

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Coppull St John's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Preston Road, Coppull Moor, Chorley, PR7 5DU	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Blackburn</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Lancashire
Date of inspection	2 March 2017
Date of last inspection	November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	VA primary 119469
Headteacher	Lorraine Ellis
Inspector's name and number	Gail Fullbrook 530

#### School context

St John's is a smaller than average primary school serving the community of Coppull. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education healthcare plan is well above the national average. Pupils are taught in mixed ability classes. The headteacher began working part-time for three days each week in January 2017. The remaining two days are covered by the deputy headteacher. The church is just over a mile from the school and is currently in an interregnum.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Coppull St John's as a Church of England school are good

- The school's Christian vision of growing and learning together in God's love is widely understood and informs all aspects of school life. Consequently, the school is a vibrant place where pupils enjoy their learning and feel happy and safe.
- Collective worship has a significant impact on the lives of pupils and supports their understanding of key Christian teaching.
- Christian values impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour and the relationships they have with their peers and adults.

#### Areas to improve

- Review the monitoring of religious education (RE) to ensure curriculum coverage in all classes.
- Develop partnerships that will support pupils' awareness of the diversity of life in third world countries.

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

At St John's the wellbeing of pupils and their families is central to the school's distinctively Christian character. It is reflected in the range of experiences offered that contribute to an excitement for learning and to the good progress almost all pupils make. The headteacher, supported by staff and governors, recognises that when pupils are happy and healthy they learn well. Families appreciate this commitment and comment on the ways in which the school gives support to individual pupils over and above what might be expected. Attendance is good and positive encouragement and support is given to families on the rare occasions where it is of concern.

Christian values weave through all aspects of school life. They are evident in pupils' attitudes to learning and their progress and attainment. Parents are confident that support is given to pupils when they find their learning difficult. One parent spoke of the encouragement given to pupils to support and help each other, commenting that, 'It helps them to understand that we all have different skills and gifts.' Pupils have a good understanding of the Biblical teaching that underpins each of their values. When discussing the value of koinonia, one pupil expressed the view that, 'We're nice to each other here, like a family, and we're always glad to welcome new friends.' Another spoke of the importance of forgiveness, saying that, 'Jesus forgave people and we should forgive them too.' Pupils recognise that values are also important to people of other faiths. They know that it is the stories in the Bible that help them to 'really understand what the values mean'.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils is good and central to the work of the school. Pupils recognise that it is their understanding of Christian values that directs their giving to the local foodbank and their support of local and international charities. They talk of the importance of caring for and of each other. One pupil commented, 'In our school we know what's right.' Pupils experience world festivals such as Chinese New Year and develop positive attitudes to those of different cultures and faiths. They are keen to talk about fund raising through events such as Comic Relief and Children in Need and can name some of the countries that are supported in this way. However, pupils do not always recognise that some children in the countries they support have access to technology and live lives similar to their own. The school recognises that this is an area for development. Relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils know that incidents of poor behaviour will be dealt with fairly and effectively. They say that adults help them to make links between Christian values and good behaviour. They talk freely of forgiveness and of the importance of making changes when they've done something wrong. Teachers say that 'everyone here is a valued member of the staff team' and that their 'commitment to the children and the school reflects their service to Christ'.

Teaching in RE supports pupils' understanding of Christian values and develops awareness of difference through the range of faiths studied. It contributes to SMSC development and supports the Christian character of the school.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Pupils talk of worship with enthusiasm. One pupil referred to it as being a time when 'we grow together in God's love'. Another shared the image of the candle being lit by the thoughts and prayers in people's hearts. Pupils readily discuss times of worship that have helped them to make changes in their own lives or to understand the viewpoint of others better. One pupil, when reflecting on the ways in which Jesus helped people who were unhappy, spoke of feeling more positive about facing 'the storms of life'. Another talked of the importance of 'living out each day as if it really mattered' after worship focusing on the Easter story.

Worship is distinctively Christian and includes a range of practices that mirror worship at church. Pupils have a good knowledge of key festivals within the Church year and know that they tell the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Prayer and times of reflection are valued by pupils. This is because they recognise that prayer is a time of talking to God and understand that sometimes they should be still and let Jesus talk to them. Pupils enjoy writing personal prayers. They particularly welcome the opportunity to pray in turn for other schools in their diocese. One child commented, 'It's a nice feeling when we know our school is being prayed about and it's nice to pray for other schools too.' Prayer areas within classrooms and around the school provide a space where pupils can pray or leave prayers that they have written. During occasional pause days where the timetable is suspended, activities are provided that support and deepen pupils' spiritual understanding.

