

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Meanwood Church of England Primary School

Address	Green Road, Meanwood, Leeds. LS6 4LD		
Date of inspection	2 May 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided
Diocese	Leeds	URN	108046

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

Meanwood is a primary school with 218 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 headteacher has been in post for 20 years and is a National Leader in Education. The local vicar recently retired and the church is currently supported by an associate vicar.

The school's Christian vision

Our vision is, 'By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another'. (John 13:35).

Key findings

- The Christian vision, expressing the need to love one another, is deeply embedded and informs all aspects of the school's work. Pupils routinely relate John 13:35 to their relationships, behaviour and life choices. The vision provides the foundation for creative curriculum planning, including planning for excellent spiritual development and thinking about 'big questions'.
- Inspirational and supportive leadership is provided by the headteacher and the deputy. The strong staff team are passionate about the joy of working in this supportive environment. This contributes to excellence, as they feel secure in exploring innovative practice.
- The vision for the school as a loving family results in a community which celebrates diversity and values each precious individual. Consequently, pupils love school and enjoy learning. This contributes to all, including the most vulnerable, making exceptional progress. The school's commitment to inclusivity results in rich inter-faith dialogue between pupils and parents. It results in strong, mutually supportive relationships. It drives the school's commitment to meeting varied needs and supporting mental wellbeing very effectively.
- Vibrant collective worship inspires pupils to love one another and act compassionately. Reflective stations throughout the school engage pupils through a creative range of activities. These are planned to be inclusive of pupils with varying needs. They provide strong support for prayer and reflection.
- Exciting RE lessons result in pupils thinking deeply about theological issues. Pupils of different faiths enrich lessons by sharing their experiences confidently. Strong subject leadership supports excellent teaching. Innovative and skilled planning results in a balanced curriculum, rooted in pupils' questions about life and faith. Consequently, all pupils make excellent progress and are highly enthusiastic about RE.

Areas for development

- To further develop the existing close partnership with the diocese, in order to access more diocesan expertise to support training and share the school's excellent practice more widely.
- To further develop global links and partnerships, so that pupils have a deeper understanding of their roles as global citizens and of Christian teaching about justice.

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

All aspects of school life are rooted in John 13:35, which expresses the school's desire to be a loving family where all have a strong sense of belonging, are able to live life abundantly and are empowered to effect change. The vision makes a profound impact on pupils of all ages. Even the youngest children know the verse well as a result of learning actions that go with it. The vision for loving all and meeting the varied needs of all members of the school family informs strategic planning and spending decisions. For example, a significant investment is made in creative provision for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The call to love results in exceptional support for staff, who bubble with enthusiasm for the way they have been supported through difficult times. This secure environment results in staff being able to take risks and explore innovative practice, for example, in engaging children with autism in new and challenging learning activities. Trainee and newly qualified teachers speak warmly of the way they have been enabled to flourish. Staff are well-supported for their roles in a church school and some have moved on to leadership positions. Governance is strong and governors know the school well. Rigorous self-evaluation is built into the school improvement cycle and contributes effectively to strategic planning.

One way in which the vision to love is worked out is through the deeply embedded culture of celebrating diversity. This results from the innovative practice of pupils often teaching about issues relevant to themselves. Pupils of different religions visit classes to explain their own faith and consequently pupils are passionate about learning about the faith of their peers. Parents and staff also share in inter-faith dialogue. Sharing diverse personal experiences also involves pupils with SEND. Pupils with autism have raised awareness of the condition by giving talks to other classes. As a result, pupils are swift in meeting their needs, for example, providing a quieter environment when requested. A range of creative strategies support mental wellbeing. A pupil explained the way the Mental Awareness Day linked to the vision saying, 'To love, it is important to know how to care for others. It is also important to understand the consequences of not having love.' The way in which everyone is valued contributes to very high standards of behaviour. Pupils explain the importance of forgiveness in relationships and the way behaviour is managed, linking this to Jesus telling Peter to forgive 'seventy times seven'. In this secure learning environment, all pupils, including those with SEND and pupils considered to be disadvantaged, make excellent progress.

