

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Leyland St James' Church of England Primary School			
Address	Slater Lane, Leyland PR26 7SH		
Date of inspection	12 March 2020	Status of school	Voluntary Aided
Diocese	Blackburn	URN	119476

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

Leyland St James' is a primary school with 232 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. The school operates two inclusion resource units for pupils with a variety of social and emotional needs. Since the last denominational inspection, a new deputy head teacher has been appointed.

The school's Christian vision

Our mission is to serve the community through serving our children. Every child is welcome regardless of need, "For whoever so welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me." (Matthew 8.5)
Everyone is valued; everyone has worth. We ensure that every child develops within God's love.

Key findings

- Leyland St James' deeply embedded Christian vision is exceptionally well rooted in gospel teaching. It is extraordinarily inclusive and highly aspirational. Highly skilled leaders at all levels are uncompromising in ensuring that this inclusive vision shapes all of school life.
- Remarkable pastoral support creates an environment where everyone feels welcomed, loved and highly respected. As a result, all are able to flourish. Staff wellbeing is prioritised; however leaders have not fully addressed ways to tackle high workload for teachers.
- Pupils live out the school's Christian vision through the extraordinary care that they express towards others. They are powerful advocates for change and engage in tackling social injustice and inequality.
- Outstanding collective worship is at the heart of the school offering an abundance of ways to encounter God. It is an expression of the vision and highly valued by everyone.
- High quality teaching and imaginative approaches in religious education (RE) provide a wealth of opportunities to explore deeper concepts and nourish spiritual growth.

Areas for development

- Further embed the development of pupils' spirituality across the curriculum.
- Continue to find ways to diminish workload of staff in order to further support their wellbeing.

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

Passionate, highly skilled leaders are unyielding in their mission to serve local needs, particularly those of the most vulnerable. As a result, the school is a beacon of exemplary practice, ensuring that all are welcomed and can flourish. Leaders are uncompromising in ensuring the exceptionally inclusive Christian vision drives all school policies, decisions and actions. Evidently, 'every child develops within God's love'.

Governors know the school extremely well, regularly engaging in monitoring visits and speaking to staff and pupils. They have a very clear idea of school performance and achievement and make highly effective use of human and financial resources. The Christian Distinctiveness Committee expertly evaluates how the vision is being lived out, securing extraordinary inclusive practice to ensure that all can flourish.

Links with the local church are remarkably strong and this is both recognised and greatly valued throughout the school community. Parishioners access training in school in order that they can enhance the reading progress of pupils. Fruitful initiatives such as 'parishioner pen-pals' further build meaningful relationships with pupils. The priest and lay minister are highly effective in supporting pupils to deepen their theological thinking.

Extremely skilled leaders contribute to current educational debates at national levels and are committed to extending their own strong principles of ethical leadership beyond the school. Innovative practice, reflecting the school's vision, is developed and shared through mutually beneficial partnerships with other local church schools. An example is the recent implementation of the Sacred Pathways programme - already seen to be impacting on pupils' understanding of their own spiritual growth. Professional development draws from strong pedagogical approaches and is highly prioritised for all. Close partnerships with both the diocese and Chorley St George teaching school alliance ensure all staff have regular opportunities to share good practice. The school has been very successful in developing future church school leaders.

Collective worship is a highly treasured part of school life and a full celebration of the Christian vision. Areas for development from the last denominational inspection have been fully addressed. Throughout the school and grounds there are an abundance of interactive opportunities to pray and reflect. These are invitational and inclusive. Pupils and staff regard prayer as central to life at Leyland St James'. Together, pupils and leaders are involved in developing worship through extremely rigorous planning, monitoring and evaluation. Christian values and Anglican traditions are skilfully explored alongside celebrations of innovation and diversity. Pupils in the worship and ethos teams thoroughly enjoy their role. They take on a range of responsibilities for planning, delivering and monitoring aspects of collective worship with eagerness and maturity. Pupils describe worship as a time of 'closeness' when they talk to God and feel connected with the school family. They feel completely safe to express their beliefs and recognise this as flowing from principles of Jesus' teaching. One pupil spoke of what Jesus might say of the school, 'He would think we are unique in the way everyone is valued.' Staff, clergy and pupils worship joyfully together, excited to sing and offer prayers of intercession. Stories, games and opportunities for quiet reflection are regularly embraced, creating openings for deeper thinking. In turn, this often sparks healthy theological debate, for example about Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

