

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Nelson St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Address Hibson Road Nelson Lancashire BB9 0DZ

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 **Good**

The impact of collective worship **Good**

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

School's vision

Providing the best education and care for our children, families, staff and diverse community, grounded in our Christian faith, alongside British values, our school values of love, joy, perseverance, forgiveness, justice and hope underpin everything we do, nurturing each unique child to: love God, love themselves, love others, love learning.
Nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God. Romans 8:39

Key findings

- The vision permeates the life of the school and drives the Christian ethos. As a result, both pupils and adults flourish through positive relationships lived out through their core Christian values.
- Senior leaders and governors drive the Christian vision to guarantee that it embraces the multicultural nature of the community, ensuring every child is cherished for their uniqueness. However, governors do not have a structured system in order to monitor the impact of the school's Christian character.
- The school enjoys exceptionally good relationships with the wider community that are rooted in trust and mutual respect. Consequently, the school is most successful in responding to the specific needs of individual pupils and their families.
- Collective worship is distinctively Christian and highly inclusive, resulting in a respectful sensitivity towards those who have different religious beliefs and worldviews. Recent challenges have limited the number of opportunities for pupils to take a lead in worship.
- Religious education (RE) has a broad coverage and successfully supports pupils in developing a global perspective regarding faith.

Areas for development

- Increase governors' knowledge and experience of the school's Christian character and distinctiveness, so that they are better equipped to support the school's future developments as a Church school.
- Give pupils greater independence in planning and leading collective worship in order to increase their sense of ownership and deepen their spiritual development.
- Further develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of social justice, in order that they become effective courageous advocates for change, equipped to respond to global issues, such as poverty and injustice.

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 is borne out of the needs of the local community in recent times. The vision responds to the school's aspirations for its community to flourish. It permeates the daily life of the school through carefully chosen Christian values, such as justice and love. The phrase 'love God, love themselves, love others, love learning', was a starting point for the school in forming the vision. Staff live out the vision daily. This is exemplified in the only school rule being to 'love your neighbour as yourself'(Matthew 22:39). Leaders ensure that the vision promotes strategic decisions. This supports the school in making bold choices. As a result, the school celebrates pupils' individual strengths, ensuring that they are supported in overcoming any barriers to their development. The leadership is relentless in ensuring that the Christian vision of 'providing the best education' becomes a reality. Staff and pupils employ the Christian values to realise these aspirations. One pupil commented that 'the teachers encourage us to do well and help us with our work'. The prominence of the Christian vision on key school documentation, such as policies, ensures that it is at the heart of any future actions. Governors are thorough in their monitoring of standards. However, they have not sufficiently targeted their efforts on the impact of the school's Christian character and distinctiveness.

The Christian vision is ambitious for the pupils. The curriculum and extra-curricular activities provide a wealth of experiences and opportunities. In turn they support pupils' deepening spiritual development. The staff's nurturing approach is most successful in meeting the needs of all pupils and is rooted in the highly inclusive vision. Pupils acquire knowledge about the wider world through planned curriculum activities and collective worship themes. Pupils undertake a variety of fundraising, including supporting a local hospice. They have recently begun to raise awareness of local road safety issues. The school is building on these initial steps taken by pupils. This term, the school launched a programme to equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to become courageous advocates of social justice.

The Christian vision is lived out through the effectiveness of the school in developing a multicultural community, that is built on mutual respect. This results from the school's approach being underpinned by the core Christian values of justice, love and forgiveness. Therefore, pupils gain a respectful knowledge and understanding of diversity, that enables them to celebrate difference. Relationships are strong between adults and pupils alike. A member of the welfare staff commented that 'the children are very respectful and caring. It's instilled in them, respect one another, love one another, we're a family'. A pupil spoke of how their Christian values help them to understand how to behave. Another explained that 'we have the inspiration of God and Jesus and we should be inspired to act like they do'. Pupils understand the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation. One described using Christian teaching about forgiveness to end arguments. This was reiterated through the importance the school community places on being respectful of others. One pupil commented that 'the school's vision tells us to love God which is like loving your neighbour and treating people equally, we treat everyone with respect.' The school is committed to strengthening the mental health and wellbeing of its wider community. Governors recognise the positive impact that caring relationships have on the wider school community. The vision has been at the centre of core decisions in developing new roles and resources. The school's 'rainbow room' successfully provides a safe space for pupils and adults to access support. Approachable and accessible family support workers provide effective liaison for families from different cultural backgrounds.

Collective worship successfully reflects both the school's vision and the Church of England's guidance for collective worship. It is distinctively Christian and ensures a valued time of togetherness. Daily worship was maintained throughout the pandemic, bringing greatly appreciated connectivity across the school community. Pupils eagerly returned their completed challenges given to them as a part of the online worship. The headteacher used the phrase 'finding commonality' to illustrate how the worship is successful in being inclusive and invitational. Worship enables the school to make respectful comparisons with world religions and worldviews. For example, when exploring the Christian value of justice, passages from the Quran were used to illustrate the value's multi-faith significance. Varied and interactive worship deepens pupils' spiritual awareness through global themes, events in the Christian calendar and visits from the local clergy. Prayer extends beyond worship and pupils value the time and space to reflect. Prayer areas are interactive and frequently used by both staff and pupils, giving space for personal spiritual moments. The local curate spoke of how pupils were able to think beyond themselves to a greater existence. A phrase supported by this inspection. One pupil commented that 'prayer encourages me to feel safe as I know God is with me'. Currently, pupils

do not plan and lead worship on a regular basis. Pupil and staff offer feedback on worship that is gathered in an informal manner. However, ideas have been considered and changes made. For example, pupils' suggestions for worship songs.

RE has a prominent place in the school curriculum. The content of different topics draws from both local and national resources, providing a balanced content. Well-planned topics ensure that pupils' regularly study different religions and worldviews. The well-established culture of respect enables pupils to flourish as they explore and develop their own ideas. For example, younger pupils were keen to share a display that highlighted their recent Eid celebrations. Likewise, older pupils discussed different perspectives about rules through an activity called 'conscience alley'. A focus on Pentecost and the use of key vocabulary, aids pupils' knowledge of the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The curriculum is closely monitored by the subject leader, ensuring that pupil progress in RE is a central focus. Teachers are thorough when marking pupils' work and topic assessments are undertaken every half term. The subject leader provides both challenge and support and is rigorous in keeping abreast of current developments, by undertaking regular training. As a result, the subject is regularly reviewed and is effective in evaluating standards and progress in RE. The subject meets the statement of entitlement for Church of England schools.

When asked what it meant to attend this Church school a pupil said that 'When I come to school, I feel an enjoyable energy that you're going to have a good day and everything is going to be fine. It's a cycle that I enjoy, again and again.' Other pupils smiled and nodded in agreement.



The effectiveness of RE is good

Teaching in RE is good. Staff display good subject knowledge and closely follow the curriculum plan. RE is taught in a way that is accessible for all, ensuring that every pupil can progress, whatever their starting point or ability. Through acquiring key skills, knowledge and understanding, pupils make good progress that is successfully built on prior learning.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	26 May 2022	URN	119438
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2014		
School status	Voluntary aided primary	NOR	418
Name of MAT/Federation	N/A		
Diocese	Blackburn		
Headteacher	Julie Wood		
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 below national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. A new building has provided much needed space for 'wrap-around-care' and school activities. There is a rising number of pupils with additional needs and English as an additional language.		
Inspector's name	Jo Williams	No.	863