Highly creative planning, linking the curriculum and collective worship, has an excellent impact on spiritual development. Each half term the school focuses on a theme which could be a Christian value or related to pupils' wellbeing. This is shared with parents, who also share in worship led by pupils on the theme and engage with their children on the topic. As a result of careful and age-appropriate planning, pupils learn to reflect, think deeply about big issues and readily relate their thinking to the Bible. They consider 'big questions' from a global perspective and grow into caring, mature individuals. A more recent innovation, developed in partnership with the diocese, has been incorporating planning for 'big questions' into the wider curriculum. For example, in science pupils explored the question, 'Are humans the most important animal?'

A range of mutually beneficial partnerships enrich the life of the school family. The school is at the heart of the local community. The strength of the partnership with the church is evident in the way valuable support has continued, despite there currently being no permanent vicar. The experienced headteacher and deputy give of their time generously to provide effective support for schools in challenging circumstances. There is a close and productive relationship with the diocese. However, the diocese is keen to develop this further and the school has much excellent practice to share with other diocesan schools. The partnership with a school in Kenya is helping pupils' to gain global perspectives on the world. One pupil visited this school with family. His accounts shocked pupils and is contributing to their growing understanding of injustice. The school is keen to further enhance pupils' understanding of their global responsibilities.

Collective worship inspires pupils to implement the vision and they readily explain the value of worship to their own lives. During an act of worship using drama to explore the story of Moses, pupils thought about the way God supported Moses through challenging times. Year 6 pupils explained how this worship was helpful as they faced national tests. Music is central to school life and the contributions of the school choir are greatly valued. All pupils lead worship regularly and they value this experience, saying that preparing worship makes them 'think really deeply' and it is 'easier to understand worship led by other pupils'. Worship often inspires pupils to individual acts

of compassion, for example, collecting for the local foodbank. Through this pupils learn to become agents for change. One pupil gave all her birthday money to support toilet twinning after this was a focus of an act of worship. Regular opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist are valued by all as a result of the invitational way in which the service is conducted. Creative prayer stations provide excellent support for prayer and reflection. These include a plethora of activities, which often develop understanding of the half-termly theme. Some activities, including using Lego and blowing bubbles, have been designed to be particularly accessible to pupils with autism. Worship is highly valued by staff and parents, who explain how they have often been moved by worship. A teaching assistant commented on the way preparing worship for the youngest children made her see Bible passages differently. Leadership and evaluation of worship is highly effective.

Excellent and skilful leadership of RE supports engaging and exciting teaching. Planning in-house, using materials from 'Understanding Christianity' and the Leeds diocesan syllabus, ensures that RE is relevant. Planning roots RE in pupils' experience and 'big questions'. It secures a balanced and coherent curriculum which effectively develops RE skills. For example, in Year 4, pupils developed a high level of reasoning skills as they engaged in a conscience alley to explore a significant Sikh story. RE provides regular opportunities for dialogue between faiths and this is enhanced by a range of visits and visitors.

The school family is passionate about continuing to develop its vision to 'love one another'. It is constantly seeking out new challenges and fresh ways to express this vision.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Teaching and learning in RE is excellent. A rich variety of teaching strategies are exceptionally well-supported by innovative and creative planning. A rigorous and supportive programme of monitoring secures and celebrates strong practice. Pupils' make exceptional progress in RE. Their work demonstrates excellent development of RE skills and profound understanding of theological concepts. Effective assessment underpins pupils' progress. It informs planning for high levels of challenge. For example, Year 1 pupils demonstrated a deep understanding of the meaning Passover symbols as they re-enacted the Seder meal. Year 6 pupils explored diversity within Christianity as they analysed differences and similarities between Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. Assessment also supports progress by informing effective feedback on pupils' work. Shared learning outcomes support pupils as they regularly improve their work in response to teachers' comments.

Headteacher	Helen Eagles
Inspector's name and number	Carol Berry 324