Parents and carers feel supported very well by the school. They greatly value regular invitations to take part in collective worship and appreciate its role in school life because pupils frequently discuss it at home. Parents and carers are particularly enthusiastic about the impact of the Christian values on the wider lives of their children. They recognise how clearly the school's vision is rooted in the Bible.

Reflecting the Christian vision, leaders ensure the staff team are highly cohesive and responsive to the needs of all pupils. The implementation of policies and practice is extremely consistent across the school. As a result, promoted behaviours are excellent in adults and pupils alike. High levels of acceptance and understanding are seen between pupils, making them feel safe. A pupil commented, 'We are loved by teachers, by other children and by Jesus.' Pupils directly link the school's promoted Christian values with the behaviour choices they make.

A strong culture of mutual respect and support for wellbeing is evident. Although plans are in place, leaders have not fully addressed ways to tackle high workload for teachers.

High quality teaching secures good progress across the school with standards of attainment consistently above those achieved nationally. Across all classes and specialist inclusion units, the staff team expertly nurtures those with a complex range of needs. This transforms the way pupils can access the curriculum. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and those with special needs and/or disabilities make remarkably good, often rapid progress. Pupils strive to meet the high expectations of their teachers. They thoroughly enjoy all that the school offers. Their tailored curriculum is designed to foster creativity and develop high performance learning skills. Planned 'big questions' about life are explored in a variety of ways across school. Pupils are encouraged to think beyond themselves, debate and practise respectful ways to disagree. Teachers devise innovative ways to develop pupils' courageous advocacy. An example is the weekly C.A.V.E. club, where Y6 pupils extend current world affairs discussion to all classes. In turn, a wealth of examples reveal how pupils are knowledgeable, articulate advocates of change in order to address injustice and exploitation. Outside learning is given the highest priority. Well-designed, exciting spaces support inclusion, worship, Forest School and many wider curricular opportunities.

RE embraces both the local diocesan syllabus and Understanding Christianity. It is given high priority and goes above and beyond requirements through extended weekly lessons. As a result of meticulous planning, rich opportunities abound for pupils to consistently question, explore and challenge their own thinking. Pupils believe that RE should challenge them and appreciate the specialist support received from the priest and lay minister. One Y4 pupil explained the transfiguration as, 'When something turns into something even more beautiful and special'. Debates around questions such as, 'If God loves everyone, why do we need food banks?' demonstrate the depth of pupils' thinking as well as the freedom they have to express their own ideas. Pupils really enjoy RE and work extremely hard. Recent training, developing teachers' understanding of planning for spiritual development, has led to enhanced classroom practice. However, the impact of this is in its early stages. Despite the school's context, pupils are fully able to articulate what it means to live within modern multi-cultural Britain. They gain a substantial depth of knowledge of different faiths, cultures and world views alongside Christianity through consistently high quality provision.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Statutory obligations for RE are fully met and very successfully sustained. Class teachers take responsibility for teaching RE and are very well prepared through planned opportunities to access diocesan training.

Accurate monitoring systems confirm that RE standards are high when compared to other subjects. Best practice is regularly shared. Skilfully planned lessons within the highly inclusive curriculum enable all pupils, including those that are vulnerable and those with special educational needs, to flourish academically in RE.

Headteacher

Lilian Taylor-Bell

Inspector's name and number

Claire Weymouth 963