

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bamber Bridge St Aidan's Church of England Primary School			
Address	Larch Grove, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire PR5 6GX		
Date of inspection	12 March 2020	Status of school	Voluntary controlled primary
Diocese	Blackburn	URN	119380

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

School context

St Aidan's is a voluntary controlled primary school with 132 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages.

The school's Christian vision

Working together, we aim high to achieve; through faith we care, show respect and succeed.

'In everything, treat others the same way you want them to treat you.' (Matthew 7:12)

Key findings

- Each pupil is loved and valued as an exceptional child of God. The compassionate pastoral care offered by the whole school community reflects the school's vision.
- Partnerships between the school and most families are highly valued; promoting a culture of mutual respect.
- Strong Christian leadership from the headteacher is ensuring that the light of Jesus continues to shine amongst challenging issues.
- Collective worship contributes significantly to school life and to the spiritual development of pupils and adults. Whilst pupils are more actively involved since the last inspection, their role in planning and evaluating worship is limited.
- The majority of pupils make expected progress in religious education (RE) given their starting points. However, some activities are not closely matched to the development needs of the pupils.

Areas for development

- Unite the vision, mission and motto into a single vision statement, underpinned by Christian theology, that can be articulated and lived out by the whole school community.
- Ensure that all governors are fully committed to monitoring and evaluating the school as distinctively Christian so that the vision enables the whole school community to flourish.
- Extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the multicultural dimension of Christianity so that they embrace a wider sense of global Christianity.

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

It is clear that the biblical text chosen as part of the vision 'treat others as you would want to be treated', is applied to all aspects of school life. Alongside the vision the school has a mission statement and a motto. This is causing some confusion, but each aspect mirrors the distinctive Christian nature of the school.

Relationships throughout the school reflect the school's vision and associated Christian values of truthfulness, thankfulness, courage, forgiveness, hope and compassion. Respect is shown and dignity given to all wherever they may be on their spiritual journey. The school sees the vision as pivotal in improving behaviour throughout the school. Whilst there are still some challenges, the rate of exclusions has declined significantly. Attendance at school is also improving, demonstrating that the pupils now enjoy coming to school. Pupils report that they are listened to and all staff are approachable and ready to support them when they need help.

The RE curriculum follows the Diocesan scheme and ensures effective coverage of Christianity and other world faiths. However, pupils' understanding of the worldwide nature of Christianity is limited. Few pupils could talk about Christians in other countries or different views of the Christian faith. Pupils enjoy their lessons, particularly when they are able to respond creatively. Some pupils demonstrate a deep and reflective response to questions. A Year 1 child linked the grains of incense on the Paschal candle to the gifts of frankincense and myrrh given to the infant Jesus. Another child said, 'The tin foil on the Christingle could remind people of the crown of thorns because it is spikey'. Some activities in RE are not appropriate for the pupils' level of development and progress is limited. However, by the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils demonstrate an age appropriate level of knowledge and understanding.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and increasingly tailored to meet the needs of a diverse range of abilities in each class. The needs of pupils are responded to, putting the vision of the school into action. For example, all pupils and staff are learning Makaton to enable them to communicate with pupils who have little verbal speech. Progress for all pupils is improving following an intensive review of teaching and learning. Themed weeks help to inspire pupils to think creatively and value their learning. The recent spirituality week provided a range of activities to enable pupils to explore spiritual and ethical issues. They confidently express their feelings and opinions and realise that some 'big questions' do not have a universal answer.

The vision and core values are evident in the everyday life of the school. The school encourages all to reach their full potential through the language used to reward those who strive to be the best they can be. Each class has a star pupil each week who demonstrates the value of their class. Pupils write positive comments on the star, showing a good understanding of how the Christian teaching underpinning the value can be lived out every day. During collective worship on a Friday pupil achievements and how the star pupils have lived out the school's vision and values in an exemplary way is celebrated. Pupils particularly enjoy time with the headteacher for a drink and biscuit, thus putting the school's vision into action.

Pupils are increasingly overcoming barriers to learning and developing the resilience needed to cope when things are difficult. The school's pastoral support worker has developed positive relationships with pupils and their families, helping them to make positive choices. The school effectively encourages pupils to look beyond themselves. In response to attending a compassion event at a local school, pupils asked to support their local foodbank. This is now a regular part of the school community reaching out to those in need. A Year 5 pupil shared how Jesus taught us to feed the hungry saying, 'If we all shared no one would be hungry. Jesus fed 5000 when everyone shared the bread and fish.' Pupils are developing an increasing awareness of the diversity of world need. Older pupils understand that treating everyone fairly does not mean treating them the same. One pupil compared need during the Australian bush fires to need today in the light of the coronavirus. They went on to say it was important to go and help each other and let people stay with you if they needed to. In the current situation their view was not letting people into your home was the right thing to do.

Pupils know that they should follow Jesus' teaching exemplified in their vision and values. They speak positively of how the school staff help them to do this; even though it is not always easy. Pupils are confident that they

will be listened to if issues arise. They know that forgiveness and reconciliation are crucial to resolving any conflict. The school is working hard to improve attendance and many initiatives are in place to encourage punctual, regular attendance.

The school provides a warm, welcoming environment. Their admission policy reflects the fact that all are welcome here, particularly the most vulnerable in the community. Parents of pupils with additional needs feel very well supported. They are confident that the school has gone 'above and beyond' to make their children feel welcome and valued. The school has recently reviewed its relationships policy in the light of changes in legislation. This effectively reflects the school's vision and supports pupils to value and form healthy relationships. However, currently the governors are not fully committed to effective monitoring and self-evaluation in their role as critical friend.

Collective worship is greatly valued by the whole school community. There are strong links with the local church. Volunteer parishioners dedicated to sharing the Bible with pupils lead 'Open the Book' on a weekly basis. Pupils speak highly of how this worship teaches them about stories in the Bible and how these can be applied to life today. All pupils and staff are invited to join in with worship and there is increasing involvement from pupils. However, they do not regularly plan or lead worship. Pupils are encouraged to read the prayers during worship. Pupils know that prayer can be helpful at any time. 'There's no wrong time to pray' said one pupil. Time for reflection is a strength of the school. During worship and other times in the school day pupils are encouraged to be still and reflect. This helps to teach them to self-regulate their behaviour and realise the importance of time to consider their thoughts, words and actions. This has had a significant impact on embedding the words of Jesus: 'Treat other as you would want to be treated.'

Headteacher	Leanne Finch
Inspector's name and number	Tracy Hallows 831