

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Middleton Parish Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	Springfield Road Middleton Manchester M24 5DL
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese/Methodist District	Manchester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Rochdale
Name of multi-academy trust/ federation	
Date/s of inspection	29 September 2016
Date of last inspection	December 2011
School's unique reference number	105821
Headteacher	Jackie Brokenbrow
Inspector's name and number	Angela Knowles 497

School context

Middleton Parish Church Primary School is larger than average and lies at the heart of Middleton. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. The school has been through a period of change since the last inspection in December 2011. It has grown in number and is now two-form entry to Year 4. Nursery provision opened in 2014 and expanded in 2015. The deputy head teacher became the head teacher in September 2016 and an experienced teacher in the school has been appointed RE coordinator.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Middleton Parish Church School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Explicitly articulated and deeply embedded Christian values of the school underpin its excellent relationships with all the school family.
- Christian commitment and values motivate the pastoral support to families which ensures there is mutual and substantial benefit to the children, the school and the community.
- The children's excellent behaviour, care for each other and attitudes to learning are rooted in the school's core Christian values.
- The inspiring Christian leadership of the head teacher, enhanced by supportive governors and senior leaders, has resulted in a worshipping community built upon prayer where those of no faith and all faiths can join together as one.

Areas to improve

- In order to further raise achievement and attainment in Religious Education (RE), review the curriculum and develop assessment processes without levels.
- Enhance spirituality throughout the school community by developing the strategic role the children have in the planning of worship so that they contribute to the embedding of the Christian values of the school.
- Developing further the links with the church and parents so that worship is something the whole school family can experience together.

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

Christian values are central to every aspect of school life. They underpin the mission statement which says that school exists to ensure that the children 'Know that they are loved by God'. The school's strong Christian character is reflected in displays which emphasise the importance of parables in daily life. The Bible passage from John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches," with the face of each member of the school on a branch, leaves you in no doubt of the school's Christian character as you enter. Each classroom has its own focus area including a cross, a Bible and opportunities to reflect on thought provoking quotes. Children value the opportunity to write P.U.S.H. (Pray until something happens) prayers which are shared regularly during worship. The focus areas support children's spiritual development extremely well, reminding them of the presence of God in their school. Children staff, parents and governors articulate Christian values consistently and demonstrate them through very positive relationships and attitudes to worship and learning. Parents spoke of the way in which Christian values learned in school had shaped lives. Relationships between all members of the school family are solid and there is a tangible sense of Christian love and care. Children are encouraged to follow the example of Christ in their behaviour, relationships and attitude. Children behave well and are polite and respectful. They are very supportive of the few who struggle to cope in school. These few children are identified and supported extremely well by adults who demonstrate Christian values in action. As a result, children are safe, ready and able to learn. Children begin school working slightly below expectation and make excellent progress so that they leave with results above the national average. The crucial link between attendance and achievement is strongly promoted by school and is celebrated within the context of the school's Christian ethos. Children are aware of other faiths and recognise that similarities far outweigh differences. They enjoy learning about and worshipping with each other. Pupils say they love their 'friendly' school and want to come to school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship plays a central role in school life whether it takes place in the hall for whole school worship or in the more intimate context of the classroom. The impact on the children and adults is obvious as many reflect on how a particular act of worship has made a difference to their thinking or helped them at a particular point in their lives. The music 'Safe in the Father's hands' created a beautiful calm atmosphere as worship began and there was an air of prayerfulness. Children contributed eagerly and demonstrated they were fully engaged in the worship. Children are able to explain that the three candles on the focus table represent God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The impact of the worship was seen during the day as many chose to wear stickers which said 'Safe with God'. Prayers children had placed in the P.U.S.H. box in the hall were also shared as part of the reflective prayer time which concluded with the children saying the grace to each other. Worship is held in church at key times in the Christian calendar with St Leonard's Church providing special experiences for the school. Worship is carefully planned and evaluated and links directly to Christian values and the church's calendar. Whilst recognising the differing religious backgrounds represented by a small minority in school, the Bible and the teachings of Jesus Christ underpin worship. The school intends to include children in the planning of worship in the future although they already take an active role in its delivery. Prayer is central to the life of the school. Not only do children pray at various times in the school day but the staff have opportunities to pray. Members of the church have a prayer buddy initiative which links with the school and they pray with and for each other. The point for improvement from the last inspection around affirming experiences within acts of worship has been fully met.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards of attainment and progress in RE are in line with other subjects. The baseline on entry is slightly below expected therefore children make good progress as evidenced in the work sample. The variety of activities and first hand experiences provided for the children enable them to understand the impact of faith on believers. The effective teaching and learning strategies used ensure each child's knowledge about Christianity and of other

religions is deepening as they move through school. The book scrutiny demonstrated how expectations and learning develop across school and books showed the huge range of activities including visits, visitors and group work experienced by all. Children enjoy RE and talk excitedly about what they have experienced and learnt. During the two lessons observed, all children were fully engaged in the learning and work was differentiated so that all could make progress. Talk partners are used really effectively in all classes. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and those observed show a confidence in the subject and are enthusiastic. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has identified the need for more thorough monitoring. The assessment of progress against the attainment targets is evident in the new RE books. Children's work is marked in line with the school's marking policy and reflects areas to improve. Children are given opportunities to reflect on their own learning and through discussion, they are able to explain what they need to do next. The coordinator has completed a review of teaching and learning for RE and has prioritised areas for development. Teaching staff share ideas and are given support with planning and assessment. The coordinator intends to make links with the diocese to support her development plans for improving RE further in the future.

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

The head teacher's clear Christian vision is supported by the whole school community and lived out in action. The vision is sought through prayer and personal reflection. This vision is strong and clearly articulated based on the Christian model of servanthood dedicated to meeting the ever-changing needs of the community. The spiritual dimension of school has always been a priority and central to everything. The school's daily life is based on prayer. The RE coordinator although new to this post is a very experienced leader and has a clear plan for the subject's development. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school. They are well informed and access relevant training. There are clear action plans for both collective worship and RE which all leaders articulate. The clergy and other members of the church are known by the children. This strengthens the valued links between school and church. During Christian festivals worship takes place in the church and parents value these opportunities to be involved. A great many special activities have been organised by the church for all the children. These have included visiting the church building and finding out in a practical way more about significant festivals. The high level of pastoral care is rooted in Christian love and has a significant impact on the whole school family seen through the school's response to need. Pupils have real opportunities for leadership responsibilities through school council and the sports committee. The RE coordinator and the head teacher have clear strategies in place for continuing improvements. When the parents were asked what they liked most about school they said 'We value being part of a faith community and our children are safe'.

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