

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Leigh St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Leigh Street, Leigh, WN7 4TP	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Manchester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Wigan
Date of inspection	2 February 2017
Date of last inspection	June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 135841
Headteacher	Wendy Cathie
Inspector's name and number	Gillian Rhodes 657

School context

Leigh St Peter's CE Primary School opened in 2010 following the closure of St Peter's Infant and Junior Schools. In April 2016 the school moved onto one site, the site of the former Junior School. Since the last Inspection there have been changes in the leadership team. The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are White British. The school serves an area with significant levels of social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils receiving pupil premium funding is more than double the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is above the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Leigh St Peter's as a Church of England school are good

- The headteacher and school leaders share a clear vision for the development of the school and its pupils which is firmly rooted in Christian values.
- Links made in religious education (RE) and collective worship to Christian values enable pupils to relate these to their own lives and to the life of the school. Consequently pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The very strong links between the school, families, church and community ensure that positive relationships underpinned by Christian values of trust and respect support the well-being of pupils.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's core Christian values are made explicit to all groups in the school community so that they have a deeper understanding of the values and their impact on the lives and achievements of learners.
- Embed systems for the monitoring of RE and collective worship in order to evaluate fully the impact of Christian values on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- Develop the ethos group and class worship areas in order to enhance pupils' opportunities for personal prayer and reflection.

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

Christian values are central to all aspects of school life. They are the starting point for all development planning for the school. The school environment provides good quality evidence of the Christian character of the school through displays and artefacts. Pupils and staff confidently explain that school values are rooted in Biblical teaching. Pupils describe how RE and collective worship teach them about values which help them to get on together and learn well. A pupil explained that Christian values are 'how Christians want to live their lives'. However, a defined core set of Christian values is not fully made explicit to all groups in the school community. Consequently not all groups are able to confidently explain the impact Christian values have on the lives and achievements of pupils.

Values of respect, trust, resilience and perseverance underpin the school's approach to behaviour and attitudes to learning. Awards for positive behaviour and conduct include 'I follow in God's way' which recognises pupils who live out Christian values. A Year 5 pupil described St Peter's as 'a good learning environment'. As a direct result, pupils now make good progress across the school from their starting points which are often below national age related expectations.

The Christian value of compassion is at the heart of the school's approach to improving attendance. This has improved in recent years and is now close to the national average. The appointment of an attendance officer, the introduction of a walking bus and a high profile reward system for good attendance have worked in tandem with understanding of family circumstances to support pupils coming to school.

The development of pupils spiritually, morally, socially and culturally has high profile in the school's curriculum and provision beyond the classroom. Detailed information on the school website identifies clearly how SMSC development is promoted through all subjects. Additional opportunities such as outdoor activities, visits to museums, sport and music are provided by the school. Set in the context of Christian hope these experiences foster aspiration and broaden pupils' horizons.

Through RE and collective worship, pupils have some understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. They learn about Harvest and Christmas celebrations around the world. Support for charities through organisations such as the Salvation Army enables pupils to learn about different groups within the Christian faith. Through the diocesan RE syllabus pupils learn about other world faiths and develop respect for diversity and difference through a thematic approach. Pupils enjoy RE and describe it as exciting and interesting. A pupil said, 'It's fun, it's cool.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central to the life of the school. Pupils and adults value coming together for praise and prayer and all participate with enthusiasm. A member of staff explained, 'Worship gives us time to pray, to ponder and reflect on big questions.' Themes for worship are based on Christian values and the seasons and festivals of the Church's year. Collective worship regularly includes biblical material and the teachings of Jesus. Pupils are able to make links between these and the school's Christian values. Class worship focuses on how pupils' can apply Christian values to their own lives. As a result, pupils are able to use the language of the school's values to determine behaviour and improve attitudes to learning. A Year 6 pupil said, 'Values show us how to get on and learn together.'

The ritual and practices of worship in school and in church enable pupils to confidently identify distinctive features of Anglican tradition. The Lord's Prayer and Grace are used. Regular Eucharist services are led by a member of the local clergy and welcome all Year 5 and 6 pupils. Preparation for confirmation is part of the RE curriculum for upper Key Stage 2 pupils. Prayer marks key points in the school day. Consequently pupils understand prayer as part of everyday life and are able to explain prayer as a conversation with God. They enjoy being given the opportunity to contribute a variety of prayers, including those they write themselves, to worship. Pupils display excellent knowledge of Bible stories. A Year 6 pupil explained the importance of Jesus Christ by saying, 'After Jesus died Christians keep his teachings going.' Pupils are very familiar with the Trinity and explain God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as the three aspects of God.

