

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Emmanuel Holcombe Church of England Primary School			
Address	Helmshore Road, Holcombe, Bury, BL8 4PA		
Date of inspection	29 November 2018	Status of school	VA primary
Diocese	Manchester	URN	105338

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 Judgements		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

Emmanuel Holcombe CofE Primary School is a primary school with 101 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The religious background of the majority of pupils is Christian. There have been recent changes of staffing and leadership including the appointment of the headteacher in 2016 and the chair of governors in 2017.

The school's Christian vision

'Jesus came to give us life in all its fullness.'

Our vision is that through faith, family and friendship, each of us can grow in love and learning; being tolerant, having resilience and developing enquiring minds, so that we can all experience the abundance Jesus came to give us.

Key findings

- Distinctively Christian values are at the heart of the school and shape the thoughtful and caring relationships and actions of all who learn and work here. As a result, pupils' behaviour is exemplary.
- The school's effective leadership reflects trust and teamwork, forged in a period of change and rooted in the school's Christian vision.
- The strong partnership between the local church, staff and governors enriches worship and leadership.
- Care for the well-being of pupils and adults as individuals enables all within the school community to flourish.
- The enquiry based approach of Religious Education (RE) contributes effectively to the school's Christian character and to pupils' spiritual and ethical development.

Areas for development

- Further develop pupils' understanding of spirituality by identifying opportunities across the whole curriculum to explore spiritual and ethical issues in age-appropriate ways.
- Increase the opportunities for all pupils to take social action by making links between their ethical and charitable activities and the school's Christian vision.
- Extend the evaluation of the impact of collective worship and opportunities for prayer and reflection to ensure there is a cohesive planning process in place to sustain pupils' spiritual development.

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 school's vision is rooted in the successful teaching of Christian values in their biblical context which strengthens the school's strongly felt sense of being a family. Through this vision, leaders affirm the importance of nurturing every individual to grow academically and spiritually.

The deep impact is seen in daily activities of the school's systematic teaching of wide-ranging Christian values. For example, staff encourage pupils to talk through difficulties, to forgive each other, apologise and make up after a disagreement. As a result, pupils often do so with little or no adult intervention, spontaneously making gestures of kindness. Pupils and staff alike articulate the connection with Christian values. A pupil described the school as inspiring and honest and added that it is 'growing you to be a better person'. Incidents of bullying and discriminatory behaviour are rare and dealt with quickly. Love, nurture, trust, respect and openness mark relationships within school and fulfil the vision of growth through faith, family and friendship.

The school's vision that all should grow in love and learning underpins planning and the drive to raise attainment. In order to meet the needs of all learners, the curriculum has been revised successfully to integrate thinking and questioning skills. A common cross-curricular approach consistently reinforces pupils' ability to analyse. However, opportunities to explore ethical and spiritual issues across the whole curriculum, as well as in RE, are not systematically identified. With the impetus of the skills based curriculum, pupils are becoming resilient and independent in learning. Pupils recognise the impact of the school's vision on their progress. One said, 'Hope helps me to learn – when you feel you can't do anything there's hope because God helps you.' In addition, vulnerable pupils are quickly identified for detailed, focussed support both academically and emotionally. Consequently, pupils' overall achievement and progress have risen over the last two years to be in line with national averages and above in reading. This includes disadvantaged pupils who have also made expected progress or better.

With diocesan advice, the RE curriculum has been thoroughly revised and strengthened to develop religious literacy through the use of the *Understanding Christianity* approach. Teachers benefit from sharing strategies as a team and from local and diocesan networks. The school makes effective use of local connections to stimulate understanding of Judaism and Islam and of the worldwide church, for example, using family links with the Greek Orthodox Church. A visit to a Muslim school and to a Fun Faith Fayre enabled pupils to reflect on beliefs that they do not regularly encounter. Following a lesson featuring Terry Waite, a pupil commented that learning more about 'how people dedicate their lives to being Christians makes you properly believe'. As a result of such approaches, RE contributes to pupils' spiritual development.

Alongside the academic curriculum, moral and personal development is nurtured through theme days, charitable giving and opportunities for leadership within school. As a result, pupils can propose and support a charity completely independently. School council meetings reinforce pupils' confidence in making decisions. In order to agree, for example, on strategies for fund-raising, pupils recognise differences of opinion and compromise. A long tradition of supporting a wide range of local, national and international charities ensures that pupils look beyond themselves and show a keen sense of concern to help others. Some older pupils have personally engaged in social action, for example, by training as Dementia Friends. Although disadvantage is explored both through charities and in lessons, not many pupils go beyond the expression of compassion to challenge injustice globally.

The desire that all should experience 'life in all its fullness' is at the forefront of the school's effective care for the mental wellbeing of pupils and adults. Theme days, such as 'All different, all equal' and 'Wellbeing', have extended pupils' awareness and understanding of themselves and others. Additionally, the school provides flexible and effective help which is individually tailored to pupils and adults needing support for mental health and well-being. A combination of external agencies and in-school strategies has made a vital contribution to pupils' improved attendance and, where necessary, behaviour. Attendance is slightly above the national average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school and the school's successful approaches with individual families. As a result, families and staff speak highly of sensitive, compassionate support.

Daily collective worship is central to the life of the whole school community. A well organised programme based on biblical passages, incorporates the church's year and chosen Christian values. Pupils and adults experience an engaging variety through relevant talks, visual prompts, questions, music, silence and corporate prayer. Clergy, governors and staff who lead services are highly committed to offering meaningful opportunities for worship. Careful attention has been given to making the Easter Eucharist accessible for all ages. Pupil leadership of worship has been strengthened by the appointment of pupil Faith Ambassadors who independently devise and lead collective worship half-termly. Feedback highlighted the positive impact of their recent choice of an animated 'Lego' version of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan. The Faith Ambassadors themselves give their opinions

more generally on collective worship. However, there is no systematic way for pupils and adults to evaluate class worship or the impact of opportunities for personal prayer. As a result, it is difficult to assess the success of any changes made in response to feedback.

The three worship centres in the parish make an imaginative and consistent contribution to collective worship and to the practice of prayer. The sponsorship of the parish enables a PAIS team, young international church volunteers, to bring fresh approaches and activities to collective worship. They model living out Christian faith today as young people and represent an international perspective. Congregation members support the everyday prayer life of the school community by regularly using prayers written by pupils. Others welcome the Faith Ambassadors to pray in the church's reflective garden. In such ways, pupils and adults join together naturally in prayer. Partnership with the local church community is the cornerstone of the school's identity as a church school.

The statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Teaching and learning in RE are regularly monitored by governors and senior leaders and graded as good by them. Resources and activities in RE lessons are carefully matched to the ages, interests and abilities of pupils to ensure they make at least good progress. Key questions for each unit help pupils to become increasingly independent in learning. The school has a carefully considered structure for half-termly assessment for all foundation subjects including RE. Moderation across classes and a portfolio of written pupil samples ensure consistency of expectation and marking in RE. By the end of Year 6 the progress and attainment of pupils in RE is similar to that in other core subjects.

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Inspector's name and number	Eleanor Benson 920