

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hesketh with Becconsall All Saints Church of England Primary School

Shore Road, Hesketh Bank, Preston, Lancashire PR4 6RD

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Blackburn
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local Authority	Lancashire
Date of inspection	3 May 2018
Date of last inspection	February 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 119566
Headteacher	Anthony Currie
Inspector's name and number	Lesley Brookbanks 771

School context

All Saints is an average sized primary school serving a semi-rural area. The number of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average although a higher than average number of pupils have a statutory assessment. The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives support funding called pupil premium is below the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is also below average. The school has strong links with its church and parish. Since the previous inspection, there has been a change of headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of All Saint's Church of England Primary School are outstanding

- A distinctively Christian vision and identified Christian values are at the very heart of the school's work. They inspire the day to day actions of all who work and learn there as well as the wider community.
- The headteacher, governors and staff are totally committed to the rigorous self-evaluation and continuous development of the school's outstanding Christian character.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are firmly rooted in its Christian distinctiveness and lead to the exemplary behaviour of its pupils.
- Religious Education (RE) has a high profile and strong subject leadership resulting in high expectations and excellent progress.
- There are very strong and mutually supportive links between the school, the church and the local community which make a significant contribution to the school's Christian character as well as to the well-being of its children and families.

Areas to improve

- Extend pupils' learning experiences about the lives and traditions of Christians in other parts of the world in order to develop a deeper understanding of Christianity as a global multicultural world faith.

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

The school's Christian vision, 'What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God', results in a school which has Christian distinctiveness at the very core of all its work. God is at the centre of everything which, in the words of the vicar, 'Brings love and strength to the school and its community'. The strength of the school's Christian character is immediately evident to all who enter the building or who explore its website. The learning environment is used effectively to promote the school's Christian distinctiveness through high quality display and artwork. Christian values of love, friendship, determination, respect, loyalty and responsibility are explicit and woven through all aspects of school life. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they understand that this is a consequence of the deeply embedded Christian values that underpin all relationships. They are unfailingly polite and take care of each other very well. Attendance is high and there are no exclusions. The happiness and well-being of pupils is paramount. This is demonstrated through the school's extensive focus on nurture and care. As a result, all groups of pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. High expectations of them ensure that they make good academic progress from their starting points. Parents explain, 'This school is awesome at supporting children and families during testing times. Nothing phases them. The Christian faith is in everything it does.'

RE and worship make an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have a deep understanding of Bible stories and can explain how these deepen their understanding of Christian values. A Year 5 pupil spoke confidently of how the story of the lost sheep teaches about trust and faithfulness. 'God always looks out for us. We can trust him, especially in hard times.' Even the very youngest children show great awareness of Christian values. After hearing the story of Jesus and the children, a very young Reception pupil spontaneously expressed that, 'Jesus is a friend to all of us in our school.' Understanding of world faiths is given a high priority within RE and the wider curriculum. This includes learning inspired by dedicated respect and tolerance days which are planned through the year. Understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith is not as well developed.

Creative spaces in school, together with Christmas and Easter experience days in church, encourage reflection and inspire personal prayer. Charitable giving is clearly seen as an important part of the school's Christian service and contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is inspiring for the whole school community. Pupils and adults alike engage enthusiastically with worship which is rooted in Bible teaching and the school's Christian values. Pupils, staff, governors and parents appreciate how worship brings the school community together. This was particularly evident in the school's sensitive response to the Manchester bombing in 2017 which touched the lives of the village and school families. Worship impacts on pupils' own lives and how they can make a difference for others. It is carefully planned so that each act of worship has a clear focus and structure as well as flexibility. As a result, a wide variety of approaches and leaders provides the school with different experiences of worship. The school prayer, liturgical greetings and responses are regularly shared as well as The Lord's Prayer, the Grace and the Blessing. Services in church throughout the year further develop pupils' experience of Anglican tradition. Pupils articulate age appropriate awareness of God as Father, Jesus as Son and the Holy Spirit as a guide. As a result, pupils have excellent knowledge and understanding of Anglican practice, as well as church seasons and festivals. Pupils sing joyfully and proudly explain, 'We learn the meaning of songs, not just sing them.' Weekly worship in classrooms enables pupils to explore Bible teaching at an age appropriate level. The pupil worship team has a proactive role in ensuring their active and regular involvement in worship, its planning, evaluation and development.