Worship is carefully planned by the worship co-ordinator in consultation with the headteacher. The regular leading of worship by members of the clergy team from the nearby St Peter's church broadens experiences for pupils. Classroom worship displays contain Bibles, familiar prayers and Christian artefacts but are not yet regularly used by pupils for personal prayer or reflection. Increased opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship are an aspect of development recognised by the school through the recent launch of an ethos group.

Pupils readily speak of how Christian stewardship is prompted by worship and how they contribute to a wide range of local, national and global charities. Systems for monitoring worship are in place and the resulting evaluation of the impact of worship on the life of the school is leading to improvements.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Pupils understand the importance of RE and it has a high profile within the school curriculum. Teaching of RE is good. The recently introduced diocesan syllabus for RE enables creative teaching and learning. The school's monitoring and evaluation of standards in RE show that standards are in line with other curriculum areas and that pupils make good progress from their starting points. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in RE identifies strengths and areas for development. This leads to action planning which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Monitoring of the impact of the RE syllabus on pupils' SMSC development is a key focus of the current RE action plan.

Assessment procedures included in the syllabus are in place. There is some inconsistency in the marking of pupil's work in RE. In some classes, teachers challenge pupils with further questions in marking comments. However, not all pupils have the opportunity to respond and so do not yet develop higher level skills of evaluation and reflection.

Pupils' secure knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths is effectively developed in RE. The class 'Books of Brilliance' show that pupils develop knowledge through a variety of experiences. RE lessons emphasise the impact of faith on believers. The question 'How does having faith affect your journey?' is considered by Year 6 pupils. In a Year 2 RE lesson pupils discussed their special places which gave pupils of all faiths or none the opportunity to contribute. Thematic approaches to teaching and learning enable pupils to make links between values and the beliefs and practices of a range of faiths and belief systems.

The RE subject leader brings a strong sense of commitment to the subject. His vision that the subject will reflect a 'creative God' is driving an increasingly creative approach to the teaching of RE. The subject leader has effectively communicated the expectations of the recently introduced RE syllabus to teaching staff and governors.

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

The headteacher and senior leaders confidently express, demonstrate and promote a vision for the school and its pupils rooted in Christian values. They are able to explain the significant impact the values of trust, respect, forgiveness, resilience and perseverance have on the lives of pupils and on the development of the school. All groups in the school community were involved in the establishing of the school motto, 'Together with God we challenge minds, recognise talents and build dreams'. This motto summarises the distinctive Christian vision which informs all aspects of school life. It promotes pupils' SMSC development and makes a significant contribution to their well-being, positive relationships and behaviour for learning.

Governors participate in all aspects of school life. They are involved in the monitoring of Christian distinctiveness through visits to school and receive informative reports from the headteacher and middle leaders. As a result they are able to effectively support and challenge the Christian vision of school leaders. School leaders have close links with the diocese through networks and training, including Christian leadership training. The RE subject leader is well supported in the role and is part of a local hub of RE leaders.

Parents recognise and praise the nurture their children receive at Leigh St Peter's. They value the opportunities they have to be involved in their children's learning through stay and play sessions, workshops, pupil performances and social events. They appreciate the welcome they receive every day from staff and feel confident that staff care for and support their children's well-being and learning. Parents speak with enthusiasm of the links the school has with the local church, particularly through the very popular Messy Church sessions. However, they are not all fully aware of the school's core Christian values and how they impact on the life of the school.

Links with St Peter's church and its clergy team are strong. Shared use of the school and church buildings is increasing. Clergy lead school worship regularly in school and in church and are familiar figures in the local community. Messy Church involves large numbers of families, members of school staff and people of the church congregation as well as clergy. This highlights and strengthens the mutually beneficial links between school, church and home.

Pupils at St Peter's are involved in the life of the wider community through charitable events and appeals. The school council are active in choosing and organising events to support local charities, often in co-operation with the church. They demonstrate the Christian value of responsibility by supporting others through local, national and international appeals such as Sports Relief, British Legion Poppy Appeal, Christmas Jumper day and a Harvest Bake Sale. In partnership with families and the church, St Peter's is a school at the heart of its community.

SIAMS report, February 2017 Leigh St Peter's CE Primary School, Leigh, WN7 4TP