

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Shocklach Oviatt Church of England Primary School			
Address	Shocklach, Nr Malpas, Cheshire, SY14 7BN		
Date of inspection	11 July 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled primary
Diocese	Diocese of Chester	URN	111283

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	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent

Shocklach Oviatt is a primary school with 45 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and 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 (SEND) is in line with national averages. The executive headteacher took up post in September 2017, spending 0.5 of the week at the school. Nursery provision has been added to the school since the last inspection.

The school's Christian vision

We aim high in our hearts and minds as we blossom in God's garden. *For nothing is impossible with God.* Luke 1:37.

We provide a long-established Christian school family in which pupils feel welcome, safe, nurtured and supported by a framework of love, order, stability and affection. We strive to bring the Gospel to bear in all aspects of school life and policy.

Key findings

- The learning beyond the classroom creates a culture of care and encouragement. This ensures staff and pupils' wellbeing and builds confidence to be advocates for positive change.
- The leadership of the school ensures that it reflects its local community and promotes its Christian character. This is achieved through supportive, sustainable and close relationships with St Edith's Parish Church and the Diocese of Chester.
- Leaders use creativity and innovation to provide opportunities for pupils to explore situations of injustice and equality. This empowers them to take constructive action to make the world a better place.
- The school places worship at the centre of its life. Both staff and pupils are able to describe moments of spiritual development and encounter. Close proactive work with St Edith's Parish Church takes worship into the community with notable impact.

Areas for development

- To ensure that strong links continue between the school and St Edith's Parish Church to enhance further an educational experience that reflects the local community.
- Within the school's Christian vision, to develop greater awareness of the full range of relationships present in society to better respond to changes pupils encounter in society.
- To establish a firm partnership with a school in another country that is mutually beneficial to extend further the global dimension to learning.

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 immediately evident from displays and symbols that Shocklach Oviatt is a school with a strong Christian vision that is focused on God's world. The Christian vision of blossoming in God's garden is given life in the outdoor focus of the learning that the remarkable executive headteacher and her team deliver. The Forest School aspect of school life significantly enhances learning for pupils, building resilience in body, mind and spirit. It links seamlessly with the school's desire to value God's creation and to take constructive action to care for the natural world. The Christian vision is understood by governors, staff and pupils leading to a common approach to learning that inspires confidence and courage.

Self-evaluation is effective as a tool to identify areas of strength and areas for development enabling rapid improvement. Parents, staff and governors recognise that the school is steadily developing under the leadership of the executive headteacher. Pupils achieve in line with expectations. The exceptional context to learning that is in place motivates staff and pupils to apply that learning to their daily lives. This has remarkable impact on the school as a learning community. One parent commented, 'I think it is phenomenal!'

The headteacher and senior leadership takes great care to ensure that religious education (RE) is given equal status alongside other areas of the curriculum. This enables pupils to value their learning and to make links between RE and other subjects. The high quality of RE is recognised externally by the gold RE quality mark. The school RE lead chairs one of only seven RE clusters across the Diocese. This leads to exceptionally good teaching and learning by staff and for pupils. RE is rooted in real life enabling learning to be applied in day to day contexts. As one pupil put it, 'RE is an incredible experience that helps me understand life.' This is evident in acts of worship as well, providing all with ways to apply Christian teaching to everyday life.

Curriculum planning builds links between subjects that create opportunities for pupils to explore the global dimension in learning. The school has links around the world with New Zealand, India, the Solomon Islands, Hong Kong and the Antarctic. These open pupils' horizons and allow them to explore God's rich creation and his diverse people. An example of this is the token of love sent to Christchurch after the earthquake and mosque shootings which brought a reply from the Dean of Christchurch Cathedral. These global connections are highly valued by pupils and staff alike and significantly motivate them to take constructive action for the benefit of all.

Pupils and staff are able to articulate and explain how to address areas of disadvantage, deprivation, and the exploitation of the natural world with passion and practicality. Concern for the declining bee population motivates younger pupils to grow bee friendly plants. Older pupils link their environmental concerns with their global knowledge. This leads them to recycle plastics into eco-bricks to help construct a school in Calcutta. The school takes their concerns to their local member of parliament (MP) who raises them in Westminster demonstrating courageous advocacy on a remarkable scale for a very small rural primary school. This is recognised by the eco-schools' bronze award which has boosted the pupils' confidence and esteem. Parents confirm that this learning extends beyond school. One parent states their child led a beach clean-up whilst on holiday. Another parent states that their child wrote to Starbucks to ask them to stop using single use plastics; both a direct result of learning at school.

An inspirational culture of care and encouragement gives staff and pupils confidence to aim high in all they do. This is reflected in a wide range of trips that encourage pupils to grow in confidence. These allow pupils to explore their identity and build confidence as they serve others. A sense of family pervades the school, welcomes pupils with disabilities and with special education needs exceptionally well, and leads to a fully inclusive community that mutually supports and builds up one another. Pupils, staff, parents and governors talk of the school being a hospitable community. The school involves the wider community extensively in its life, enabling pupils to mix with people of all ages. This experience enables pupils to grow and flourish. A parent describes this by saying that the children become, 'well rounded human beings from being in this school'.

Worship is central to the life of the school, permeating all aspects of school life giving the spiritual dimension to life status alongside all other aspects. Close relationships with St Edith's Parish Church ensure that pupils are able

to experience a range of worship contexts providing a wide range of opportunities for spiritual development. Exciting worship and prayer in a variety of tents, buildings and in the open air are highly valued by pupils and staff alike. Pupils and staff comment on exceptional spiritual encounters they have had whilst reflecting and praying as part of school. Music plays a significant part in the life of the school and its use in worship is evident, enabling pupils to express their creativity. They are able to engage in a range of prayer and reflection activities that promote their spiritual growth. Parents talk of the way that pupils bring elements of school worship home in a way that enriches family life. Pupils are aware of a variety of faith traditions through their study of other world faiths in RE which they connect with world issues.

Pupils and staff know support at all times, particularly those of sadness or crisis. They use the tools of prayer and worship, that provide a range of techniques to promote personal wellbeing and health, to help address these. One member of staff comments, 'I feel incredibly supported in my role.' The partnership with the local church provides additional support that ensures pupils and staff experience sustained pastoral care that promotes wellbeing.

'Nothing is impossible with God' encapsulates the growth in confidence and sense of working for justice that pupils demonstrate in this school and that is why, as one parent put it, 'They love to come to school.'

Executive Headteacher	Kathleen L Shephard
Inspector's name and number	Rev Craig Watson 78