

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

The Redeemer Church of England Primary School, Blackburn			
Address	Jack Walker Way, Fernhurst Farm, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 4JJ		
Date of inspection	6 December 2018	Status of school	VA Primary
Diocese	Blackburn	URN	133987

Overall Judgement	Grade	Excellent
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgements		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent

School context

Blackburn The Redeemer is a primary school with 422 pupils on roll. The school has low levels of religious and cultural diversity and 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 in line with national averages. The headteacher is a national leader of education, head of a teaching school and is currently also the executive headteacher of a smaller church primary school.

The school's Christian vision

*Believing, loving caring. Everyone growing in the light of Christ.
John 13:34 Love one another as I have loved you.*

Key findings

- The school's unmistakable Christian vision which is promoted and lived by leaders at all levels is deeply embedded. It shapes all aspects of the school and provides the motivation to help it develop even further.
- The highly cohesive staff team live out the school's vision in the way they tirelessly support pupils, families and one another. They demonstrate clearly what it means for a community to live well together.
- The school's policies and practices have created an environment which pupils recognise is physically and emotionally extremely safe and where all can flourish.
- Meticulously planned collective worship nourishes pupils and adults and enables spiritual growth.
- Inspirational teaching and a highly effective team approach to monitoring in religious education (RE) ensures consistently high standards for all pupils.

Areas for development

- Enable pupils to manage their own child-initiated projects in relation to social action. Encourage pupils to develop projects arising from their own spontaneous compassionate responses to local or global situations.

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

Leaders at all levels speak with passion about the way the Christian vision shapes all areas of the school. The vision is rooted clearly in theology and in the school's detailed understanding of the Bible. Leaders prayerfully ask for the 'light of Christ' in all their strategic decision-making.

Nourishing and profoundly spiritual acts of worship show the vision in action. Meticulous planning by leaders ensures that worship provides a rich range of opportunities for all pupils and adults to be still, to reflect, to sing or to listen. Worship also deepens pupils' understanding of global Christianity, for example in Vanuatu. This school prays a lot. With skill and wisdom leaders model various forms of prayer, so that all present are able to join in if they choose. Worship has an extremely high priority. Leaders provide excellent support for staff both within the school and beyond. Their significant investment of time and resources has resulted in exceptionally well-trained staff and pupils who are well-equipped to lead worship and to train others.

Partnership with the church is very strong indeed, resulting in detailed and shared worship planning and a profound sense of belonging. Pupils and staff take part enthusiastically in Sunday services and in church events. The school and church jointly support causes such as Foodbank or Nightsafe, which deepens pupils' awareness of injustice or inequality. Pupils have some experience of leading projects themselves, such as the 'shoebox' appeal, but projects are usually initiated by adults.

The school has an excellent track record for improving other schools. The headteacher and staff regard this as part of the mission of the school, in line with its Christian vision. This has increased since the previous inspection. Staff development is a very strong feature of the school, and staff are extremely well supported in developing as future leaders of church schools.

The leadership of the pupils on the ethos council is highly significant in helping promote the vision. Particularly striking is the way they take responsibility for collecting prayers from other pupils, including even the very youngest. Pupils' ability to lead worship and pray spontaneously during whole school worship is remarkable. The school's commitment to developing these pupils reflects its vision for helping all to grow in the light of Christ.

Statutory obligations for worship and religious education are met and areas for development from the previous inspection have been addressed. Leaders ensure that RE has the highest possible profile, with highly skilled teaching and thorough and committed co-ordination by the subject leader. Comprehensive monitoring by senior leaders and governors is integral to the process. Standards are consequently high. Pupils speak excitedly about visits to places of worship and about multi-faith weeks. The school's involvement in a local schools' linking project has resulted in richer understanding and appreciation of diversity. RE very clearly expresses the school's Christian vision. It emphasises an understanding of and positive engagement with the Christian faith and is underpinned by the school's strategic aims.

Everyone works extremely hard to build and nurture this very special school community so that all can flourish. Standards are high. Seven strategic and biblical aims, such as forgiveness, arise from the vision and underpin everything the school does. High levels of supervision and comprehensive policies, such as the behaviour curriculum, enable pupils to feel safe. Leaders ensure that staff are well-trained in preventing prejudicial behaviour. They enable all pupils to contribute well to developing the school as a hospitable community, in line with the report *Valuing All God's Children*. Relationships are rich and extremely supportive. A pupil explained that, 'Being kind helps us help others to be kind'. Relationships are characterised by hope and forgiveness and they extend beyond the school. One adult described them as relationships which are 'built in prayer'.

Staff invest time in making themselves available for pupils and parents. This is evidence of living out the vision. Leaders successfully establish a culture where pupils feel safe to risk making mistakes. Pupils learn to manage their worries about particular subjects because adults provide examples from their own experience which they model with skill and sensitivity.

There is an extremely well-co-ordinated approach to meeting the needs of all pupils. Leaders have made bold decisions in creating posts of responsibility, including that of a family support worker. This links directly to ensuring that vulnerable pupils achieve well. Results for these pupils are high. The impact of this appointment on

pupils' emotional and mental health needs has also been significant, resulting in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 at or above national levels of attainment in 2018. The way in which staff work flexibly and creatively together to enable pupils to flourish clearly reflects the school's vision. They work determinedly and with optimism and they are highly effective in improving attendance and pupils' academic success. This engenders an increased sense of belonging to the school community. Mental health and wellbeing is a priority for the adults in the school as well as for pupils. In line with the vision, staff invest time in supporting one another's growth. This happens formally, through the wellbeing action-plan, and informally, through initiatives such as 'Toast Wednesdays'.

The school's Christian vision is clearly fundamental to everything it does. At the heart of the school's two-year curriculum plan is the worship plan. Leaders are passionate in their determination to provide a broad and exciting curriculum which meets the needs of the whole child. They ensure that disadvantaged pupils can take part in enrichment activities which raise aspiration, such as in the children's university. The school's rich provision for spiritual development, including prayer, runs through everything it does. It supports pupils' learning, for example in helping them to reflect and develop thinking skills. In their monitoring of different subjects, governors look for evidence of the school's Christian vision. One example is in mathematics where the link governor looks at ways in which maths teaching promotes thankfulness and wisdom. Parents say that the staff teach 'with love'.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Pupils are passionate about RE. They eagerly acknowledge that RE challenges them to think profoundly, especially when considering differing viewpoints. Through skilful and creative teaching, pupils learn extremely well and reflect deeply. Their theological discussions, such as on the implications for Christians of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, show considerable maturity. Curriculum planning for RE is extremely effective. Knowledgeable leaders have developed and continue to review a curriculum based on the diocesan syllabus which reflects the *Church of England Statement of Entitlement*. Standards are high. The 'joined-up' team approach, which characterises this school, is a striking feature in the leadership of RE. Together with the headteacher, governors and other leaders ensure that the very high quality of teaching and learning is maintained. These deeply embedded monitoring and assessment systems are highly effective in maintaining the school's high standards.

Headteacher	Alison Ashworth-Taylor
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