

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Haslingden St. James' Church of England Primary School			
Address	Regent Street, Haslingden, Rossendale, Lancashire BB4 5HQ		
Date of inspection	04/07/2019	Status of school	VA primary
Diocese	Blackburn	URN	119452

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

St. James' Haslingden is a primary school with 190 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of Asian heritage. Most pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. Since the last denominational inspection, a new headteacher, deputy headteacher and incumbent are new to post. There are also new leaders of religious education (RE) and collective worship, and there has been a high turnover of teaching staff.

The school's Christian vision

We are a safe, loving, supportive, Christian family which values each child's individuality and uniqueness created in the image of God. We nurture the talents given by God to inspire pupils to achieve and succeed, and foster a sense of awe and wonder of God's world.

Key findings

- The excellent leadership of the school, especially in RE, is inspired by the shared Christian vision. Pupils' knowledge of living world faiths is growing.
- The pupils' behaviour is exemplary and is supported by the Christian vision and ethos of the school.
- The vision has inspired mutually beneficial links with a variety of partners, thereby enriching the pupils' understanding of diversity locally, nationally and globally.
- Pupils challenge inequality and injustice. As a result, they are actively engaged in social action and drive charitable works, locally and nationally.
- Creative, dynamic and interactive collective worship engages pupils with great enthusiasm. However, pupils and clergy are not always involved in the initial planning of worship.

Areas for development

- Increase the input of pupils and clergy at the planning stage of collective worship provision thereby enriching involvement and ownership.
- Deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of living world faiths and beliefs.

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

Haslingden St. James' is an inclusive, caring school which 'nurtures the talents given by God'. The biblically rooted Christian vision shapes the school's policies and priorities, enabling all to be welcomed and to flourish. This is reflected in the inclusive admissions policy. The school celebrates diversity as all are 'created in the image of God'. A governor shared, 'The vision has brought all faiths together in school.' The vision has nurtured strong partnerships with the parish, other schools and the diocese. These partnerships have ensured school improvement, the professional development of staff and governors along with effective succession planning. Since the last denominational inspection, there have been many changes. The inspirational headteacher commented, 'Our vision and faith has always helped us when we're faced with challenges. The clergy and parish have been there for us.'

Shaped by the vision, the broad, highly inclusive curriculum is supported by rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems. As a result, progress of the pupils, including the most vulnerable, is in line with national standards. 'Super learning weeks', such as 'Christianity throughout the world' and the regular watching of 'Newsround' have enriched the curriculum. Big questions, such as 'Which is the most important Christian value?' are woven into curricular provision. The pupils ask and answer searching questions within a safe environment. A pupil wrote, 'Learning is fun. We are encouraged to be independent and think.' As a result of the pupils' enjoyment of school, attendance has improved. Pupils have a growing knowledge and understanding of world faiths but this is not, as yet, fully explored. Many extra-curricular activities and visits, including to various places of worship, widen pupils' horizons. Staff share a clear understanding of spiritual development. This provision is impressive and includes outdoor spaces. A pupil explained, 'We feel very happy going to the reflection areas in school. I can think things out there.'

Pupils value immensely that they should use their 'talents given by God'. As a result, they aspire to be the best they can be. Pupils place the school's Christian values at the heart of their choices. Weekly awards identify pupils who uphold the core values of the school. A pupil shared, 'We must guide each other on the right path.' The vision inspires the school community to be 'loving and supportive' by challenging social injustice with social action. A parent commented, 'When my child saw a homeless man, he insisted that he gave him some money.' Classes choose charities to support, often inspired through worship. There have been whole school campaigns, such as fund raising through Muslim Aid for the Grenfell tragedy. Subsequently, the pupils show compassion and a concern for the future. A pupil wrote, 'I want a world where everyone treats people equally.'

The school works tirelessly to ensure that pupils feel 'safe and loved' in their 'Christian family'. Consequently, behaviour is exemplary and relationships are caring. A teacher commented, 'The vision has created a loving environment for us all.' Pupils appreciate the school's core value of forgiveness and conflicts are dealt with swiftly. 'We forgive as God forgave us', stated a pupil. Members of the school community are asked for their opinions. As a result, they feel 'listened to' and adults feel greatly supported. A parent explained, 'School was a fantastic support as my child has many medical problems.' Mental health and wellbeing provision are key priorities. The staff value the weekly sessions with the vicar when they can share with a trusted listener. Pupils listen to each other with great respect. They use the sensory room to reflect, relax or speak to the school learning mentor. Great support is given to parents and families. Classes are run for them to learn, for example, English. As a result, the school community is nurtured.

All cultures are celebrated, reflecting the vision of all being 'created in the image of God'. A display was created following a 'diversity week' entitled, 'Diversity is the one thing we all have in common'. A parent enthused, 'This school embraces equality and diversity.' This is strengthened by the presence of a governor who is an imam at a local mosque and a regular visitor to the school. The pupils enjoy the security in RE of being able to express their thoughts and feelings. The vicar commented, 'The children's thoughts often inspire me.' Policies linked to dignity and respect all reflect the vision and, consequently, pupils share that they know prejudicial behaviour will be dealt with by the staff. The school enjoys many fruitful partnerships with local schools and those in contrasting settings, such as a school in Pakistan. A pupil explained that the links, 'help us to get other people's perspective on things'. Pupils are beginning to deepen their knowledge and understanding of living world faiths and beliefs.

Creative, inclusive and engaging collective worship inspires reflection. It is a highly valued part of the day. Worship is 'at the heart' of the school. Carefully planned themes ensure that the invitational worship provides a varied experience. It includes many visitors and inspirational speakers, such as the Bethany Project. The ethos group is involved in planning an increasing number of worships. However, they are not yet fully involved in planning the

themes and long term plans. The parents are welcomed into school and church worship and the numbers attending are rising. 'We see the good way worship affects our children and how they treat each other,' remarked a parent. Worship is central to the maintenance of the excellent bonds between the school and the parish. The clergy, whilst not always involved in initial planning, regularly lead worship. St. James' is a prayerful school. There are many areas where pupils and staff can reflect, inspiring them to use prayer in their lives. A parent shared that her child keeps telling her at home, 'Now it is time to pray.' Pupils can explain the Trinity and the importance of the Eucharist within Christianity. A pupil stated, 'Our vicar explained to us how the Eucharist is linked to the Passover.'



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

The school ensures that all groups of pupils flourish in RE, including the disadvantaged. Pupils' progress is at least good against the expected standards and their progress is carefully tracked. Due to high quality professional development, regularly observed teaching is often judged to be of an outstanding standard. The school has an accurate understanding of standards within RE. There is a very effective monitoring schedule in place, which ensures improvement, leading to standards in line with other core subjects. This monitoring is shared with governors termly so that the high standards can be maintained.

Headteacher	Frances Brady
Inspector's name and number	Susan Cliffe 832