

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Paul's Church of England VC Primary School, Rawtenstall

Address Calder Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, United Kingdom, BB4 8HW

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

Excellent

School's vision

Encourage one another and build each other up. This is based on 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Key findings

- The Christian leadership of the headteacher is characterised by care and dedication. This results in a school community who live out their Christian vision and values with passion and commitment. This is effectively supported by governors. The biblical roots of the vision strongly influence relationships, pupils' behaviour and the well-being of all.
- The Christian vision has a tangible impact on the support and provision for vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs. Leaders strategically deploy resources to ensure these pupils are fully included and making progress. The promotion of the vision has ensured deep foundations are in place for all learners. The impact of this, however, is yet to be fully evident in all pupils' learning outcomes.
- Collective worship is excellent. Engagement and participation are high and it is a valued and enjoyable part of the day. Pupils and staff confidently plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship. The mutually beneficial partnership with the church community significantly enhances and develops provision. Key Christian values are woven through worship and are subsequently lived out by all in school.
- Spiritual development is a strength. Pupils recognise the value of prayer and say it helps them if they are worried or sad. The forest school area is one of many enrichment opportunities pupils experience. It gives them a sense of awe and wonder and instils a responsibility for being 'God's caretaker.' Pupils are inspired to have an impact on the global community but opportunities for this have been limited due to the recent pandemic.
- Religious education (RE) is well-led and managed. The curriculum and assessment system show a clear progression of skills. The subject leader uses her knowledge to share good practice locally and engage in, and lead, professional development with the diocese. As a result, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and a range of other major faiths and worldviews.

Areas for development

- To further develop the Christian vision to reflect and promote the school's aspirations for its community.

· To build international partnerships to develop pupils' global awareness. This will enable pupils to apply the Christian vision, and the skills they acquire around courageous advocacy, to impact beyond the local community.

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 vision of 'Encourage one another and build each other up' ensures all who enter this school receive a warm and friendly welcome. The Christian vision, its biblical roots and associated values, permeate the life of the school. They are understood and lived out by all. Key policies are shaped by the Christian vision. As a result, the school is a happy, safe place to work and learn. Leaders are totally committed to the vision and are positive role models to pupils and staff. This impacts on the strength of relationships, the level of love and care and the inclusive nature of the school. Pupils say, 'In this school we are all equal.' Governors have ensured that a clear system of self-evaluation is in place. Leaders rigorously evaluate their effectiveness as a church school through the school improvement cycle.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and identify the impact the vision has had in recent years. They say the Christian ethos leads to their children being physically and mentally safe. The vision results in a happy, stable staff team who work as one to promote the vision and encourage one another. The mental health and well-being of all is a clear priority and this has helped to sustain the school community during the recent pandemic. During this time, pupils engaged in social action, distributing 'bags of hope' in local shops. The school took courageous decisions to meet the needs of pupils and their families during lockdowns.

The enquiry-based curriculum reflects the Christian vision and context of the school. It develops learners as critical thinkers. The vision means that provision for vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs is a strength. Leaders demonstrate their impressive commitment to inclusion by strategically allocating resources to a learning pod. This provision gives pupils with complex needs a bespoke curriculum and impacts on their confidence and progress. Parents praise the way special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) provision impacts on their children and has 'turned their world around.' However, the aspirations the school has for its learners is not yet reflected in the wording of the Christian vision or learning outcomes of all groups. Currently, pupils' academic achievements do not always surpass expectations.

The Christian vision ensures pastoral care wraps around all pupils and adults in school. Pupils know who they can speak to if they are worried and the staff team love and support each other. Pupils relate this to the Christian vision and say, 'If we are not encouraged, we don't know what we can achieve.' Adults speak movingly about the impact of support on their own lives.

Pupils have a strong sense of stewardship towards God's world. They describe themselves as God's caretakers and put their words in to actions. On a recent visit into the community, pupils were unhappy to see litter. They requested to return and now regularly litter pick in this area. The school's forest area enables everyone to immerse themselves in God's world. The impact of this on their mental and physical health is invaluable.

Pupils have a mature understanding of difference and diversity. They speak confidently about equal opportunities for all, different kinds of families and standing up to injustice. The effects of the pandemic limits opportunities for pupils to live out the vision in the global community. They say, 'We are all unique with different beliefs.' The leadership roles that pupils take give them a powerful voice. They are not afraid to be courageous advocates and articulately give their views on racism, homophobia and disability discrimination. Alongside this runs an ingrained sense of forgiveness and reconciliation, as promoted in the school's positive relationships policy. Pupils link the need for forgiveness to the life of Jesus and the Christian festival of Easter.

Collective worship is an important part of the day. There is a sense of excitement as pupils enter and high engagement as they are invited to partake. The singing and praise is joyous and energetic. Pupils are keen to lead worship and any pupil who wishes to do so has the opportunity. As a result, worship is uplifting, relevant and clearly reflects the Christian vision. Worship gives pupils an understanding of the Holy Trinity. They speak eloquently of God as a father saying, 'He is everyone's father- we can rely on him.' Regular, incisive input from members of the church community develops worship, both in school and at church. A church member recalls the deeply spiritual experience of leading a school Christingle service in the forest. Experiences such as this ensure worship has a powerful and lasting impact on the spiritual development of those present. Pupils have regular opportunities to pray or reflect. Spontaneous prayer is an intrinsic part of worship and pupils pray for their families, the school and the world.

Leadership of RE is a strength. The drive and passion of the subject leader ensures all staff are well equipped to deliver good quality and relevant RE provision. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of Christianity as a living world faith, the Bible and the life of Jesus. Pupils say this teaches them to 'Do good deeds, be thankful and live a good life.' Pupils have regular opportunities to explore core Christian concepts, for example, creation. The RE curriculum is crafted around the context of the school and develops religious literacy. As a result, pupils say, 'If you believe in God or not, Bible stories make me think I can change the world with one tiny thing.' The coverage of a range of major world faiths gives pupils a good insight into the lives of groups in their local and wider community. Provision and practice in RE are further strengthened by the link with the diocese, who recognise St Paul's as an 'outward facing' school. Staff at all levels attend a range of RE training. This supports the induction of new staff and prepares future church school leaders. The school regularly shares its good practice with other schools and leads a local RE hub.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	23 June 2022	URN	119367
Date of previous inspection	25 June 2015		
School status	VC	NOR	282
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation			
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Manchester		
Headteacher	Sharon Charlesworth		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Above National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector's name	Anne Barker	No.	0959