

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

### St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Meadowfield, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 9RE	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Blackburn</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lancashire
Date of inspection	8 February 2018
Date of last inspection	December 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 119416
Headteacher	David Merritt
Inspector's name and number	Penny Burnside 772

#### School context

St Peter's is smaller than the average-sized primary school with 216 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than the national average. A range of Christian churches as well as different religions are represented in the school community. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average as is the percentage eligible for the pupil premium grant. The deputy headteacher is currently seconded to another church school. The headteacher recently took on the leadership of religious education (RE) during the temporary absence of the subject leader. Since the last inspection the school has taken on the running of the nursery on site.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The confident Christian leadership of the headteacher has created a very special culture which is rooted in Christian values and where the abilities of all are celebrated, developed and mobilised to encourage and serve others.
- A carefully-crafted range of experiences of worship enables pupils to encounter and understand the centrality of love and forgiveness to the Christian faith and to the life of the school.
- The vibrant sense of family within a richly diverse context helps pupils settle quickly into the school and to flourish.

#### Areas to improve

- Secure pupils' understanding of the practices and beliefs of major faiths by supporting them to recognise both links between faiths and differences specific to each religion.
- Increase pupils' involvement in leading worship still further in order to enrich their spiritual development.

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

The Christian character of St Peter's school is deeply embedded. The school's mission statement, 'Unlocking Potential', operates on many levels. It has clear Christian roots, with references to the cross, St Peter's keys and the Bible text, 'I can do all things through him who strengthens me'. It is underpinned by values of endurance, encouragement and respect which in turn provide impetus for achieving the highest possible standards. The rich symbolism of the mission statement enables a deeply Christian vision to be shared with a culturally and religiously diverse school community. The school is experienced in understanding and celebrating diversity, recognised by a Race Equality award in 2017. High-quality RE plays a significant role, with staff and pupils describing it as 'essential' and 'a key skill for life'. Creative teaching of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith ensures that there is breadth to pupils' understanding. Pupils enjoy learning about the heritage and religions of their classmates. As a result they are simultaneously curious and respectful regarding other world faiths. Parents describe the school as being like a family and comment that the Christian character shines through everything, supporting pupils' personal development and complementing values learned at home. The learning mentor and staff in the Foundation Stage model this well, allowing children and families to experience Christian values in action from their earliest encounters with the school. Attendance is high because of the quality of support for children and their families. Staff and pupils acknowledge that worship impacts positively on relationships and behaviour which are both good. Pupils recognise that Christian values, 'help you deal with situations in the correct way'. The school council's code of conduct is explicit when it says, 'Always be polite to everyone and show them respect as we are all equal in God's eyes.' Forgiveness and reconciliation are key themes in this school. The code of conduct goes on to say, 'Try to forgive others, just as God forgives us if we do something wrong.' Standards are high for all groups because staff know pupils well and are committed to unlocking potential. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is rich with many high-quality experiences. The reflection areas in classes are imaginatively and thoughtfully created by teachers, well used and enjoyed by children and monitored effectively by staff and governors. Children in the Foundation Stage often choose to use their reflective space as part of their continuous provision. 'Godly Play' is gradually being introduced across the whole school. Set within a context of Christian teaching on giving and on stewardship, a concern for the environment is consistent across the school, for example in saving water, toilet twinning and reducing food waste. Serving others is a key characteristic with Year 6 pupils participating in the Archbishop of York's Young Leaders' Award. Pupils are inspired and challenged by RE and there is a strong expectation that their learning will make a difference beyond the school.

