

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Whitchurch Church of England Infant and Nursery School

Address	Station Road Whitchurch Shropshire SY13 IRJ		
Date of inspection	17 January 2019	Status of school	VC Infant and Nursery
Diocese	Lichfield	URN	123515

Overall Judgement	Grade	Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgement		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Whitchurch is an Infants and nursery school with 353 pupils on roll. The school has very low levels of religious and cultural diversity and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above national average. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed who has established a new leadership team who operate within a distributed form of leadership.

The school's Christian vision

Learning as we grow. Growing as we learn. Rooted in Jesus.

Key findings

- The exceptionally strong leadership of the dedicated headteacher has created a Christian and inclusive vision which directs school improvement and inspires all pupils to thrive.
- Collective worship reflects the Christian vision which is central to the school. Many pupils are able to demonstrate ability to express their relationship with Jesus and its impact on their deeds and actions.
- School leaders understand the needs of the community and provide very effective assistance so that individuals receive the support that they require for social, emotional, academic and spiritual wellbeing.
- Inclusive and nurturing relationships based on Christian values enable all members of the community to strive for their potential and to make the most of their God given talents.
- Coherent approaches to religious education (RE) allow pupils to develop exemplary relationships which are intolerant to prejudicial behaviour and foster respect and dignity for cultural diversity and difference.

Areas for development

- Establish more rigorous and effective systems of monitoring and evaluation involving all members of the school community so as to inform future Church school development.
- Expand further worship development so that pupils have more frequent occasions to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship.
- Enrich pupils understanding of global partnerships so as to appreciate the diversity in which Christians across the world worship.

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

Whitchurch is an inclusive school with a clear distinctive Christian vision which is based on embedded Christian values and practice. Together with an engaging leadership team, the dedicated headteacher ensures that the vision is being lived out by all leaders strategically and operationally. For example, the vision and values are effectively communicated in various forms, such as, the newsletter so that all associated with the school understand their importance. As a result, some members of the school community can articulate the Christian vision which is rooted in a biblical narrative. For example, one parent said, 'You can see this is a Church school by the way staff model the Christian values.' New ways of management are addressing the areas of development from the previous inspection. They are also strongly promoting the school's key priorities which are impacting positively upon the Church school experience for both pupils and adults to flourish. Partnerships with other schools and the diocese effectively support Church school improvement. Professional development equips staff with the skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles in a Church school. This supports succession planning, which is promoting leaders to have a deeper awareness and understanding of Church school education. Leaders have secured very effective leadership of RE and collective worship. Both have a high priority within the school and make substantial contribution to the school's Christian distinctiveness and performance. Governors play an active role in the rapid Church school improvement which is successfully driven by the headteacher. Self evaluation processes are in place for governors to evaluate the effectiveness as a Church school. However, this monitoring and evaluation is limited.

Creative curriculum planning is 'aspirational' and inclusive so that all pupils flourish to be the best that they can be. Underpinned by its Christian vision, the broad and balanced curriculum is enhanced with extra curriculum activities which widen pupils' horizons and life experiences. Early identification of learning and personal needs is quickly addressed so that pupils make good progress. Intervention strategies and nurture provision have a significant impact on pupils' learning and particularly those with specific learning challenges. For example, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress. Positive attitudes to learning are reinforced with activities for resilience and perseverance so that pupils feel well prepared for life. Exemplary work by the family support worker is pivotal in ensuring that the needs of families and individuals are quickly identified and met. For example, this is seen in improved attendance and parental engagement. A consistent approach to the learning environment meets the needs of all pupils' irrespective of academic, physical and social ability. Classrooms have reflection areas, which, when used, make a significant contribution to pupils' understanding and spiritual development. However, occasions for spirituality to be spontaneous across the curriculum are limited.

Pupils have a developing sense of justice and understanding of global deprivation. This is reflected in the support the school community gives to others through fundraising for local, national and international projects. Initiatives such as Share a Pencil Day encourage pupils to make a difference where injustices occur and to engage in social action. Indoor and outdoor resources, such as prayer areas, and Forest School are used to explore 'big questions' and provide valuable spiritual experiences. Visual images and artwork throughout the school foster cultural awareness of diversity and difference. A Cultural Diversity Day and celebration of festivals, such as Diwali, supports this understanding. This is particularly useful since the school is not a naturally diverse community. RE is exemplary in its contribution to Church school development through its impact upon pupils' personal development. The subject is enthusiastically led and provides support and encouragement to all staff. This is credited in the awarding of the RE Quality Mark Gold Award.

Inspired by the Christian vision, all school leaders work tirelessly so that pupils and adults can flourish and live well together. Relationships within and beyond the school are firmly rooted in Christian values which ensure that everyone is given the support, encouragement and opportunity to thrive. School Council initiatives provide space to effectively explore different points of view. Exemplary standards of behaviour are due to a well-disciplined school which focuses on Christian values. The wellbeing and mental health of all members of the school community is a key priority. School leaders are aware of the demands that they place upon staff and have in place measures to protect the wellbeing of the adults as well as the pupils. In order to achieve this, the school's vision is lived out in a practical way.

Underpinned by the Christian vision, all pupils are treated with dignity and respect as unique individuals to be nurtured and supported. As a result, pupils of all faith, backgrounds and abilities feel welcomed, loved and embraced, into a Christian community where they have a sense of belonging. Pupils are safe, happy and are proud of their school.

Collective worship is a much valued part of the school day. Using a biblical approach it has a focus on the teaching and person of Jesus Christ with a developing understanding of the Trinity. Careful planning supports the

school's vision, exploring Christian values and themes imaginatively. Pupils do not always make explicit links between Jesus' teaching through parables about Christian values and the use of them in their own lives. Pupils' experiences of different styles of worship, led by other Christian faith groups, are not always evident. As such, their appreciation of Christian diversity, varied liturgical and worldwide traditions of Anglican worship is limited. Worship inspires action and benefits from close partnership with the church. Pupils have very few occasions to plan, lead and evaluate worship which the school recognises. Prayer is a part of daily life so pupils speak well about their prayer life. The evaluation of collective worship is limited in its impact to develop pupils and adults in their personal spiritual growth.

Headteacher

Sarah Cope

Inspector's name and number

Alison M. Morris 759