

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Utkinton St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Address	Quarry Bank, Utkinton, Nr Tarporley, Cheshire, CW6 0LA		
Date of inspection	3 December 2018	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Diocese	Chester	URN	111261

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

Utkinton St Paul's is a small primary school with 65 pupils on roll in four classes. The school has little religious and cultural diversity with few pupils speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below the national average as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school is in a partnership with Huxley CofE Primary school. The deputy headteacher of both schools is currently acting headteacher. There are well advanced plans for these two schools to federate.

The school's Christian vision

Our school's vision is to enable every child to fulfil his/her academic potential in a nurturing Christian environment. To provide an individualised academic learning experience, which allows all children to fulfil their potential as well as grow in accordance with the Christian values that underpin the community.

Key findings

- The strong and purposeful Christian leadership of the acting headteacher, supported by a committed staff team, demonstrates a clear Christian vision. This promotes the school's Christian character and mission well.
- The Christian vision permeates every aspect of the school's daily life. Together with core Christian values, this vision ensures that everyone grows and flourishes in a loving and caring community.
- The Christian climate of this school, enriched by the school's core values, supports positive relationships for all. Each member of the school is seen as a unique child of God.
- Collective worship and religious education (RE) contribute significantly in promoting distinctive Christian values and deepening pupils' spirituality.

Areas for development

- To create classroom reflection areas so that pupils can contemplate and further consider the worship theme of the week.
- To develop the monitoring of RE so that senior leaders have a sharper knowledge of standards of teaching and learning.
- Enhance governors' involvement in the strategic planning and monitoring of the Christian dimension of the school as it moves into the next phase of its 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

Utkinton school has a strong Christian ethos which is welcoming to all. The school's vision stems from the shared Christian values agreed by staff, governors, pupils and parents and underpins everything that the school does. One parent summed this up by saying, 'The school has a real sense of community, where strong morals underpin everyday life.' This can be seen in the provision the school makes for the diverse needs of individual pupils. The acting headteacher, who has recently completed the Christian Leadership course, demonstrates strong leadership that ensures all staff understand current practice in Church school education. Priority is given to the development of collective worship and RE. The school has a strong link with Chester Diocese which ensures appropriate professional development support as the school lives out its Christian vision. An effective partnership with the local church provides good opportunities for the school to engage with the wider community.

The acting headteacher confidently articulates and encourages the school's vision which is firmly based on Christian values. He is supported enthusiastically by senior leaders and staff. Together they ensure that Christian values underpin all learning and support for pupils' wellbeing. Staff live out this Christian vision, providing a supporting and caring environment, underpinned by a strong Christian ethos. The leadership of the school is supported through strong links with the vicar. As a result, prayer and pastoral links between church and school are effectively interwoven. The governing body has a strong commitment to the school's Christian foundation. Governors are kept well informed through regular reports from the acting headteacher. As a result of the imminent federation with Huxley, there will be a need for further involvement in strategic planning and vision. Recruitment for members of the new governing body is under way, ensuring that it has the relevant skills to move both schools forward.

The Christian vision shapes the way decisions are made regarding the curriculum and extended learning. Pupils' excitement about learning and school life is reflected in their good attendance. Provision for those with additional learning or personal needs and those who are vulnerable is exceptional. It is rooted in Christian love and understanding. The school's curriculum and good teaching enable pupils to achieve at least in line with national averages. Parents speak highly of the school's commitment to supporting families and meeting the learning and emotional needs of their children. Priority is given to the wellbeing of everyone. Parents know that the staff will help their children to overcome barriers to learning and provide loving care during the school day. Mental health is also promoted as an integral part of each person's wellbeing. The relationships and sex education curriculum and personal, social and emotional programme also promote high self-esteem and emotional wellbeing. They help pupils to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others. Staff wellbeing is given a high priority. Parents feel welcome and included. This was summed up by one parent who said, 'We come from a family into a family.' There is respect for all religions without prejudice and all faiths are valued. Everyone is treated as an individual. The school has adopted the parable of the lost sheep to demonstrate that everyone matters. One member of staff reinforced this by saying, 'Nurture is the key word and sums up the school. Every child is unique and can be themselves.' The whole school family demonstrates Christian compassion and concern for justice in local, national and global settings. They support a number of charities and pupils' involvement leads to a deeper understanding of poverty, disadvantage and deprivation.

Pupils' behaviour is strongly influenced by the Christian vision. As a result, the supportive and respectful harmony of the school community is impressive and welcoming. Pupils feel safe, valued and understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Staff speak of the many ways they feel supported and appreciated, attributing this to the culture of the school's distinctive Christian ethos. The positive approach to equality and valuing difference means that everyone in the school family is treated with dignity and respect.

Great emphasis is placed upon worship being at the heart of school life where it effectively underpins and extends the school's well-embedded Christian vision and values. It is rooted in biblical teaching, the life of Jesus and Christian festivals and seasons. Collective worship begins with the lighting of a candle and pupils share the Christian greeting, 'Peace be with you.' This reinforces on a daily basis that Jesus is always with us. A pupil ethos group, which meets with staff, clergy and a governor, plays an important role in promoting the Christian vision. Members assist in the planning and delivery of worship, including the monthly worship they plan and lead. Prayer plays an important part in the life of the school and encourages spiritual development. Pupils understand the value and importance of prayer. As one group of pupils said, 'If you are having a bad day you can reflect on how you can change it and move on.' Pupils write their own prayers and there is a

well-used reflection area in the school corridor. However, the school recognises that classroom reflection areas would help pupils to consider worship messages and offer a place for quiet contemplation. The vicar regularly leads worship in school and in church at specific times during the year with parents and members of the local community. This strengthens the bond between church and school. Worship places great emphasis on encouraging pupils to explore the Christian faith as well as providing an understanding of the beliefs and practices of other world faiths. As a result, pupils are prepared well for life in British society. The school promotes an understanding of the Holy Trinity and pupils have an age-appropriate appreciation of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There are effective procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of worship. Pupils are part of this evaluation, expressing their thoughts and feelings in personal reflection books.

Use of the diocesan RE syllabus ensures pupils have rich learning experiences that develop their knowledge of Christianity and other major world faiths. One pupil commented, 'It's good to learn about your own religion as well as those of others and to learn what others do compared to us.' Pupils are enthused by the well planned RE curriculum. Staff and pupils focus on a Christian value each term and apply this across all aspects of school life. RE provision strengthens the school's core values and vision and reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement. The RE leader ensures that the subject maintains a high profile and stimulates pupils' interest and enjoyment as well as providing effective support to staff. Good teaching ensures that pupils are fully engaged and enjoy their learning. However, the school does not have thorough systems in place to monitor the subject. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Bible, the life of Jesus and other major world faiths. There is a thorough assessment and tracking system that ensures outcomes in RE are in line with those in other subjects. RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Visits to places of worship also enhance pupils' appreciation and understanding of the beliefs and customs of faiths practised in the area.

Acting Headteacher	Gareth Coyne
Inspector's name and number	Stephen Burrow 622