

# Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

## Parson Cross Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Address Halifax Road, Parson Cross, Sheffield, S6 1LB

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

As a school we are rooted in God's love and try to share that with all who connect with us.  
 'I pray that you, being rooted, and established in love may have the power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.' (Ephesians 3 17-18)  
 We nurture the little spark of genius in all members of our school community, that they may know, experience, and share God's desire for life in all its fulness. 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full' John 10:10.

### Key findings

- The Christian vision, driven by the compassionate and inspirational headteacher, together with governors and staff, ensures that all can flourish. However, formal processes to monitor the impact of the vision across the school are not in place.
- Vulnerable pupils and their families are supported by the school so that the 'little spark of genius' can be ignited and encouraged, resulting in the raising of aspirations.
- The partnership with the local church is a strength. Church and school are seen as one in the community so that together they express God's love, especially through worship opportunities.
- Opportunities for spiritual development enrich the lives of all in the school community. However, there is not yet a consistency of approach to spiritual development across the school.
- Teaching of religious education (RE) is strong. It contributes to the flourishing of pupils. They make progress in knowledge and understanding of Christianity. Their progress, knowledge and understanding of world faiths and different beliefs is not so well developed.

## Areas for development

- Develop appropriate and manageable systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of the vision across the school. This is to support the school's journey towards excellence.
- Develop a consistent approach to spiritual development. This is so that the impact of spiritual development is fully maximised and contributes to the continuing flourishing of all.
- Strengthen pupils' knowledge of world faiths and beliefs, so that they can better appreciate the impact that they have on their society and culture.

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

Parson Cross is a school where the vision to share God's love and to find the 'spark of genius' in everyone is made real every day. Adults and pupils flourish because the vision drives all actions. The compassionate and inspirational headteacher lives out the vision daily, motivating others to do the same. They frequently go 'the extra mile' to ensure the wellbeing of staff. In return the staff team support one another overcoming personal as well as professional challenges. This is highly valued and leads to their flourishing. Early career teachers are given opportunity to observe more experienced teachers to develop their skills in the delivery of RE. This results in confident teaching.

The vision has a positive impact on pupils. The strapline 'Believe, Achieve, Celebrate' is understood and lived out. Pupils are encouraged to believe in God and themselves. As one pupil put it 'if we do that we might believe in God, but we will believe in ourselves'. Pupils' hopes and aspirations are raised through their 'celebration log'. Amongst other awards, staff write letters to pupils acknowledging ways they live out the vision and values. This personal touch is appreciated.

The vision drives the work of governors. They acknowledge school is a 'reliable constant' where everyone receives love and compassion whatever their circumstances. However, there are not yet procedures in place to measure the impact of the vision. Parents are enthusiastic about the work of the school. They see the vision lived out in the way pupils are supported and encouraged. 'Words cannot express how grateful we are' is typical of comments made by parents.

The curriculum enables academic flourishing. Able pupils are challenged whilst pupils with additional needs are well supported. Finding the 'little spark of genius' and allowing it to grow drives curriculum planning. Pupils value the wider opportunities offered by extra-curricular activities before the pandemic. A visit to London which included singing at the Royal Albert Hall was a highlight. Leaders are committed to ensuring that such opportunities continue in the future.

Behaviour is exemplary. The behaviour policy has at its heart 'forgiveness that waits'. The parable of the prodigal son inspires this approach. Pupils and adults know that each day offers a fresh start. Pupils talk about 'starting each day with a smile' because they are secure in the knowledge that mistakes are not carried forward.

Having respect for all has a high profile. Bespoke support is in place so that vulnerable pupils and families can flourish. During the covid pandemic the headteacher and staff were in regular contact offering academic, practical, and emotional support. Parents express gratitude for this. The school was also asked to take in pupils from other settings. Through this time they ensured the vision drove their actions. A vulnerable pupil said they hoped secondary school would be like Parson Cross because 'it's all about love, isn't it?'

Pupils see themselves as courageous advocates improving the lives of others. They plan events such as Christmas lunches for the elderly. They organise fundraising to pay for the event. Prior to the pandemic they regularly visited a local care home. Through these activities pupils see themselves fulfilling the vision. They are enthusiastic about campaigning

to reduce the use of plastic in school as a way of showing care for God's world. Further pupil leadership opportunities are beginning to be re-established.

There is not yet a consistent approach to spiritual development across the school. However, opportunities for prayer and reflection take place regularly. Days are set aside as prayer space days. Pupils, staff and parents appreciate these times to reflect and pray. The stimulus provided inspires pupils to ask big questions. These show deep levels of thought such as 'do you ever grow out of having a fear?'

Collective worship is key to supporting pupils' spiritual development. It is invitational and engaging, helping them 'connect with God'. Worship in school is value focused. Pupils and adults are encouraged to see how Christian teaching can be applied to their own lives regardless of personal beliefs. Worship on the theme of justice, for example, illustrates how anger can be used positively to change unjust situations. Values explored in worship are shared with parents through home-school values sheets so living them out can be continued at home. Pupils talk about how they show generosity at home by sharing their toys with friends.

Links with the parish church are strong. The vicar and curate are often in school. They build strong relationships with pupils and families. Parents know that if they need help they will be supported by clergy. Across the community, church and school are seen as one. Together they are proactive in exploring ways in which school, home, church relationships can be strengthened. Services are held in church. Staff value these and the work of clergy in school, enabling them to feel they belong to Christ Church. Clergy work with classes to prepare worship and pupils are enthusiastic about leading it. During the pandemic, worship continued online. As a result whole families were able to attend. Pupils experience a breadth of Christian worship styles. Their understanding of diverse traditions in the worldwide Anglican church is developing. Opportunities for monitoring worship are limited however.

Pupils enjoy and are challenged by RE because of a rich and engaging curriculum. It enables them to develop a good knowledge and understanding of the Bible and Christian teaching. Their understanding of other faiths and worldviews is not as good. Pupils demonstrate a reflective and thoughtful response to RE teaching, applying it to their own lives. As a result, RE makes a significant contribution to their spiritual development. Opportunities to engage with cultural diversity are supported by visitors. Pupils recognise the importance of this to 'know who we share the world with'.

Leaders have deeply embedded the school's Christian vision. As a result, aspirations are raised as 'the little spark of genius' is uncovered in everyone. This is a school where people are equipped to live life in all its fulness, rooted in the love of God.



### The effectiveness of RE is **Good**

RE is led and managed by an experienced leader. They ensure that staff are well supported and trained. Effective use is made of the Understanding Christianity resource. The quality of teaching and learning is good as verified during the inspection. Work is well matched to pupils prior learning. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good progress.

### Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	17 March 2022	URN	107107
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2014		
School status	Voluntary aided primary school	NOR	204
Name of MAT/Federation	n/a		
Diocese	Sheffield		
Headteacher	Julie Wright		

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.		
	The school serves an area of high deprivation.		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector's name	Jane Lewis	No.	27