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

Pupils at St Peter's have a rich and exciting range of worship experiences. This is because school leaders and clergy work together with passion and dedication to plan opportunities which include everyone. No pupil is withdrawn. They experience a range of styles of worship from a number of visitors, including the chaplain of the local high school. This enhances pupils' understanding and awareness of the local Christian church. A recent innovation has been the introduction of class worship. This has greatly increased the opportunities for pupils to participate and to lead and there is a high level of engagement and enjoyment. Teachers show creativity in designing acts of worship appropriate to their pupils, such as in Year 5 where pupils were given opportunities to reflect on the events of Pentecost. Worship in Reception is delightful, featuring a 'prayer bear,' much excitement and genuine opportunities to worship. Children of all ages, including some nursery children, are confident to make up their own prayers. Teachers respond with sensitivity by including children's own prayers in class worship. The passionate and committed involvement of the curate ensures that pupils gain a sound understanding of Anglican faith and practice. Along with other parish clergy, she ensures that pupils are taught about the Eucharist in ways which are carefully planned and appropriate to their age. Worship is Trinitarian and based on the Bible and, as a result, pupils use the Bible well. They talk very naturally about Jesus. Values such as thankfulness, hope and compassion arise from Bible teaching and are linked with children's own life experiences. Pupils' support for a number of charities such as Operation Christmas Child and the Salvation Army food-bank has been prompted by their deeper understanding of Christian teaching about giving. Evaluation of worship is rigorous and provides valuable insights. It involves the worship governor, the curate, school staff, and school-wide surveys of pupils. Governors have noted the potential of class worship to strengthen relationships. Leaders have observed pupils showing increased empathy and gratitude following worship. Adults and children acknowledge that worship in this school helps people to have a deeper understanding of forgiveness, which then helps to improve behaviour. A number of pupils comment on the school's practice of pausing during the Lord's Prayer to allow those present to whisper a prayer of forgiveness of their own. As one pupil explained it, 'We have some time to forgive each other before we leave.' The focus for development from the previous inspection was to increase pupils' involvement in leading worship. This has been addressed, for example, with the chaplain training pupils to help lead his weekly acts of worship. Leaders are committed to developing this still further.

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

Standards of achievement are high across the school with approximately 25% of pupils exceeding national expectations. A number of pupils bring to RE lessons a detailed knowledge of their own faith. The progress of these pupils is carefully monitored and teachers are diligent in ensuring that teaching is adapted to meet their needs. This can be seen in very detailed responsive marking of pupils' work in Year 6. Pupils are clearly inspired by RE and they can list numerous examples of lessons which have challenged them or prompted them to change their opinion. Teaching is consistently good, with much of it outstanding. Teachers' use of supplementary questioning is skilful, as seen in a lesson in Year 2. Good teaching in Year 4 has resulted in some deeply reflective writing of new psalms. The RE curriculum is rich and varied and provides opportunities for pupils to understand a range of faiths. The strongly inclusive school culture has resulted in pupils displaying curiosity about different faiths and a mature ability to make links between them. However some pupils occasionally confuse some of the distinctive features of the religions they have studied. Leadership of the subject has remained strong despite temporary changes in staff. Assessment practice, in line with the introduction of the new diocesan syllabus, has been further developed in partnership with another church school. Monitoring and evaluation is rigorous and leads directly to improvement. Natural links are made in RE between Christian values and everyday life. For example in Year 2, when pupils were considering the impact of a person's beliefs on their behaviour, natural links were made to hope, compassion, faith and friendship. Pupils' learning about prominent leaders with a religious faith has challenged them. For example, one pupil said of Desmond Tutu, 'He needed a massive amount of faith to speak up and help others speak up.' Staff have high expectations of pupils using their own learning and experiences to make a difference beyond the school. One example is in Year 2 where pupils look for opportunities to show compassion and friendship to the school's neighbours. They describe this as 'lighting-up' the world around them.

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

The headteacher is determined in his drive to unlock potential. He is confident and clear in promoting a distinctively Christian vision and in his expectation that all staff will share a commitment to nurture children's God-given potential. Standards are high and leaders and governors attribute the school's success to its Christian character. Leaders define the Christian ethos of the school by listing a number of factors which help pupils to learn well. These include worship, Christian teaching on resilience, a Biblical understanding of failure and new beginnings, and opportunities to move on in faith. Evaluation systems, including monitoring by governors, are highly effective and result in improvement. Leaders have an astute understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Arrangements for RE and collective worship meet statutory requirements. The leadership of RE and worship has a very high priority in this school. The recent temporary change in leadership of RE was exceptionally well-managed with smooth transitions, shared planning and excellent communication. During this time, the school was able successfully to introduce the new diocesan syllabus and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The school is committed to developing its staff and governors as potential leaders of church schools. The deputy headteacher is currently seconded to another church school as associate headteacher and a number of staff have taken part in diocesan training which has deepened their understanding of church school leadership. The school enjoys rich partnerships. Relationships with the parish are mutually supportive, with three of the clergy involved in school. 'Messy Church' takes place in the chapel, which is part of the school hall. Other Christian visitors, for example representing the Salvation Army or the Methodist church, lead worship. Links with Archbishop Temple School are enhanced by the sharing of a chaplain. The school is creative in accessing parental expertise and experience to benefit pupils' learning. Pupils recount how they were recently challenged by a visiting parent's personal experience of religious persecution in the Ukraine. Parents are enthusiastic in their support, praising the balanced way in which Christian faith is presented and 'woven through the whole fabric' of the school.

SIAMS report February 2018 St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Fulwood, Preston PR2 9RE