

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. Peter's Church of England Primary School, Ashton-under-Lyne	
Address	Oxford Street, Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL7 0NB
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)	Good

School's vision
At Saint Peter's, everybody is given the opportunity to grow and fulfil their potential like the mustard seed, Matthew 13:32. 'Although the smallest of all seeds, it grows into the largest of plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.'
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deeply-held Christian vision is embedded into every aspect of the life of Saint Peter's school and beyond. This vision promotes growth and high aspirations for adults and pupils alike and is transforming lives. • Opportunities for continued professional growth and development are exceptional and lead to high levels of expertise. Innovative opportunities for pupil leadership are empowering pupils to overcome obstacles and equipping them to become advocates for change. • The school, like the branches of the mustard tree, provides a safe shelter where diversity is not only recognised but is celebrated. This creates an encompassing recognition of the inestimable worth and potential of every member of the school family. • Collective worship is highly inclusive and provides opportunities for all to grow spiritually and to flourish together in a safe space. Pupil involvement in worship is impressive. However, pupil-led worship does not always link explicitly to the teachings of the Bible. • In order to allow all pupils to flourish, a more creative approach towards the teaching and assessment of religious education (RE) has been introduced. Pupils respond well to this approach but learning is not always progressive.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed recently adopted systems for the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment in RE. This will enable leaders to evaluate the impact of the more creative approach and ensure that the knowledge pupils are gaining is consistently progressive. • In pupil-led worship, support pupils to include more intentional links to stories from the Bible. This will help to deepen their understanding of Christianity and the teachings of Jesus.

Inspection findings

Saint Peter's is an innovative and vision-driven Church school. It provides a sanctuary where every member of the school family is viewed as a seed with potential to grow. Inspirational leaders, including the governing body, provide the nourishment for all to flourish. The deeply-held Christian vision expressed through the parable of the mustard seed is understood by all. There is a tangible sense of watching over one another in love, resulting in a tightly-knit familial community. Adults and pupils alike offer examples of the vision's impact. One member of the school community attributes the love the school provided during a difficult time as 'the thing that helped me more than anything else.'

Leaders make bold decisions to ensure all pupils including vulnerable pupils grow and fulfil their potential. These include employing a speech and language therapist to assess pupils on entry, so pupils can receive tailored support. There is a significant percentage of pupils who have additional needs or for whom English is not their first language. High numbers of support staff along with a self-funded resource base mean that the needs of all pupils are met. The school allocates budget to ensure all pupils can access the wealth of extra-curricular opportunities offered. This ensures no talent remains untapped, irrespective of personal circumstances. Pastoral staff provide exceptional assistance for families, and parents speak highly of this. Pupils feel nurtured and attendance is excellent. As a result, progress and achievement frequently surpass expectations.

The school's work around growing future leaders is exemplary. Leaders engage with quality training and take time to grow spiritually by attending events such as the diocesan retreat. This provides opportunities for reflection and growth. Subsequently, they support others through a servant leadership model. All staff recognise the impact of the focus on professional development and wellbeing. Because staff feel valued, morale is high and staff turnover low.

Opportunities for pupil leadership are exceptional and pupils articulate how this links to the vision around growth and nurture. A rich variety of opportunities including ethos and trinity groups, worship leaders and earth stewards, provides a dynamic pupil voice. Pupils are making a difference in their own community and beyond. They are often inspired into action to tackle injustice, driving initiatives on a wide scale. These include the recycled uniform shop to support families during the cost-of-living crisis and raising awareness for the plight of Syrian refugees. Consequently, pupils are highly decorated with official awards for their work as courageous advocates.

