

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Prestbury Church of England Primary School

Bollin Grove, Prestbury, Macclesfield SK10 4JJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Chester
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Cheshire East
Date of inspection	23 November 2017
Date of last inspection	October 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided
Headteacher	David Capener
Inspector's name and number	Jean Forward 625

School context

Prestbury Church of England Primary School is average in size and has nursery provision. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average, as is the percentage with a statement for special educational needs or an education, health, care plan. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2017, pupils' attainment was significantly above the national average, including at the higher level. The school holds the Religious Education (RE) Quality Mark Silver Award.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Prestbury as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The outstanding servant leadership of the headteacher and his vision for the development of the school ensure that its distinctive Christian ethos is central to the school's mission.
- The school is a beacon of Christian care and nurturing. The inclusive environment, rooted in Christian values, has a direct influence on pupils' well-being and eagerness to learn.
- The pupils' excellent behaviour, respect for others and positive attitudes stem from the school's emphasis on the transformative power of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in building Christian character.
- Worship is at the heart of the school's daily life. It has a significant influence on the spiritual development of the whole school family.
- The governing body provides extremely strong support and challenge through its commitment and expertise. As a result, highly effective and strategic self-evaluation of church school distinctiveness ensures that it is central to the school development process.

Areas to improve

- Introduce a formal system to record the monitoring of worship which includes all stakeholders. This will add to the evidence base for discussion and development already provided by pupils' written responses.
- Extend the opportunities for pupils to learn about non-Christian faiths other than those included in the diocesan syllabus in order to broaden their knowledge and understanding of difference and diversity.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

An outstanding commitment to the development and well-being of every pupil underpins the school's work and is rooted in Christian love and the mission statement 'Let your light shine'. High expectations and encouragement are directly linked to the Christian life of the school and the recognition that 'every pupil is unique and blessed by God'. Following a review of its Christian values, the school has adopted the nine attributes of a community demonstrating the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians). Pupils talk confidently about the importance of these attributes in their daily lives. One said, 'The values help us to do what God wants.' Another explained that the core values prompt everyone to reflect on their behaviour and how they treat others and the world around them. As a result, the positive relationships across the community are rooted in a Christ-centred approach and there is a calm and peaceful atmosphere. Pupils say that staff are kind and encouraging and this gives them confidence in their learning. Pupils are happy and enthusiastic. One remarked, 'The school helps me to grow as a person.' This is affirmed by parents who say that their children feel happy and secure and that the Christian ethos develops their confidence. Parents believe that the exceptional support for pupils and families is directly linked to the distinctive Christian character of the school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is excellent. Pupils have access to a broad, creative and stimulating curriculum and a wide range of additional activities which extend experience and develop individual skills.

Christian trust is clearly evident in the school's daily life, resulting in all members of the community feeling valued and supported. Pupils demonstrate respect and concern for others in and beyond the school. They enjoy being members of the school council and ethos group and take their roles as buddies and playground pals very seriously. They understand that these opportunities are an example of service to the school community. The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship. A designated annual charity encourages pupils to plan fundraising activities. Pupils understand the importance of showing generosity and know that this is rooted in Jesus's teaching. A long-standing link with a Christian school in South Africa gives pupils a greater understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural worldwide faith.

Eye-catching and engaging displays emphasise the school's Christian character and prompt the pupils' spiritual awareness and understanding extremely well. Pupils value the classroom reflection areas and are able to explain that these support them spiritually and are an aid to prayer. The school has plans for an outdoor reflection area in order to widen opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. The RE curriculum introduces pupils to Judaism and Islam and contributes well to positive attitudes about other beliefs and cultures. The emphasis on respect for all makes a strong contribution to the school's Christian character and inclusivity and to pupils' SMSC development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship has a deep and sustained influence on the life of the school. All members of the community recognise its importance and the central part it plays day by day. It is inclusive and inspires pupils and staff. As a result, the Christian faith and its teachings are constantly linked to daily life and inform the way in which every member of the community seeks to follow the example of Jesus. Excellent planning enables pupils to understand Christian values, the Bible and major Christian festivals. In this way, the worship of the school is linked to the pattern of worship in the wider church.

The pupils enjoy worship. They listen attentively, sing with enthusiasm and engage well. All members of the school community experience times of prayer which are an important part of the rhythm of the school day. Pupils write their own prayers and share these with one another and their teachers. As a result, the development of pupils' spiritual awareness and understanding is enhanced.

