

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

Holy Cross Church of England Primary School, Oldham	
Address	Ruth Street, Oldham, OL1 3EZ
School vision	
<p>Learning, Loving and Growing Together Strengthened by God's Love.</p> <p>At Holy Cross CE Primary School, we strive to ensure our children, their families and our wider community can deepen their own positive values and unlock great potential. Acknowledging everyone as unique, we will welcome, love and respect all God's children and we help them thrive in a purposeful and peaceful environment.</p> <p>'There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body.' 1 Corinthians 12: 12</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of the school's Christian vision transforms lives. This is because it is appropriate to the school and its community. The vision underpins all decisions and policies. Leaders, including governors robustly evaluate its impact.</li> <li>• Respectful relationships are a strength at all levels. They are built upon the school's intentions that all should learn, love and grow together as parts of the one body.</li> <li>• Collective worship is a joy. It gathers all together in a manner that shares the Christian message. It is invitational and inspiring to adults and pupils of all faiths and none. The pattern of worship includes the opportunity to celebrate both the Christian and secular calendars.</li> <li>• Learning opens doors for pupils to be inquisitive and independent. Opportunities for pupils to develop academically and spiritually are rich and available to all.</li> <li>• Religious education (RE) is carefully planned and led. Therefore, pupils learn about, and understand, a range of faiths and worldviews. They engage with their learning because teachers make it interesting and relevant.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek opportunities to share the extensive good practice that exists in this Church school. This is so that the impact of the highly effective Christian vision has extended influence.</li> <li>• Embed and develop the newly adopted RE curriculum. This is so that pupils continue to flourish in their learning about a range of world religions and worldviews.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>Holy Cross is a distinguished multifaith, multicultural and multiracial community. Its rich diversity is harmonious and respectful. This is possible because the Christian vision has been wisely chosen to meet the context of the school. It is deeply rooted in the belief that each person is uniquely created in the image of God. This results in excellent care, support and encouragement of all. Adults collaborate effectively thus ensuring that the school functions as a single body working for the good</p>	

of its community. Careful staff recruitment and induction guarantees adults appreciate that the setting is distinctively Christian. It lives by its vision and values. The effectiveness of the vision is increased by leaders' regular, robust evaluation. In this they focus on both the potential, and actual, impact of their decisions and policies. However, opportunities for the school to share its immense expertise are underdeveloped. The meaning of the Christian vision and values is emphasised to all by striking artwork. Pupils refer to it and what it means to them. They explain how it shapes their behaviours and shows them God's ways.

Guided by the intentions of the Christian vision, leaders promote the wellbeing of all. This includes the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Parents rightly appreciate that the school is in partnership with them in supporting their children. Teachers ensure that learning is brought to life for pupils. This encourages them to flourish in their knowledge and understanding of all that they are offered. Pupils are empowered to think about their learning. Therefore, they welcome reflecting upon their daily experiences and consequently, they are enabled in both their spiritual and academic development. Rich opportunities exist for pupils to expand their life experiences and horizons through trips and visits. They value highly visiting Lytham beach and eating ice-cream as well as feeding ducks in the local park. Pupils enjoy their daily encounters within this nurturing school. This results in excellent behaviour and particularly good attendance.

Thoughtfully planned collective worship explores the vision and creates bright moments in the daily life of the school. It is uncompromisingly Christian yet accessible to all. Pupils recognise the Trinitarian nature of worship. Important Christian feasts are celebrated with joy and inclusivity. These include Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Arranged so that all can experience it in different settings, worship offers valued opportunities to contemplate God's message. The school community regularly celebrates in the parish church. Worship creatively, inclusively and respectfully enables all, without compulsion, to experience moments of stillness, joy and reflection. Inviting all to 'pray as you pray' successfully encourages adults and pupils to be responsive to worship. This empowers all in their personal religious and spiritual growth. While some pupils join their hands and say 'Amen,' others may turn their palms upward and reply 'Aameen'. Deeply relevant worship enables pupils to consider the impact of the school's values and their responses upon their various communities. For example, integrity in actions for the wellbeing of God's planet enables pupils in their stewardship. Local clergy provide rich support to the school as governors and through weekly 'Open the Book' worship. The very capable pupil ethos group contributes significantly to preparing, leading and evaluating prayerful gatherings. Representing the diversity of the school's religious and non-religious community, the groups' evaluations securely consider the impact of worship upon all. Pupils' value the quiet areas throughout the school as places to think, pray and reflect upon their worries and behaviours. In this way, pupils are allowed the space for their spiritual flourishing.

Relationships, built upon the Christian vision of recognising uniqueness and offering welcome and love, are at the heart of this school. This helps all in their support and encouragement of each other professionally and personally. Adults in all their different roles have the wellbeing and nurture of pupils as their core purpose. They rightly express this as being, 'cheerleaders for our children.' Barriers to learning are minimised and every assistance given to parents so that they can support their children. This includes the availability of bi-lingual staff. Pastoral care is a strength and clearly rooted in the Christian vision. Trauma informed responses and a focus on mental and physical wellbeing support all pupils but especially the most vulnerable. There is an embedded appreciation that when things go wrong, there is the opportunity to evaluate actions and decisions. This leads to forgiveness and fresh starts. Pupils reflect the positive behaviours that adults model in their interactions with them and each other. They are highly appreciative of the differences between individuals and recognise this as a cause for celebration.

Standing up for each other and those in need is embedded in this considerate and compassionate

community. Leaders, including governors, make courageous decisions for the benefit of all. The impacts of which resonate with families and the wider community. Pupils follow the lead of the adults around them. They collect for, share with, and celebrate the local groups to which they generously contribute. This includes hosting coffee mornings, singing for the elderly and litter picking locally. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and think deeply for themselves, appreciating that assisting others often means helping school families. They respond to the principle of kindness that runs throughout the community. Opportunities to be school councillors and take on other leadership roles provide pupils with conduits for their voices. Adults are unstintingly open to listening to ideas and enabling independent initiatives. For example, the 'harvest for the animals' collection inspired by pupils' concerns for hungry animals.

The effective leadership of RE supports teachers and ensures pupils are exposed to rich learning that they enjoy. They make progress because they are well taught, always by their class teacher, and encounter a challenging and balanced curriculum. Adults know the progress that pupils make because they assess work accurately. Collaborative working with local colleagues enables teachers to be confident in their assessment. This includes giving pupils feedback that facilitates them in improving their work. The interesting experiences and discussions that younger pupils have are carefully recorded in floor books. These provide good evidence of them thinking knowledgeably about a range of religions and worldviews. Opportunities are included for pupils to engage in experiential learning through visits and gatherings including in the school's faith garden. Visitors representing world religions awakens pupils understanding of a wide range of beliefs. Similarly, visits to local churches support pupils in their learning about Christianity. Pupils appreciated seeing where baptisms occur and identifying their importance to Christians. Leaders have recently adopted the new Manchester Diocese scheme of learning for RE. However, this is in the early stages of development.

The inspection findings indicate that Holy Cross Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundations as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	27 November 2023	URN	135720
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	427
Diocese	Manchester		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Paul Wardle		
Chair	Carole Howarth		
Inspector	Fiona Ashton	No.	860