Leaders have developed an RE curriculum which sensitively reflects the school community and the vision of nurture. When teaching Christianity, teachers skilfully draw on the beliefs of a range of faiths. For example, when learning about Zacchaeus, pupils were encouraged to consider how artefacts from different religions help believers in difficult times. Pupils engage well and demonstrate exceptional levels of mutual respect. They have a good understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Understanding of key Christian festivals such as Easter is not always progressive. Recognising that literacy presents a barrier to learning, the school has developed a creative approach to RE. Opportunities for pupils to respond to challenging questions through disciplines like art or music enable all to fulfil their potential. The RE leader has recently developed systems to monitor RE, including moderation. The school is part of the local RE hub and therefore shares good practice with other schools.

The school acknowledges its plurality of faiths by emphasising inclusive and invitational worship. Consequently, no pupils are withdrawn from worship. A structure for worship




including lighting three candles and time for invitational prayer and reflection provides familiarity for all. The use of high-quality resources and consistent staff training demonstrate the value placed on worship. Leaders measure the impact of worship by the actions pupils subsequently take. For example, pupils raised money to support Australia during the bush fires. Pupils are actively involved in worship through opportunities offered by pupil groups. They plan, lead and evaluate the impact of worship and this has brought about improvements. Pupils deliver worship confidently but do not always link it explicitly to the Bible. During the pandemic, the school and diocese partnered together to develop the Worship 2 Go resource. Pupils were involved in recording worship for other schools. Currently, pupils lead worship for the church community. Consequently, the impact of worship reaches beyond the school's own community. Despite not having a vicar, the school has retained church partnerships. Parents of all faiths and those of none speak highly about worship. One expressed gratitude that worship continued during the pandemic as it provided 'a sense of belonging and peace.'

All pupils use reflective spaces to be still. The charity Hand to Mouth provided training towards effective use of reflective spaces. Subsequently, these spaces were moved outside classrooms to improve privacy. Bible quotes and thought-provoking questions enhance these areas. The school community views prayer as an important part of worship. For example, older pupils requested their own prayer group after seeing the impact of one for younger pupils. Space is also set aside for adults with a reflective area and prayer tree in the staff room. Leaders are creating explicit opportunities to develop spirituality. Initiatives including Forest Schools allow pupils to reflect on the wonder of the natural world. Additionally, outdoor reflective areas dedicated to the memory of past pupils provide a space to reflect on the meaning of life.

The environment is rich and inspiring, celebrating the school's unquestionable Christian distinctiveness. This is enhanced by the work of an artist in residence who has worked with pupils to create a myriad of artwork. One example is the inspiring Aspiration Alley which is decorated with powerful Bible quotes about growth and success. Pupils describe how mirrors placed at different heights allow any one of them to reflect and consider what these quotes mean to them.

This is a school where everyone flourishes in a climate of love. Adults feel valued. One member of staff explained 'For the branches to grow, they must be nourished by the trunk. Because we feel nourished, we can nourish our children.' Parents describe the school as a place where their children 'feel at home.' Pupils eloquently describe the ways in which they grow academically and spiritually. They attribute this to the nourishment received from adults and the opportunities offered. Pupils believe they can overcome any obstacle. When asked what he wanted to be, one pupil said, 'the prime minister, so I can make things better for everyone.' Saint Peter's is a place where aspirations and hope are high and consequently the lives of the pupils are truly being transformed.



	The effectiveness of RE is		Good	
	<p>A creative curriculum and the use of high-quality resources including Understanding Christianity means that RE is taught well. Pupils respond positively in lessons and display a good understanding of a range of faiths and world religions. They use age-appropriate religious vocabulary in context. In recognising barriers to learning such as literacy, leaders have recently developed a variety of ways to assess learning. This enables all pupils, including vulnerable pupils to make progress and to flourish.</p>			
Information				
School	St. Peter's Church of England Primary School, Ashton-under-Lyne	Inspection date	8 February 2023	
URN	106245	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	
Diocese/District	Manchester	Pupils on roll	203	
Headteacher	John Wilson			
Chair of Governors	Moira Wilson			
Inspector	Joanne Hyslop	No.	972	