

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

### St John with St Michael Church of England Primary School

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| <b>Address</b>            | Moss Side Street, Shawforth, Rochdale, OL12 8EP |                         |            |
| <b>Date of inspection</b> | 07/02/2019                                      | <b>Status of school</b> | VA primary |
| <b>Diocese</b>            | Manchester                                      | <b>URN</b>              | 199690     |

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| <b>Overall Judgement</b>   | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Good</b> |
| How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish? |              |             |
| <b>Additional Judgements</b>   |              |             |
| <b>The impact of collective worship</b>  | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Good</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>   | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Good</b> |

#### School context

The school is in a semi-rural area with 128 pupils on roll. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is in line with national averages although the distribution of the pupils through the school varies between year groups. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. Currently no pupils with a statement for SEN or a EHP attend the school. The current headteacher was appointed in March 2017 and the deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2018. The church is currently in an interregnum.

#### The school's Christian vision

Our vision is to promote the physical, mental, moral and spiritual development of the children in the light of the Christian gospel. During their time at the school we want our children to 'Live, Love, Learn and Pray'.

#### Key findings

- The excellent support offered to pupils and their families, both within and beyond the school day, reflects the commitment of governors and staff to ensuring that the vision is lived out daily.
- The vision of Love, Live, Learn and Pray is illustrated in the school's rich curriculum. A breadth of extracurricular activities and visits enables all pupils, including those who have special education needs or disabilities or who are vulnerable, to flourish.
- Pupils behave very well and in their attitudes to and support for one another they show Christian love, compassion and forgiveness. They are respectful of each other and know the importance of greeting one another with a smile.
- The wide range of additional activities that supplement the curriculum ensure that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.

#### Areas for development

- To support pupils' spiritual development, ensure that there are planned times for reflection on themes within the curriculum, especially in religious education (RE) and worship.
- Strengthen understanding of the school's vision so that it becomes a point of reference for pupils and adults across all aspects of school life.
- Develop opportunities for pupils to reflect on significant global issues such as disadvantage and exploitation. Encourage pupils to consider the ways in which people, including the pupils themselves, can work to bring about change.

## 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 vision of Love, Live, Learn and Pray, underpinned by verses from scripture, threads across the life of the school. The welcome and support offered to all pupils is excellent. Consequently, pupils are confident and thrive. The vision is reflected in most school policies and informs decisions made by school leaders and governors. A next step for the school is to make the relationship between the vision and decisions explicit. The school receives good support from Manchester Diocese and engages in supportive partnerships with local church schools.

The school is receiving good support from the church community and from other local churches as they wait for a new parish priest to be appointed. A number of local priests and committed Christians support staff and pupils well and enrich the distinctiveness of this happy school. Leaders and governors work together to develop the school as a church school utilising accurate self-evaluation. Recommendations from the previous SIAMS inspection have been successfully introduced.

Pupils make good progress and their academic and developmental needs are effectively met through the high level of challenge and support given. A focus on supporting the individual academic, spiritual and social needs of pupils is in place. It is reflected in excellent attitudes to learning and the progress made by the vast majority of pupils. The progress of pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs or disabilities is at least in line with that of their peers. Pupils' emotional and spiritual well-being is prioritised. They respond with enthusiastic curiosity to the many well-planned activities and experiences offered. The focus on seeking ways to enrich pupils' experience within and beyond the curriculum is having a positive impact on their understanding of difference and diversity. For example, a recently established link with a largely Muslim school is widening pupils' understanding of the different ways in which children live and worship. For example, pupils knowledgeably discuss the ways in which their Muslim friends dress and pray.

Understanding of Christian values is important to pupils. They recognise that the values help them to make good choices and support them in their learning. Pupils are involved in a number of local, national and global charitable activities. This is because they understand the importance of Jesus' teaching about meeting people's basic needs. However, pupils are less confident when discussing issues of injustice and their potential role in challenging it.

Strong relationships underpin all aspects of the life of this successful church school. Pupils behave very well and are caring and supportive of each other. The words of the vision are widely known and understood and pupils refer to them when talking about the faith foundation of their school. Pupils are confident when sharing their opinions and sensitive when in dialogue with those who disagree. They know that, on the rare occasions when pupils misbehave, staff and pupils will work together to bring about change. Pupils' mental health and wellbeing has high priority in the life of the school. Staff know pupils and their families well and recognise the importance of listening whenever a concern is expressed. School based nurture groups are offered where additional time and support is necessary.

Pupils discuss issues of divergence and diversity with respect and understanding. They reference their views to their vision statement and to the verses from scripture that underpin each word. Pupils show respectful curiosity when learning about people of other cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Relationships and sex education is well taught from a Christian standpoint. The focus at all times is on each person being uniquely loved by God. A parent commented that, 'Our children learn to respect one another regardless of the make-up of their family, their colour or their faith.' Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils are confident that where such issues occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively. Absence rates are currently higher than national averages. There are a number of understandable reasons for this and the school is working supportively with parents to get pupils back in to school quickly. Pupils with poor attendance are encouraged to attend the school's breakfast club. Additionally staff support parents in establishing effective morning routines or guide them to other available support.

Worship is a valued and important part of each school day. Pupils readily share times when it has helped them to think about issues such as forgiveness or thinking about others before yourself. Use of music, art and drama enrich pupils' experience of worship. Pupils have a confident approach to the importance of prayer in their own lives. They enjoy times of prayer through the school day and speak of quiet moments taken in classroom reflection areas. Pupils confidently discuss their understanding of the nature of God and of the Trinity.

Worship plans reflect the cycle of the church year. Worship is delivered by range of adults drawn from the local Christian community, senior leaders and teachers. Pupils are keen to be involved and the school's ethos group now leads occasional acts of worship. Effective evaluation of worship is in place and is used to support future

provision and planning. For example, recent evaluation highlighted a lack of enthusiasm amongst some pupils about singing. Consequently the number and style of songs used was reviewed. The resulting changes and improvements led to greater enthusiasm and understanding, as well as higher quality singing amongst pupils. Enrichment areas of the curriculum, such as Forest schools, are delivered in such a way as to enrich pupils' spiritual development. Despite the distance between school and church pupils regularly lead and experience worship in church thereby deepening their understanding of Anglican worship.

The school has recently reviewed the RE syllabus used and understanding of core theological concepts is now central to the curriculum. Pupils' understanding of the concepts is developing as is their understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Pupils have a secure knowledge of key Biblical stories and teaching and are able to link their learning from stories with daily life. A range of key skills are utilised within lessons and pupils are confident when sharing their interpretation of the meaning of Biblical texts. They are respectful of the opinions of others and comfortable when talking about their personal beliefs. Pupils are familiar with a number of other major world faiths and talk knowledgably about key artefacts and ways of worship. However, they are less confident when talking about the ways in which the beliefs of people of other faiths impact on their daily life.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

The subject leader brings a passion and personal interest to her leadership of RE. As a result, staff are keen to develop their approach to delivering the RE curriculum. Monitoring is in place but is in its early stages and there remain some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school. For example, opportunities for reflection are not routinely included within lessons and as a result, pupils' responses sometimes lack depth. Overall, teaching is consistently good with some evidence of excellent teaching. Pupils make good progress and standards are in line with national expectations. RE workbooks are moderated within the school and the recently introduced RE Hub is enabling staff to share their best practice and to learn from others. The school's syllabus and provision for RE meets Church of England requirements.

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| Headteacher                 | Kate Garner        |
| Inspector's name and number | Gail Fullbrook 530 |