

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bryn St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Downall Green Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, WN4 0DL

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Diocese

Liverpool

Previous SIAS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Wigan

Date of inspection

2 February 2017

Date of last inspection

February 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Controlled URN: 106438

Headteacher

Gillian Collier

Inspector's name and number

Stephen Burrow 622

School context

Bryn St Peter's CE Primary is a slightly smaller than average sized primary school. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above the national average. The school has very few ethnic minority pupils. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is slightly above the national average. Since the last inspection a new headteacher and new vicar have been appointed. There are two assistant headteachers and a learning mentor. Due to the closure of the local church, services are held in school. The headteacher has recently completed the Christian Leadership course.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Bryn St Peter's CE Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong, purposeful Christian leadership of the headteacher, supported by committed staff and governors, ensures that pupils maximise their personal and academic achievement.
- A deeply embedded Christian ethos underpins all that the school does. Pupils are highly valued and nurtured as individuals in a caring Christian environment, enabling them to grow exceptionally well academically, spiritually and socially.
- Collective worship and religious education (RE) make a strong contribution to the promotion of distinctively Christian values and develop pupils' spirituality very effectively.
- The strong, mutually supportive links with the vicar and church family make a significant contribution to the school's Christian character and to the spiritual development of all members of its community.
- The explicit Christian character of the school, demonstrated through Christian symbols and high quality displays of pupils' work, provides a very positive, welcoming and supportive atmosphere for the school family and visitors.

Areas to improve

- Establish ways for pupils to be more involved in the planning of worship, so that their ideas and thoughts can be shared and discussed in order to enrich the experience of worship and provide further opportunities to develop spirituality.
- Refine the evaluation of collective worship to include all who deliver worship, especially the pupils, so that this informs future planning and leads to on-going improvement

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

Deep, caring relationships between all members of this tightly knit Christian family are a significant feature of St Peter's. They are underpinned by Christian values that are evident in every part of school life. The message, 'Together with God, building our future,' is prominent throughout school and in all documentation. The behaviour of pupils is of the highest standard, driven by the application of gospel values to everyday life. Pupils consistently demonstrate these through their attitudes, behaviour and learning. As a result, strong mutually nurturing and supportive relationships exist throughout the school. Pupils feel safe, happy, valued and well cared for. The use of coloured prayer stones in the hall encourages pupils to create their own themed 'Rainbow Prayers'. These, together with well utilised reflection areas in all classrooms, provide opportunities for pupils to think and quietly pray. Consequently, pupils' spiritual development is significantly enhanced. A group of pupils explained, 'Prayer is looking to God.' They said, 'We pray to God and Jesus so they can help us with our problems.' There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. High quality displays emphasise the school's distinctiveness and support pupil's spiritual awareness and development extremely well. Worship and RE support the Christian character of the school and the pupils' understanding of Christianity around the world, as well as teaching about other world faiths. Pupils speak with clarity and conviction about the Christian values that are promoted in all aspects of school life. They are proud of their school and speak confidently about why it is special to them. The school is very supportive of all families, based upon a clear understanding of each pupil's unique needs. The learning mentor works very hard to intervene early, creating a mutually trusting relationship between school and parents. She ensures that all concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. As a result, attendance has improved. Pupils understand the need to help others less fortunate than themselves through their Christian service in supporting charities such as the Royal National Institute for the Blind and an orphanage in Uganda. The vicar has a high profile in school, giving practical and prayerful support, which is valued and appreciated by the whole school family. Parents explained how distinctive Christian values are deeply rooted in the life of the school and spoke of the impact these have on their children. One parent reinforced this when they said, 'The children talk at home about the church ethos and values.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Great value is placed upon worship being central to school life. It is well planned and effectively underpins and extends the school's deeply embedded Christian ethos. It also enhances pupils' understanding of the importance of taking responsibility for their conduct and actions. Bible stories and Christian teachings explored through worship support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively by making them think carefully about their actions. Christian festivals are celebrated and pupils learn about those of other world faiths. This promotes very effectively pupils' acceptance of and respect for the views and beliefs of others. Differing needs of the pupils are met through whole school, key stage and class-led worship. The vicar leads weekly worship in school and a regular Eucharist service. One pupil said, 'We enjoy worship because it helps us to understand our Christian values.' Pupils are able to explain their developing understanding of God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Respect, Attitudes, Values and Ethos (RAVE) group, made up of pupils from throughout the school, meet weekly to discuss RE and worship, including ways to improve worship. The school recognises, however, that pupils are not yet fully involved in the planning and evaluation of worship themes and has plans to address this further. Prayer and reflection are regular features of all forms of worship and pupils say that during reflection and prayer time, they felt that they were actually talking to God. The playing of appropriate peaceful music creates a calm atmosphere, which encourages pupils to reflect and prepare themselves for worship. This is enhanced by a table with a cross, Bible and candles. On the day of the inspection the vicar led an outstanding and interactive act of worship on the theme of wisdom, linked to a parable. Pupils were very much involved in this stimulating worship experience, which was further enhanced by opportunities for prayer, song and reflection. Pupils value their worship experiences, talking confidently and with enthusiasm about the messages they receive from them. This contributes significantly to their spiritual development. All staff participate in worship, which also supports pupils in developing their spiritual awareness. Whilst there are suggestion boxes and reflection areas in every classroom for pupils to comment on RE and worship, the school recognises the value of introducing a system to record and share pupil's views and reflections of worship.

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

The distinctive Christian character and vision for the school is shared, agreed and upheld by all members of the school community. Staff, pupils, governors and parents are fully aware of the school's core Christian values, which permeate daily school life. The headteacher, having completed the Christian Leadership course, has a clear understanding of what it means to lead a church school. She and the senior leadership team carry out their roles very effectively. They are extremely well supported by school staff and a highly effective governing body. The successful leadership is enhanced by the close working relationship with the vicar, as a result of which the prayer, pastoral and other links between church and school are very effectively interwoven. Leaders and governors monitor and evaluate the work of the school, ensuring that church school issues are identified and addressed through improvement planning. They clearly articulate how Christian values impact upon the lives of pupils and on the whole life of the school. Governors have regular involvement in the school's life and work and have established strong relationships with the headteacher and staff, based on mutual trust. They receive detailed information on developments in RE and worship through regular reports from the headteacher. The chair of governors explained that there is always an open door for governors, who are seen as an integral part of the school. All staff are inducted well into what is expected of them in relation to promoting the Christian ethos of the school. They feel that their ideas are listened to and valued. One teacher said, 'The children are loved. We teach the whole child.' Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and are confident that their voice is heard. The pupil leadership team and RAVE group provide opportunities for pupils to share their ideas and suggestions, knowing that their views are valued. There is a strong Friends of St Peter's Association which actively supports the work of the school through social and fund raising events. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They say the school listens to their views and that their children enjoy school and are happy, safe and nurtured within a distinctly Christian community built on strong gospel values. One parent summed this up when referring to the school's values by saying, 'They are a way to live, not just a thing to do.'

SIAMS report February 2017 Bryn St Peter's CE (VC) Primary School, Downall Green Road,
Ashton-in-Makerfield, WN4 0DL