Pupils become familiar with Anglican practice through the use of a variety of prayers, responses for greeting and dismissal and a clear liturgical framework. These established patterns enable pupils to develop an understanding of church tradition and that worship plays a key part in the life of Christians. The school places great importance on developing pupils' understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As a result, they are able to talk about the Trinity and they develop a more mature understanding as they progress through the school.

Members of staff, the parish priest and visitors play an important part in the pattern of worship. The weekly community act of worship is led by the vicar of St. Peter's. Parents and governors support this and there is a true sense of the school family coming together. The school worships in the church for major festivals. As a result, pupils and parents experience a sense of welcome and belonging within the wider worshipping community.

Pupils enjoy preparing for and contributing to special acts of worship at key points during the school year. The weekly house worship is prepared and led by Year 6 house captains. These leadership opportunities deepen their understanding of the key elements of worship and its importance in the Christian life. The school asks pupils to comment on worship in a special book. Although informal monitoring takes place through discussion, there is no written record of responses from other members of the school community.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The importance of RE in the life of this Christian school is demonstrated by its high priority as a core subject. Discrete lessons are effectively reinforced by pupils' exploration of the spiritual across the curriculum. Teaching is consistently good with many outstanding features. Standards are comparable to those in other core subjects and reflect the consistently good and often outstanding progress pupils make. Lessons are planned to meet the needs of all learners, using varied and differentiated activities which engage pupils and develop essential understanding and skills. The subject is taught in a creative and interactive way with a strong emphasis on developing Christian values and concepts. The diocesan syllabus provides rich and varied learning opportunities which widen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils experience a range of stimulating activities which enables them to question, discuss and reflect. There is a clear balance between learning about religion and opportunities for pupils to think about what their learning means to them. They think deeply, express their opinions with confidence and listen carefully to the views of others. This enhances their skills of empathy and religious literacy. As a result, they are enthusiastic and say that they enjoy their learning.

Evidence of prior learning and thinking skills was demonstrated in a Year 1 lesson about Christian symbols at Christmas. Pupils were very keen to contribute and share ideas with one another. Year 3 pupils were fully engaged exploring the meaning of the gift of gold in the Christmas story. A range of focused questions and suitable challenge encouraged pupils' involvement and their desire to contribute. A pupil commented, 'Gold is a gift fit for a king.' Judaism and Islam are introduced through the RE curriculum. A pupil said, 'We enjoy learning about other faiths.' Teachers are well-supported by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader. In-house professional development and attendance at diocesan training effectively support teaching and learning. Assessment for learning statements guide pupils and invite them to answer questions and extend their understanding. Class books provide a vibrant record of the creative work the pupils undertake. The subject leader monitors teaching and learning through a rigorous programme of observations, moderation and book scrutiny. Assessment is effective in tracking attainment and progress. Annotation of planning and the use of concept maps inform the process. As a result of this ambition for RE, highly effective development takes place.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding

The headteacher's informed and dedicated Christian leadership is rooted in a deep personal faith. The dynamic promotion of the core values ensures that the Christian ethos guides every aspect of school life. The headteacher has a clear Christian vision for the school which is focused on ensuring that all pupils know that they are children of God. He is supported by a strong senior leadership team, committed staff and dedicated governors. Everyone is committed to fostering all aspects of pupils' development and well-being through the fruit of the Holy Spirit. There is a determination to ensure that the school enables all pupils to do their best. As a result, the Christian ethos supports effective learning and personal development.

The school knows its pupils and their families extremely well and meets individual needs through a culture of Christian nurturing and support. Parents recognise the distinctive Christian character of the school and believe that it fosters a strong sense of family. They welcome the open door policy and find members of staff approachable and supportive. As a result, the home and school partnership is reinforced. The relationship between the school and St. Peter's church is extremely strong. They work together on a number of events and activities which strengthen the school's involvement in the life of the church and wider community. The school and the vicar of St. Peter's have a close working relationship. This strengthens the spiritual and pastoral elements of the partnership between the school, its families and the church.

Foundation governors have a clear understanding of their strategic role. They ask informed questions and provide a high level of challenge and support. Detailed action plans for RE and worship are included in the school's development planning and are reviewed regularly. These plans set challenging targets and strategies for further improvement. The designated RE link governor is committed to her role and provides excellent support. These strong elements of governance ensure that the school's Christian ethos draws together every aspect of decision-making and strategic leadership. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

The school is outward-looking and plays a full role in local and diocesan initiatives. A strong partnership with the diocese through support and training contributes to the development of church school distinctiveness. Professional development and succession planning for leadership of church schools has a positive effect and enables staff to contribute ideas and insights which enhance their own and the school's Christian development.