walked the local estate to give practical support and encouragement. The school's response was recognised when they became the first nationally to achieve the 'Investors in Families National Lockdown Award'.

The vision for enabling all to shine means that mental health and wellbeing is a priority. There is a strong pastoral team who have the time needed to provide intervention as required. Support extends to staff and families who speak warmly about the care they receive from the school. Many staff have achieved the Trauma Informed School diploma which equips them to support pupils who have suffered difficulties in childhood. These trained staff run the 'Happy Lunchtimes' initiative which includes forest school, prayer and reflection, sports, yoga and time for unstructured play. This is having a profound impact on pupils' behaviour and their readiness for learning in the afternoon.

Character development is excellent. Pupils develop leadership skills as they take responsibility during 'Happy Lunchtimes'. The ethos group decided to develop the lunchtime forest school activity into forest church. They lead reflection, craft activities and prayer in the forest area. Pupils also take a lead in promoting safeguarding. During lunchtime, the pupil group, Safeguarding Soldiers, raise awareness of neglect and the need to speak out about abuse. They provide lunchtime access to laptops so that pupils can use the 'Toot Toot app' to report anxieties confidentially. The newsletter from the Safeguarding Soldiers has now been shared widely and this initiative has been adopted in many local schools.

The vision for shining a light into the town of Ince has a profound impact on the curriculum. The curriculum is focused on the themes of 'heritage, enlightenment and advocacy'. 'Heritage' includes an exploration of Ince and its history, which engages families. As a result, a rich local context is provided for learning. This supports all pupils in making progress, including those with SEND. Aspirations are high and all, including the most able, are challenged. The school seeks to create 'a contagious love of learning'. The curriculum design means pupils gain pride in their local community. Effective support for local families is also provided through the community library opened by the school and the partnership with the Startwell Centre.

Pupils are passionate about inclusion and have a deep respect for diversity. The curriculum theme of 'Enlightenment' looks beyond Ince, exploring different faiths and cultures, as well as national and international issues. RE is seen as the 'core of all core subjects'. It makes a strong contribution to positive attitudes to diversity. Inspirational RE lessons

in Key Stage 1 provide pupils with immersive experiences, for example, of Jewish life, which are memorable and contribute strongly to their spiritual development.

The curriculum provides effective support for pupils' development as advocates of social justice, particularly through art or design and technology. Pupils are inspired to take action on issues such as deforestation and child poverty through their exploration of artwork from around the world. One creative response was the adoption of the local train station by the school. This was a sad and dark place. In response to their vision for shining into the local community, the school now shines light into the station. It is filled with pupils' artwork, aromatic plants and posters offering support for mental health.

The vision includes the commitment to enabling staff to shine. The inspirational headteacher and the strong leadership team have involved the wider school community in working out the vision. They encourage all to engage in appropriate training. This includes leadership training for senior staff and encouragement to attend college courses for parent volunteers. Staff appreciate the investment in their professional development and the collaborative spirit in which training takes place. They say their views are valued. One leader said, 'I have come on in leaps and bounds over the last few years.' The staff are a supportive learning community who take collective responsibility for developing each other. Problems are shared and rigorous evaluation results in determination to work with others for improvement. A senior leader, new to leading collective worship in a church school, spoke about how his understanding and practice had improved as a result.

The Christian vision for being a light and enabling others to shine through living 'life in all its fullness' results in innovative and creative practice. Many leaders already share this excellent practice beyond the school. The exceptional way in which the Christian vision is applied to some national initiatives means there is much for the school to share even more widely.



The effectiveness of RE is

Excellent

Teaching and learning in RE are excellent. The curriculum is balanced and progressive. It gives learning a rich and memorable context by weaving RE units into the school's curriculum themes for each term. Excellent use is made of assessment to identify individual targets for each unit. This informs planning of tailored learning activities for each pupil. Consequently, pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve and make excellent progress.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	29 November 2021	URN	106476
Date of previous inspection	3 March 2015		
School status	Voluntary Aided Primary including nursery.	NOR	381, including 25 in the nursery
Name of MAT/Federation	N/A		
Diocese	Liverpool		
Headteacher	Sara Lawrenson		
Pupil profile	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.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	The headteacher was appointed in 2019. She is also the director of the Startwell Centre on the same site. The school is situated in an area with very high levels of deprivation.		
Inspector's name	Carol Berry	No.	324