

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Church of England Primary School			
Address	Harden Road, Leamore, Walsall, West Midlands, WS3 1EN		
Date of inspection	21 November 2019	Status of school	Voluntary controlled primary
Diocese	Lichfield	URN	104220

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	Good
Additional Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Christ Church is a primary school with 350 pupil students 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 above national averages. The school is oversubscribed.

The school's Christian vision

We value all children as unique 'Children of God' and welcome them into our safe, loving and supportive Christ Church family.

Achieving excellence, inspiring dreams, opening minds, creating futures.

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

Key findings

- The school demonstrates its vision well by its steadfast focus on pupil and staff wellbeing, mental health and personal, social and emotional support. Everyone feels safe, loved and able to shine.
- The school vision results in hugely positive relationships and a sense of belonging as the Christ Church family. This extends beyond the gates so that the school has a positive impact upon community cohesion.
- New governors and staff are not trained quickly enough to use the SIAMS schedule to drive school improvement and so the pace of improvement as a church school is not always as rapid as it should be.
- The school works exceedingly hard to reduce barriers to learning. From below national expectations, pupils make good progress but are attaining below national averages.
- Religious education (RE) and collective worship are engaging and creative experiences which promote pupils' respect for faith and diversity and an understanding of the school's Christian vision and values..

Areas for development

- Ensure that all governors and all staff are regularly trained to use the SIAMS schedule to drive school improvement and consider an aspect of the schedule at each governors' meeting as a priority.
- Demonstrate the impact of the school's Christian vision on core curriculum areas so that attainment is usually around national averages by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Establish the school as a centre of excellence offering support and training to other schools in a joined up Christian approach to mental health, wellbeing, and personal, social and emotional support.

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 promotes its Christian vision effectively through cultivating a strong sense of family, based upon love. Pupils, staff, parents and church are greatly valued. They develop strong connections with this school. This opens up pathways across the locality to promote the school's inclusive Christian values. Consequently, the school has an enormously positive effect upon community cohesion. It clearly serves the common good.

Although the school has maintained many strengths since the last inspection, its development as a church school has lacked pace until last year. This is because the school has not trained new governors and staff with sufficient urgency in using the SIAMS schedule to drive developments. With renewed energy in the last year, the school has worked hard on the areas for improvement from the last inspection, resulting in positive progress. The appointment of the assistant head, together with the valuable assistance from the Year 4 teacher, has re-focussed the school's efforts as a church school. These leaders have been well supported by diocesan advisors who have helped the school distil a Christian vision and Christ Church approach. Policies increasingly reflect the unique role of the school's vision and values in ensuring pupils and adults thrive. The school's Christian vision is clearly embedded. Its ready articulation is now motivating the work of the school once more.

A large proportion of pupils enter the school attaining well below national averages, especially in oral language development. Through a well thought out curriculum and targeted support, as well as exemplary special needs provision, most pupils make good progress in their learning. Although rising year on year, attainment is still generally below the national average by the end of Key Stage 2.

Everyone at the school has a steadfast commitment to ensuring all barriers to learning are reduced and that the conditions to enable learning are established. This means the school works exceptionally hard through learning strategies, relationships and the exercise of Christian love to promote strong mental health and wellbeing. This is developed further through careful and specific support for all members of the school community with regard to their personal, social and emotional health. The training of staff as mental health first aiders and involvement in Hello Yellow mental health activities exemplify this.

Although the school doesn't communicate its understanding of spirituality as well as it might, its provision and intent ensures pupils and staff develop well spiritually. Through a broad, creative curriculum, as well as through extra curricula activities, pupils have ample opportunities to flourish spiritually as individuals. One child said of forest schools work, 'I am happy and love to be outside in nature'.

The school's effective wellbeing and inclusion work ensures that everyone connected with the school feels safe, loved and able to shine. As a consequence, the school raises aspirations and opens minds to possibilities. From a basis of security, pupils are increasing resilient in their learning and relationships. It is clearly evident that pupils are developing a strong sense of self and are increasingly confident to persevere with the many challenges they face. The school actively challenges stereotypes. Recent Stonewall inclusion work and the promotion of Black History Month are good examples of this. The care of pupils as a springboard into learning and excellence, based upon a Christian vision of offering pathways for life, is a key strength of this school.

The headteacher and deputy relentlessly model Christian love in their care of staff and pupils. They are at the forefront of training all in the ways of the Christ Church family. Inspired by the vision, relationships at the school are based upon love, respect and the inclusion of all. This clearly impacts the pupils' good behaviour and the sense of team for the staff. The school's Christian values are shaping pupils who express a definite sense of right and wrong. Pupils have opportunities to lead to test out their moral compass, for example, in acting as playground buddies. Where things do go wrong in relationships, pupils are generally well supported in making moral decisions and considering forgiveness and reconciliation.

where appropriate. The school's anti-bullying and safeguarding practices are robust, and reflect the Church of England's statement of best practice, 'Valuing All God's Children.'

The school's Christian values are conduits through which Christian love and service are practised, for example, through a wide range of charitable giving. This includes supporting Blakenall Foodbank with the biggest amount of food given by any local school. The school is helping pupils to extend charitable giving as a pathway to seeking social justice and to making a positive difference to the world. Its emergent links with a school in Rwanda enable pupils to appreciate global perspectives and responsibility.

Pupils enjoy RE, finding it interesting and enjoyable. The RE curriculum has a suitable balance of creative content and approaches. These focus on Christianity, further world faiths and moral and ethical issues to open pupils' minds. Pupils enjoy learning about faith which underscores their respect for diversity. The use of the 'Understanding Christianity resource over the last year has significantly raised the level of challenge, deepening pupils' skills and appreciation of key Christian concepts and vocabulary. Building upon 'philosophy for children' approaches, RE enables pupils to discuss their own thoughts concerning the 'big questions' of life, confidently and respectfully.

Collective worship is a joyful time that reinforces the vision statement of being a church school family, centred on Christ. Collective worship invites pupils as part of their spiritual growth to encounter God in silence, reflection and prayer. The recent pop-up prayer spaces have really engaged pupils and made prayer fresh and relevant for pupils and staff alike. The worship team from Christ Church Parish Church make a positive contribution, helping the school to see themselves as an Anglican worshipping community. Anglican forms are thoughtfully modelled, including an awareness of the festivals and church seasons, reinforced by the use of church seasonal colours for the worship table. Pupils are periodically engaged in planning and leading collective worship, for example, the worship group of pupils leading worship on school values. Collective worship is carefully planned and reviewed resulting in an experience that includes all. Provision makes effective links between biblical thought and everyday life. For example, pupils relate the story of the feeding of the 5000 to their exercise of friendship, sharing and compassion.

Christ Church is a school highly attuned to its pupils' needs and those of the community. It is now clearly focused upon living its vision and values. As a vibrant Christian family, Christ Church is well placed to create positive futures through the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Headteacher	Sean Davies
Inspector's name and number	The Revd Dr Jason Phillips 598