

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Church of England VC Primary School & Nursery, Sparkbrook	
Address	Claremont Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, B11 1LF

School vision
At Christ Church... • We LOVE Learning • We ACT responsibly • We WALK with pride and in excellence Our key Bible verse which under pins our vision is: 'What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God'. Micah 6:8
School strengths
• The refreshed Christian vision ignites the sparks that enable pupils and adults to shine brightly. They flourish in their personal growth and learning. • Relationships with families, the local church and community are secure, trusting and nourishing. This is a school built on the principle of loving neighbours from all faith traditions and backgrounds. • Religious education (RE) is a significant strength of the school as a Church school. The RE curriculum is exciting and ensures that pupils acknowledge similarities as well as respect differences between religions and worldviews. • Inclusion is outstanding so that more vulnerable pupils walk with pride and are ambitious to learn. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) play an active part in the life of the school. • There is an established culture of service to others. Pupils are passionate agents of change and frequently make a difference to the lives of others through their words and actions.
Areas for development
• Leaders, including governors, to embed the refreshed Christian vision, and its accompanying Bible roots, in policies and practice so their impact is more explicitly known. • Develop a shared understand and language around spirituality so that adults and pupils confidently articulate their spiritual growth. • Enhance the impact of collective worship by exploring a wider range of styles and approaches that enrich the experience for all ages.
Inspection findings
Christ Church is in a new season of growth as a Church school. Led with deeply held commitment to the Christian foundations, the school community has a palpable energy and positivity about its future. With changes to leadership, the decision to refresh the Christian vision means it is more confidently articulated by pupils and families. The vision builds on the established example of the

biblical prophet, Micah. This accurately reflects the needs of this vibrant and inner-city community which has high levels of deprivation. As the vision has strong historic roots, it is already key to ensuring that all ages are secure and so able to learn. Governors understand pupil and staff needs. They make ethical decisions to support those who experience barriers to learning. The current board is in the process of appointing new governors to strengthen the strategic work of the school. Capacity to evaluate the school as a Church school is limited by governor vacancies. Leaders, however, are working swiftly to embed the refreshed Christian vision in policies and practices. At present, systems for leaders to know the impact of the vision are in place for collective worship. Such systems are not evident in other aspects in the life of the school as a Church school.

Respectful and trusting relationships are at the heart of the school. The vision and accompanying Bible verse, create a strong culture of connectivity. All ages express a powerful sense of belonging. Families trust the school. Staff, in turn, honour parents and pupils, giving time and support with generosity and grace. Pupils cherish each other and their teachers. Members of staff echo this in their relationship. Support staff work in close partnership with teachers. All roles are equally valued.

Such positive relationships extend into the community and beyond. Adults and pupils work collaboratively to address social needs. Birmingham city council supports the food festival held at school. The event showcases food from ten different parts of the world and is provided free to all who attended. Pupils are effective campaigners for social change. Their work to improve road safety resulted in a video now used by the council to assist communities with similar problems. Charity appeals are taken further that fundraising. Pupils 'shared smiles' with patients in the children's hospital by sending jokes and greetings as a way to extend their care for others.

The vision builds academic aspiration. Teaching and support staff are encouraged to be creative and harness their own talents. Consequently, pupils are excited to learn and hugely appreciate their teachers' dedication to support them as individuals. This exemplifies the exceptionally positive relationships between adults and pupils. The curriculum embraces diversity in cultures. Pupils are confident to ask questions and explore their place in our diverse world. Teachers make meaningful links to pupils' own backgrounds, for example integrating Islamic traditions into the history curriculum. There is also a sharp focus on developing language and communication skills which underpin progress across subjects. The annual interfaith week broadens pupils' awareness of a wide range of faiths and worldviews. Pupils with additional learning, medical or social needs are fully included in lessons and the wider life of school. Consequently, pupils thrive in their learning.

Partnership with the Diocese is fruitful. Recent training around spirituality gives staff the confidence to explore their personal views. As one said, 'here, spirit connects to spirit'. Within the school day, reflection is encouraged. Leaders rightly identify next steps to advance the wider understanding of spirituality across the curriculum. This work is at too early a stage to evaluate. However, staff are enthusiastic to continue the work, inspired by the thought-provoking input from the diocesan adviser.

Spiritual growth is integral to collective worship. Acts of worship are expertly linked to themes that relate to most worldviews and faiths. Inspiration is sought from the Christian Bible and sacred texts from several religious traditions. The worship experience is respectful. It celebrates the shared heritage of the school community and wider world. Singing is a highlight of worship. It is uplifting and joyful and so reflects the vision to walk together through life. Adults and pupils alike describe the unifying force of music in their spiritual growth. Pupils play an active part in supporting worship. The pupil 'faith team' ensures that matters of global concern feature in worship. Pupils show concern for poverty, conflict in the world and environmental issues. This demonstrates the impact of worship in enabling pupils to look beyond their immediate community. Pupil feedback improves worship. The faith team members rewrote morning, lunch and end of day prayers for classes to use.

They are also key to suggesting that classroom reflection spaces include prayer mats. Adults and pupils look forward to time for worship, whether in class room, hall or parish church. Clergy from Christ Church parish make a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school. Faith dialogue is key to worship's impact. It is highly commendable that worship has a positive impact on those from several faiths and worldviews. Leaders are yet to explore different styles and approaches in the organisation of worship, including using the outdoor spaces. As a pupil commented, 'worship may bring us closer to God'.

RE adds to the personal and academic flourishing of pupils and adults. Led with expertise and passion, the curriculum is rich in faith traditions. The school contributes to the development of the subject within the Diocese. As such, Christ Church is influential in other schools. Work in books demonstrates pupils' secure learning and deep thinking. Consequently, pupils appreciate differences but also acknowledge the common ground between faiths and worldviews. A pupil commented, 'transfiguration means transformation, we can also change someone's life'. Pupils are articulate and thoughtful, making links between topics studied. A striking example is the way they learn about how forgiveness is a feature of many religions. They explain that to some Christians, confession symbolises God's forgiveness. Pupils are, therefore, aware of diversity within the Christian faith.

The inspection findings indicate that Christ Church C of E Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	14 November 2023	URN	103397
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	225
Diocese	Birmingham		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Tracey Adams		
Chair	Toby Crowe		
Inspector	Allyson Taylor	No.	768