

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

| Grimsargh St Michael's Church of England Primary School | | | |
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| Address | Preston Road, Grimsargh, Preston, Lancashire PR2 5SD | | |
| Date of inspection | 13 June 2019 | Status of school | Voluntary Aided Primary |
| Diocese | Blackburn | URN | 119565 |

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| 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

Grimsargh St Michael's is a primary school with 207 pupils 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages.

The school's Christian vision

'Let your light shine' (Matthew 5:16)

Inspiring, believing and achieving in our loving Christian environment guides our work of celebrating everyone's God-given talents and nurturing these gifts and skills in our school community, so that all may become the best that they can be. In this way we enable all adults and children to 'let their light shine'.

Key findings

- Leaders have created a dynamic, aspirational vision, founded on the school's long-standing Christian distinctiveness and values. Rooted in Bible teaching, the vision is transformational and fully shared across the school community. It inspires the creative curriculum through which all are enabled to 'let their light shine' and drives every aspect of school improvement.
- The distinctly Christian leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by outstanding senior leaders and skilled governors, has created a vibrant, highly inclusive Christian learning environment in which every member is loved and nurtured as a unique child of God. The vulnerable and those with special needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported. As a result, the levels of spiritual, personal and academic achievement for all are extremely high.
- Engaging collective worship, greatly enriched by the strong partnership with the church, inspires pupils and helps them to apply Jesus' teaching about love and friendship in their own lives.
- Inspiring religious education (RE), supported by excellent assessment, ensures that pupils develop high levels of skills. They gain a deep understanding of important Christian concepts and belief. However, their understanding of diversity and difference is less well developed.

Areas for development

- Provide more frequent opportunities for pupils to encounter people of different faiths and cultures so that they enhance and deepen their understanding of difference and diversity.

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

Grimsthorpe's long-established Christian mission and values underpin every aspect of school provision. The renewed vision, developed following a detailed audit of the school's Christian distinctiveness and performance, is fully shared by the school community. All speak positively about how the aspirational, inclusive vision impacts on all areas of school life. It ensures that everyone is nurtured and supported so that they can make the most of their God-given talents. As a result, pupils develop a deep love of learning and the motivation to 'let their light shine' in whatever they do. The distinctly Christian learning environment is continually enriched by the innovative, creative curriculum. Pupils are offered a rich diet of themes explored through outdoor learning, visits and the creative arts. Christian values, woven across the curriculum, ensure that pupils explore Jesus' teaching and apply it to their own lives. As a result, pupils are eager, joyful and reflective learners. They aspire to 'make a difference' by supporting those less fortunate and challenging injustice. For example, Year 5 pupils explained that they raise funds to send a Bolivian boy to school because 'everyone should be able to go to school'.

Morale is high within the harmonious staff team because they know that they are supported personally and professionally. They benefit from high quality professional development targeted to support continuous improvement. Highly effective partnerships with the Diocese and Longridge cluster of schools, many of which are church schools, support curriculum development, teaching and governor training. The impact of this is seen in the way staff were able to 'step up' when the headteacher was seconded to support another church school. The wellbeing and mental health of staff and pupils is effectively prioritised. The nurture of pupils' social and emotional wellbeing exemplifies the way in which adults strive to show God's love by their unstinting efforts. This ensures that everyone flourishes and achieves to be the 'best they can be'. As a result, parents are overwhelmingly supportive. One stated that 'the school is nothing but amazing at times of family need.'

Governors know the school extremely well. The robust cycle of monitoring and evaluation informs self-evaluation and improvement planning exceptionally well. Regular visits and meetings with staff and pupils, provide them with an exceptionally clear idea of performance, achievement and the way in which the vision is being lived out. Governors have secured outstanding leadership for RE and collective worship. Both make highly significant contributions to achieving the vision. Governors ensure that human and financial resources are used effectively to support the needs of all pupils. Issues from the previous denominational inspection have been addressed and changes continue to be evaluated. As a result, governors know that all aspects of school improvement are driven by the Christian vision.

All pupils make exceptionally good progress, as reflected by the impressive levels of attainment which are consistently well-above those achieved nationally. This is the result of dependably high quality teaching which meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils strive to meet the high expectations of their teachers. They work hard within a calm atmosphere which fosters collaboration and a strong sense of personal achievement. This is reflected in the vibrant displays of pupils' work. Provision for pupils' personal, social and spiritual development is well-considered. It ensures that all pupils have repeated, high quality learning experiences through which they explore the world and consider global issues such as deforestation and pollution. Pupils of all ages regularly participate in music, sports and the dramatic arts. As a result, their personal and spiritual development is excellent. They consider the needs of others and willingly participate in community events. This supports their understanding of Christian service. The strong links with the church make a substantial contribution to this. For example, pupils perform dances at the church garden party. They use their talents to make and sell items to raise funds for local and world-wide charities.

RE makes an excellent contribution to the school's distinctiveness and pupils' spiritual growth. Staff and pupils, are inspired and excited by RE. It provides a safe space in which pupils explore ideas about belief. Exemplary questioning deepens pupils' thinking as they explore and reflect on why such a belief is expressed. Pupils enjoy the wide variety of approaches used, through which they explore belief and develop key skills. The depth of their responses, and the extent of the challenge for pupils, is reflected in the high quality of pupils' work. The inspirational Pentecost and Ascension displays are examples of how pupils use art to reflect their personal responses. Their knowledge of Christian belief and concepts is remarkably thorough. Regular church visits and the support of the vicar in, for example, explaining the Eucharist, enhance learning, as do occasional visits to other places of Christian worship. Through the study of Judaism, Islam and Sikhism, pupils gain some knowledge of different faiths and cultures. Sikh and Muslim parents support learning by talking about their religion and customs. However, regular opportunities for pupils to meet people of different faiths and cultures are limited. As a result, pupils' understanding of difference and diversity is less well-developed.

Collective worship is the heartbeat of the school. Pupils enjoy worship because they are engaged and included. They participate actively and respond willingly. Themes explore the life and teaching of Jesus and Christian values imaginatively, so that worship constantly refers to the school's vision and values. The focus on Christianity as a multi-cultural faith is exemplary. The imaginative use of topical news resources helps pupils explore themes such as injustice, linking them to how Christians strive to challenge these and 'make a difference' in peoples' lives. Pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories and events in Jesus' life celebrated by Christians around the world. They are familiar with some traditional Anglican practices and show a remarkable awareness of the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The vicar leads worship and provides pastoral and spiritual guidance for staff, pupils and their families. Increasing numbers of pupil groups are actively engaged in planning and leading worship. For example, the worship group are currently using resource materials to focus on Christians around the world. Pupils also lead the special festival services in church. Prayer and reflection are key features of the school day. Pupils write and use their own prayers. Classroom and outdoor reflective spaces are valued and well-used by pupils, one of whom explained that they are places of peace. The evaluation of worship is thorough. Feedback from pupils, staff and visitors informs future planning and ensures that the impact of collective worship continues to improve.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Consistently outstanding teaching challenges and supports pupils' exploration of religious belief and practices. Pupils are excited and challenged by their learning, through which they develop the key skills of enquiry and analysis. High quality leadership ensures that staff are knowledgeable and skilled. Evidence of pupils' achievement in RE supports teachers' understanding of progression and attainment. Imaginative, highly effective end of unit assessments ensure that all pupils, including the disadvantaged and those with special needs and/or disabilities, make good, sometimes rapid progress. As a result, standards of attainment for all pupils are high, being in line with the above average attainment in other core subjects.

Headteacher

Kathryn Ward

Inspector's name and number

Anne B. Woodcock (445)