

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Church of England Primary School			
Address	Mount Grove, Birkenhead CH41 2UJ		
Date of inspection	5 December 2019	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary
Diocese	Chester	URN	105064

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
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent

School context

Christ Church is a primary school with 180 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 well above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The acting headteacher was seconded to the school in September 2019.

The school's Christian vision

With God all things are possible. (Matthew 19:26)

At Christ Church, we seek to create a firm foundation for individual growth through being a welcoming, caring and vibrant Christian community. Believing Christ to be in all of us, we strive to nurture talents, widen horizons, develop skills and create and celebrate aspirations for life as local, national and global citizens.

Key findings

- The extremely strong Christian vision permeates every aspect of the school's daily life. It is understood and articulated by all members of the community. Together with the core Christian values, the vision ensures that everyone flourishes in a welcoming, inclusive and loving environment.
- Senior leaders demonstrate outstanding Christian leadership and service. They have the support of committed governors whose experience and skills enable them to fulfil their strategic role effectively.
- All members of the school community are treated with Christian dignity and respect. Consequently, relationships are extremely strong. The school's nurturing ethos ensures that every individual feels safe and valued as a unique child of God.
- Varied and invitational worship lies at the heart of the school day. It inspires all members of the community and encourages spiritual reflection and development.
- Exceptional leadership of RE ensures that the subject is taught with commitment and enthusiasm. Pupils experience lively and searching learning and their ideas and opinions are always valued. As a result, they are engaged and feel secure when expressing their views.

Areas for development

- Explore the introduction of eucharistic worship across the school. This will support pupils' growing understanding of the central role of Holy Communion in the lives of Christians.
- Engage with the Christian Aid *Global Neighbours* programme. This will further develop the school's extremely imaginative approach to courageous advocacy.

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

Christ Church is exceptional in the way it lives out its Christian vision and values. 'In God all things are possible' is threaded through every aspect of daily life. Pupils automatically refer to the quotation and the core Christian values when talking about their learning. The school is committed to meeting the diverse needs of individual pupils and their families in an area experiencing significant social disadvantage. Senior leaders are secure in their knowledge of current thinking in Church school education and all staff take advantage of opportunities to develop their professional and leadership skills. The school has extremely strong links with the diocese, parish church, local schools and many outside agencies. This ensures that Christian distinctiveness, school improvement strategies and provision for the specific needs of all pupils are central to development planning. Governors are extremely involved in the daily life of the school. Systems for monitoring and evaluation are rigorous and as a result, governors are able to offer well-informed challenge and support. The designated governor for Church school distinctiveness is involved in the monitoring and evaluation of worship and RE. This collaboration brings additional insight into the development of these aspects of Church school life.

The school's Christian vision underpins an innovative approach to the curriculum and extended provision. This ensures that teaching and learning are tailored to the specific needs of all pupils. The curriculum is rich and balanced and includes a commitment to broadening experience and horizons. This includes visits to art galleries and museums, visitors and residential opportunities which enrich pupils' lives and learning. As a result, pupils flourish and are eager to do their best. Inclusion is at the heart of the school's Christian vision. The wide range of intervention strategies, nurturing provision and extra-curricular activities enables all pupils to become confident and aspirational learners. The appointment of a family partnership worker and the creation of nurture provision enable the school to support its most vulnerable pupils, especially those with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. A rigorous and unwavering approach to attendance encourages all pupils to value their time in school.

The school's Christian vision and holistic approach to child development and learning ensure that pupils are able to flourish, believe in themselves and strive to achieve. They say that their teachers help in any situation. Many pupils show great resilience and perseverance. The school's Christian ethos provides an extremely safe and supportive environment in which they can progress and grow in confidence. Pupils have opportunities to grow through leadership roles in the school council, eco team, ethos group and safe squad. They take these responsibilities extremely seriously and the school's Christian vision and values are at the heart of their social interaction. All members of the school community demonstrate Christian compassion and concern for justice in local, national and global settings. The use of Picture News provides opportunities to discuss world events and enables pupils to focus on big questions. The school supports a number of local, national and global charities. Pupils' involvement leads to a deeper understanding of poverty and disadvantage. The school intends to broaden its global partnerships. The Christian vision is reflected in the way that the senior leadership team and governors make astute and ethical decisions about resources, always seeking to do the very best for pupils and staff.

The Christian vision and values underpin relationships throughout the school community and are at the heart of policies and practice. Pupils behave extremely well and explain that Christian values and the school's rules encourage everyone to be thoughtful, kind and forgiving. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe at all times. Parents endorse this and say that the school is a haven of Christian pastoral care not just for pupils but for everyone. They attribute this culture to the school's distinctive Christian ethos and sense of family. The positive approach to equality and valuing difference means that everyone is treated with dignity and respect and their mental health and wellbeing are a priority. The school's involvement with Place2Be is proving to be a significant part of its approach to mental health for pupils, staff and families. Pupils speak openly about the importance of having the opportunity to share their concerns.

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. It is inclusive and invitational and reflects the school's Christian vision and values. Staff say that they find it supports their own spiritual needs. Planning is thorough and well-established. It is rooted in biblical teaching, the seasons and festivals of the Church's year and Christian values. Pupils explain the nature of the Trinity in age-related terms. They enjoy worship and participate enthusiastically whilst maintaining a sense of reverence. The ethos group is involved in planning and

leading worship. This gives pupils a strong sense of involvement and responsibility and helps them to understand the elements of liturgy. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have recently experienced eucharistic worship in the church and the school would like to extend this to all pupils. Reflection areas in classrooms and a designated prayer room enable pupils to be still and contemplative. As a result, pupils understand the importance of prayer in the lives of people of faith. The parish priest and foundation governors lead worship in school and there are many occasions during the year when pupils worship in the church. This creates a strong link with the worshipping life of the parish and it enriches the Christian experience of the whole community.

Use of the diocesan syllabus and *Understanding Christianity* resource ensures that pupils have rich learning experiences in RE. These develop their knowledge of Christianity and different world faiths. Pupils have the opportunity to understand the significance of sacred texts and to engage with challenging questions. They were observed engaging in respectful discussion and collaboration. As a result, they are able to reflect on their own and others' religious and spiritual convictions and respectfully articulate differing points of view. Pupils also value their learning through creative activities, visits to places of worship and discussion with visitors from different world religions. The subject is well resourced and a professional development programme ensures that staff feel confident about their teaching and subject knowledge.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Effective teaching and informative assessment procedures ensure that all pupils, regardless of ability, make at least good progress. As a result, standards of attainment for all pupils are in line with those in other subjects and some achieve above age-related expectations.

A thorough programme of subject monitoring and involvement in the local cluster of diocesan schools informs the school's target areas for development.

Acting headteacher	Nicky Tweddle
Inspector's name and number	Jean Forward 625