Well-chosen worship themes support the development of understanding about key Christian beliefs. Pupils are familiar with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and older pupils talk about what each form of God means to them. Each week a verse from scripture is displayed in the hall and links are made between the verse and each day's worship. Some older pupils enjoy recalling verses that have meant a lot to them.

Worship is well planned by the headteacher and senior staff. It reflects the headteacher's statement that 'worship involves everyone and is for everyone'. Pupils regularly evaluate worship and their suggestions, along with those of adults and visitors to the school, inform future plans. Worship is usually led by senior leaders and teachers. Parents welcome the opportunity to join class worship which is led by the pupils. Despite the distance involved, major celebrations and festivals are celebrated in St John's Church.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

Pupils enjoy RE lessons and make good progress. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with that of other core subjects. Teaching is at least good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils develop a good knowledge of key Christian teaching and welcome lessons where they are encouraged to reflect on their learning and share their ideas and beliefs creatively. They particularly enjoy learning through discussion, art and drama. A range of key skills such as reflection and enquiry are effectively developed within lessons. For example, when thinking about trust, Key Stage 2 pupils reflect on the integrity of Jesus' teaching. Key Stage 1 pupils explore the feelings of the people close to Jesus as the day of his crucifixion drew near. Where teaching is very good or outstanding pupils develop the breadth of knowledge and understanding necessary to enable them to respond to key questions about each topic. However in some classes pupils' progress is limited because of too strong a focus on retelling Biblical stories. Teaching and learning about other faiths is a strength of the school. Multi faith focus weeks and occasional visitors make a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge of other faiths and their understanding of how faith makes a difference to peoples' lives.

The Christian character of the school is developed within RE through reinforcement of the teaching that underpins the school's core Christian values. Frequent references linking values to school and community life develop pupils' understanding of what it means to be a Christian.

The subject leader monitors teaching and learning regularly through lesson observations and work book reviews. Curriculum coverage, however, is not always thoroughly monitored. As a result, some elements of the curriculum are not consistently taught. Regular meetings with colleagues from other schools enable the school to learn from the best practice of others and to share their own good practice. The meetings also serve to ensure that the school is well informed about current developments in the teaching of RE. Assessment levels are validated within the meetings. The school has identified that reviewing the monitoring of RE to ensure curriculum coverage throughout the school is an area for development.

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

Staff and governors articulate a clear and explicit Christian vision of growing and learning together in God's love which is securely embedded in Christian values. Their commitment to promoting a love of learning, a celebration of individuality and a commitment to serving others is woven through all aspects of school life. The importance of the wellbeing and personal development of pupils and adults is central to the school's mission. This focus has a significant impact on the attainment and achievement of pupils.

Self-evaluation of the school as a church school is accurate and takes into account the viewpoint of parents, pupils and staff. Governors are well informed and support the school in a number of ways. Questions asked in meetings hold the school to account for its work as a Christian community. Time spent in school ensures that governors are familiar with school life and know pupils and staff well.

The school's commitment to the church and local community is strong. Staff and pupils attend key community events such as the Remembrance service and occasionally visit a local nursing home to sing to and meet residents. Focuses for development from the previous inspection have been fully addressed.

The governors commitment to succession planning is evident in the current arrangements for the leadership of the school. Staff are given appropriate support and training for their roles through dedicated staff meeting time. RE and worship are well resourced and both meet statutory requirements.

Pupils and parents know that they are part of the family of St John's Church. Pupils enjoy worshipping in church and regularly take an active role in Sunday worship as well as weekday school services. The previous vicar was a regular and welcome visitor to the school. The school has good and effective links with Blackburn Diocese.

The school enjoys good and productive relationships with parents. Parents say that they feel welcomed by the school and know that any concerns they may have will be quickly and effectively dealt with. One parent commented that, 'Staff are interested in our children, even when they've left the school.' They say that the Christian ethos of the school is highly effective and helps their children to develop a sense of belonging and to learn respect.

SIAMS report March 2017 Coppull St John's CE VA Primary School, Preston Road, Coppull Moor, Chorley, PR7 5DU