

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John's Church of England Primary School

Address	Johnson Street Radcliffe Manchester M26 1AW		
Date of inspection	5 March 2020	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary School
Diocese	Manchester	URN	145560
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 Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

St John's Primary School has 214 pupils on roll including a 26-place nursery and is part of the Christ Church CofE Multi-Academy Trust. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small minority speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is more than double the national average and the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. St John's serves a traditional local community where several generations have attended the school. Although attendance is below the national average, the school has worked closely with families to make marked improvements in this area.

The school's Christian vision

'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' John 13:34
'A journey of PRIDE with God by our side' reflects our drive to create a loving community, rooted in our four key Christian values of love, kindness, honesty and forgiveness, ensuring St John's is a place to love, learn and grow.

Key findings

- The Christian vision permeates all aspects of the school's daily life and is understood by all members of the community. Together with core Christian values, the vision ensures that everyone grows and flourishes in a loving and caring community where the mental health and wellbeing of everyone is given high priority.
- The inspirational Christian leadership of the headteacher with the committed support of the deputy headteacher, staff team, partners and trustees of Christ Church C of E Multi-Academy Trust, emphasises the clear Christian vision and shared drive for improvement.
- Relationships based on Christian love, with forgiveness and reconciliation at their heart, ensure that behaviour is good and pupils are keen to learn.
- Collective worship and RE contribute significantly in promoting distinctive Christian values and deepening spirituality.
- The school has strong links with the church and the local and wider community. Through this, the love of Christ reaches out beyond school.

Areas for development

- Develop pupils' involvement in planning and evaluating worship in order to further enrich their experience.
- Build on the existing opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and knowledge through deep enquiry-based learning and creativity so that they are better able to reflect on questions of meaning and purpose in RE.
- Further develop the current assessment of RE, so that pupils have more opportunities to reflect on their own learning.

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

St John's Christian vision of 'A journey of PRIDE with God by our side', together with the associated values of love, kindness, honesty and forgiveness is at the heart of everything the school does. The Christian vision, which is understood by all and lived out in daily school life is prominently displayed around the school. Pupils are able to articulate and demonstrate how the values are important in everyday life. The headteacher, supported by her leadership team, is a shining example of Christian leadership in action. Both pupils and adults are strongly motivated by her dynamic approach as she consistently models the school's vision and values. The vision is also reflected in the provision the school makes for the diverse needs of individual pupils. This ensures that everyone can be, 'The best they can be.' Pupils' behaviour is good. It is strongly influenced by the Christian vision, based upon forgiveness and reconciliation and reinforced by the Pupil Promise, which they created themselves. Pupils feel safe and valued and understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Relationships between all members of the school community are extremely supportive and firmly rooted in Christian love. This ensures that everyone is given the support, encouragement and opportunity to shine. Pupils know they can express their worries and anxieties and be listened to. The positive approach to equality and valuing difference means that everyone in the school family is treated with dignity and respect. Staff feel valued and appreciated. As one staff member said, 'We are a real team with everyone included. We know we can rely on our leaders.'

The school has strong links with Manchester Diocese which provides appropriate professional development and support. The school also enjoys extremely strong support from Christ Church C of E Multi-Academy Trust. This collaboration, based on the MAT's own core Christian values and vision of 'Grow together, learn forever,' provides appropriate challenge in all areas of school improvement through a robust cycle of self-evaluation underpinned by Christian distinctiveness. The Trust provides many opportunities for collaboration across its schools, including sharing best practice. Trustees have regular involvement in school life and know the school well. The headteacher and RE leader provide detailed information regarding the development of RE and worship. As a result, strategic development is highly effective.

Mental health and the wellbeing of the whole school family are given high priority. By living out the Christian vision, a supportive and caring Christian ethos has been created. This and strong links with the church provide pupils with a firm foundation for life. The school holds an annual Happiness Week which falls on the anniversary of the Manchester Arena attack. This is aimed at encouraging pupils to be grateful, inspired, overcome adversity and to develop a positive mindset. It provides pupils with an opportunity to reflect on future hopes and aspirations and to help them become caring citizens.

The Christian vision shapes decisions related to curriculum planning and extended learning. Provision and nurture for those with additional learning or personal needs and those who are vulnerable are very strong. It is rooted in Christian love and understanding. Families and staff value the frequent acts of kindness shown to them. The caring and supportive work of the parent mentor ensures that the needs of families and individuals are quickly identified and met. Parents speak highly of the school and its commitment to supporting families and meeting the learning and emotional needs of their children. They see the school as the centre of their community and feel welcomed and included in their children's education. As one parent said, 'The staff work with you, they really do care for every child.'

The whole school family demonstrates Christian compassion and concern for social justice in their local and wider community as well as globally. A link with a school in China has been established. The school's support for and involvement in a number of charities leads pupils to have deeper understanding of poverty, disadvantage and deprivation. It strives to be as a place where everyone can become advocates for change within society. Pupils take on roles, which develop responsibility. Enthusiastic groups of pupils, including the prayer and worship squad, school council and eco council have a strong voice. They are very much involved in influencing and improving school life.

Worship is at the heart of daily school life. It is inclusive and sensitively led with well planned themes developed around the school's Christian values, the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. Worship explores the Christian faith as well as providing an understanding of the beliefs and practices of other world faiths. This is strengthened by the opportunities pupils have to visit non-Christian places of worship. As a result, pupils are provided with a clear understanding of and respect for major world faiths within multi-cultural British society. The strong bond between church and school is mutually beneficial. The vicar leads worship and is a regular visitor to school. Pupils, especially

the prayer and worship squad (PAWS), enjoy taking on responsible roles during worship. However, they are not yet fully involved in planning worship and the school recognises the need to further develop this. Pupils enjoy worship because it helps them to relate faith teaching to their daily lives. They participate enthusiastically whilst maintaining a due sense of reverence. As one pupil said, 'Worship is a time to rest and clear your mind.' Pupils understand the value and importance of prayer. They make good use of reflection areas in classrooms and this enhances their spiritual development. As one pupil explained, 'Prayer is a time to speak to God. He likes people talking to him.' Although systems are in place for monitoring and evaluation of worship, the school recognises that there need to be increased opportunities for all pupils to express their views on worship. Parents are invited regularly to class led worship and church school services. As a result the whole school family feels fully included.

RE provision strengthens the school's vision and core values. The use of *Understanding Christianity* and *Questful RE* resources support this well and reflect *the Church of England Statement of Entitlement*. Provision in RE for those who are vulnerable is exceptional due to high levels of nurture, carefully adapted planning and targeted support.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The RE leader provides effective support to staff and ensures that the curriculum stimulates pupils' interest and enjoyment. Pupils enjoy RE lessons which provide a safe environment in which to learn about Christianity as a world faith. They are enabled to explore their own beliefs and customs as well as those of non-Christian faiths. Effective teaching, using a range of varied teaching strategies and resources, along with effective professional development, enhances RE provision well. Consequently, pupils of all abilities make at least good progress, in line with other core subjects. Although challenging questions are used in each RE topic to encourage deeper thought, the school is working hard to include more enquiry-based learning. This will further enable pupils to share and discuss their own thoughts and ideas whilst respecting those of others. RE is regularly and accurately monitored, however the school recognises that assessments need to include opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own learning.

Headteacher	Anna - Claire Withey
Inspector's name and number	Stephen Burrow - 622