Monitoring and evaluation of worship is robust and involves all members of the school community. This leads to purposeful next steps, for example, the development of varied approaches to prayer at the request of pupils. Prayer is an integral part of school life and central to worship, resulting in pupils who appreciate times of personal prayer and reflection. This includes the use of classroom worship spaces which they help to develop and which enable them to pray in creative ways. Prayers from class prayer boxes are offered during weekly whole school worship with the vicar and added to the prayer board initiated by the worship team. Pupils have a strong sense of prayer and readily express its importance to them. They speak of how it makes a difference to their lives as well as to the choices that they make. They know they can pray anywhere and in different ways. One child explained, 'We can pray for people who are ill or far away in other countries, our family and our amazing world.' Parents appreciate that worship gives children a sense of belonging and enables them to reflect on their beliefs. One parent summarised the views of others saying, 'The Christian faith is truly lived out here.'

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Subject leadership of RE is strong and effective. This ensures that the subject has a high profile and that it is exceptionally well led and managed. Focused improvement supported by high quality professional development impacts positively on teaching and learning in the subject. Regular monitoring and evaluation result in RE being taught effectively and continually developed. Next steps are identified and carefully followed through, resulting in consistently high expectations of teaching and learning. Robust systems for assessment and tracking have ensured that all groups of pupils make excellent progress. As a result, data and pupils' work show that attainment in RE is above that in other core subjects. The RE governor is highly proactive in her role and a regular visitor to school. She offers both support and challenge for the subject leader and is exceptionally well informed. This enables her to report back developments in detail to the full governing body.

Teaching is at least good and often outstanding. Pupils of all ages and abilities are challenged to think deeply and explore 'big questions' and can readily give examples of these. It enables them to develop spiritually and grow in understanding of Christian belief and practice. They are genuinely enthusiastic about RE and rise to the challenges they are set as they engage in a wide range of creative learning activities. As a result, they are confident and active learners who articulate their ideas clearly. They explore the Bible confidently. A Year 6 child explained that, 'The Bible gives us a connection with God, we can read it whenever we like and feel close to him.' Speaking about how Jesus chose Peter to build the Christian church, a Year 4 pupil explained, 'Jesus chose people who are ordinary. This tells us that we're all special to God and he believes in us.' They contribute readily and with great honesty to discussions and listen respectfully to the views of others. Provision for learning about other faiths is carefully planned with focus days and activities in addition to the learning included in the RE syllabus. Artwork and display reflect the positive impact of respect and tolerance days on pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths. These have included exploring Rosh Hashanah, Diwali and Holi, life as a spiritual journey and acceptance day. Visits to different places of worship both Christian and of other faiths enable pupils to appreciate and explain the similarities and differences between Christianity and other faiths.

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

The headteacher and senior leadership team lead by example through an uncompromising commitment to the school's Christian vision and values. As a result, staff, governors, pupils and parents know the school's vision and values thoroughly and confidently explain them. Parents clearly understand what makes All Saints a distinctively Christian school, which was an area to develop from the previous inspection. As a result of the leadership's commitment to the school's Christian vision and values there are excellent relationships and teamwork at all levels. A further area to develop from the previous inspection was to involve governors and staff in evaluating All Saints as a church school. Robust self-evaluation now ensures that All Saints is a self-evaluating and self-improving church school. Governors have a rigorous and active role in the self-evaluation of its Christian distinctiveness. Many governors regularly visit during the school day. This enables them to know the school very well in order to effectively support and challenge its work. They are extremely knowledgeable about RE and worship and how the school meets the needs of all groups of children, including those who are vulnerable. Governors and school leaders ensure that all statutory requirements for both RE and collective worship are met.

There are strong links between the school and church which reach into the wider local, national and global community. A church and school group of staff, parents and parishioners is proactive in planning events which promote the spiritual development of pupils. Examples are messy church, faith days and a parish nativity. The initiatives and enthusiasm generated by the church and school group demonstrate a strong and mutually beneficial relationship between church and school. As part of service to others, the school offers support for a wide range of Christian and secular charities. Pupils appreciate the needs of others as well as the importance of Christian giving. This is enhanced through links with local Christians who have global links through Fairtrade and a project building schools in Africa. One governor summarised, 'Children leave this school as good human beings with embedded Christian values, a relationship with God and the ability to value and respect everyone.'

SIAMS report May 2018 All Saint's Church of England Primary School, Hesketh with Beconsall, Lancashire, PR4 6RD