



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Christ Church C of E Primary School

West Bridgewater Street
Pennington
Leigh
Wigan
WN7 4HB

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Manchester

Local authority: Wigan

Dates of inspection: 11 December 2014

Date of last inspection: 28 September 2009

School's unique reference number: 106512

Headteacher: Janet Rigby

Inspector's name and number: David Thorpe 461

School context

Christ Church is a popular primary school and is full to capacity. The proportion of children with additional needs is well above average and the number supported by pupil premium funding is above the national average. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed to their posts since the previous inspection. The school has undergone a major refurbishment programme since the previous inspection and occupies a position surrounded by industrial units with very little space. The school operates and funds its own nurture provision for those children identified as being vulnerable.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Christ Church as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Leadership and management at all levels is clearly focussed on creating an ethos that is built on Christian foundations. This is clearly and confidently articulated resulting in a clear vision which informs every aspect of school life.
- The strong personal development of each child, including an excellent understanding of Christian values, enables them to fulfil their academic potential and become excellent ambassadors of the school and considerate citizens of the local community.
- Religious Education (RE) is engaging, enriching and varied. This leads to the children having a wide religious vocabulary that they use with confidence.

Areas to improve

- Promote greater child involvement in the planning and leading of collective worship to extend their confidence and skills in leadership.
- Establish a system of work moderation in RE that includes cross phase working, in order to build confidence for non-specialist staff in the assessment of RE.

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

Christ Church is a distinctively Christian school where the children achieve very well as a result of the 'golden thread' of core Christian values. These are well embedded and permeate all areas of school life and upon them all policy and practice is based. The values adopted provide the foundation for excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Christian values, including trust, courage and forgiveness, give children the confidence to try new tasks and enable them to give of their best consistently. The school actively and very successfully promotes respect for, and understanding of, the diverse society in which we live. As a result of this children are exceptionally well prepared to be good citizens, both now and in the future and they feel valued regardless of their faith or ability. They know that Christianity is a world faith and as a result of positive opportunities being created to work with other faiths they show a high degree of respect for those of other beliefs as well as high respect for each other. The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship, supporting a range of charities and this reinforces the Christian values of justice and love which are two of the school's core values. The contribution of RE is outstanding providing the children with a rich religious vocabulary which they use with great confidence, maturity and understanding. The excellent behaviour of the children enhances relationships in school and they genuinely care for each other, living out the values of love, justice and peace. The Christian nature of the school clearly shapes its approach to behaviour, the children are happy and state that they feel very safe in school. There have been no exclusions in over five years. The children are very clear that bullying is not an issue at school due to everyone in school 'living out our values', as stated by a Year 6 child.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is highly valued by all members of the school family. Worship is well planned to cover Christian themes, with a strong emphasis on Christian values. Worship enables children to understand the qualities of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit through the themes and stories which are included in the planning cycle. Collective worship is inspirational and ensures that all are included because, as a Year 5 child said, 'we want to be included'. Worship engages all and its impact can be discerned through the excellent relationships evidenced in school. The Bible is central to all worship times resulting in the children having very good biblical knowledge. The children's singing is of an exceptionally high quality and their enjoyment shines through. Children often write and lead their own prayers incorporating poetry regularly. The children speak with confidence about the importance of prayer. One child commented that 'it makes you feel closer to God'. They often use the prayers written, not just in collective worship but also in their personal lives throughout the day. They enjoy leading worship and are eager to take on a greater role in the planning of worship when appropriate. Throughout the week worship is led by a variety of leaders and encompasses a range of styles. This provides a rich experience for the children and develops their confidence when worshipping in different ways. They demonstrate a good understanding of, and can confidently articulate, who the person of Jesus is. One reception child said 'Mary is special because she was Jesus' mum and Jesus is God's son ... so Mary is very special.' The school community enjoys worship in the church throughout the year. Parents appreciate the opportunities to worship in church with their children and actively support these occasions. During the nativity service in church one parent commented that 'it brings the whole family together at important times in the year and reminds us that we are a church school.' This creates a valued link with the worshipping life of the parish and it enriches the experience of the whole school. The school and church work very effectively together and the vicar or curate lead worship every week in addition to being involved in the planning process. This helps in making an outstanding contribution to children's spiritual development, reflection and understanding of key Christian festivals.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE is led and managed very effectively and the school has recently adopted the Blackburn syllabus which is providing the children with an engaging and varied curriculum that they are enjoying. The children are inspired by the creative approach to RE and talk about the subject with impressive confidence and enthusiasm. There is an excellent balance between learning about religion and learning from religion. Several staff have specialist RE qualifications and this provides very good capacity for further development of the subject. RE teaching and learning is monitored by the senior leadership team (SLT) regularly indicating standards that are at least good and often outstanding. Assessment of RE is robust and considers whether children are below, in line with or exceeding expectations. This confirms the view that standards in RE at the end of each key stage are at least in line with, and often exceed standards in other core subjects. Work is moderated by the whole staff but does not yet include moderation across key stages. Progress is outstanding and this is achieved through excellent and varied teaching and good use of a wide range of resources. Good prior knowledge and thinking skills were demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson about Advent and John the Baptist. They responded confidently when asked to express their opinions and ideas. The sharing and careful consideration of ideas and opinions make an excellent contribution to children's spiritual and moral development. RE has a very high profile throughout the school providing effective opportunities for links to be made between the beliefs and value systems of other faiths. This leads to high levels of understanding from the children about their place in modern society.

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

Leaders at all levels are relentless in their aim of ensuring that the school's Christian values impact positively on the standards of achievement. The governing body ensures that the character of the school is distinctly Christian and that excellent links between the school, the church and the local community are strengthened and celebrated at every opportunity. All leaders confidently talk about, live out and promote the school's mission statement, 'Love of life, love of learning, love of each other, love of ourselves. Growing through the love of God.' The chair of the governing body succinctly sums up the inclusive nature of the school using the phrase, 'We educate the whole child and we educate every child.' Foundation governors are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of their role. They are highly effective in both supporting and challenging the school and they are extremely well informed. This enables effective decision making to take place. Governors and children alike talk confidently about the importance and impact of the school's core Christian values on its daily life. Succession planning and professional development of staff is given a high priority and has had a positive impact on the school community. The leadership of RE and collective worship is represented on the SLT resulting in a high priority always being given to both and high expectations for both being rigorously maintained. The subject leader is new to post and is being supported by other members of the SLT of which she is a member, as RE is viewed as a core subject. There is an exceptionally strong focus on meeting the needs of every learner and as a result the school is continually looking at how it can be better. The strong link with the parish church enables children and families to have positive views of the role of the Christian church within the community.

SIAMS report December 2014, Christ Church, Pennington, Leigh WN7 4HB