

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hob Hill CE/Methodist (VC) Primary School

Address	Armitage Lane, Brereton, Staffordshire, WS15 1ED		
Date of inspection	17 October 2019	Status of school	VC primary
Diocese / Methodist District	Lichfield Diocese Wolverhampton & Shrewsbury District	URN	124291

Overall Judgement	Grade	Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgement		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Hob Hill Church of England/Methodist School is a voluntary controlled primary school with 276 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and 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. A new deputy headteacher has been in post since February 2018.

The school's Christian vision

We strive to enable our children to flourish and achieve their potential as unique creations of God. This is based on Jeremiah 29:11. 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord. 'Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'

Key findings

- The impact of the Christian vision on the quality of relationships is excellent. It results in an ethos of respect, honesty and aspiration. Families speak highly of support received during difficult times.
- The passionate, enthusiastic Christian leadership of the headteacher ensures pupils and staff realise the school's Christian vision. His aspiration, love and care for each child enables them to grow and flourish. Governors' understanding of how Church school evaluation systems judge effectiveness lacks depth.
- The Christian vision of this highly inclusive school is effective at meeting the needs of vulnerable pupils. Pastoral and learning support is a strength.
- Collective worship is central to the life of the school. It gives pupils regular opportunities to encounter biblical teaching, experience prayer and reflection and learn about traditions of Anglican and Methodist worship.
- Leadership and management of religious education (RE) is strong. A clear system of assessment is in place. This ensures that pupils consolidate their skills and that there is continuity and progression across school. Not all teachers, however, have had recent training in delivering the RE curriculum to a high standard.

Areas for development

- To ensure governors have a clear understanding of the way the school's self-evaluation procedures relate to the effectiveness of the school as a Church school. This is so that governors ensure the Christian vision continues to enable pupils and adults to flourish.
- To continue to enable all teachers to develop their practice and engage in professional development for RE. This is to provide effective support for teaching about core theological concepts.

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

The Christian vision is evident throughout the work of the school. It has the flourishing of children at its heart. Consequently, all who enter Hob Hill receive a warm, friendly welcome. The biblical roots of the vision reflect the aspirations leaders have for pupils and adults. The involvement of staff and governors in the development of the vision has resulted in an enthusiastic commitment to living out its words. The school community values the excellent relationships that exist. The headteacher leads by example and is a popular role model to pupils and staff. A parent described the headteacher as 'One in a million!' Leadership has been further strengthened through the support provided by the recently appointed deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. Parents say the Christian vision gives the children a good foundation on which to base their lives. One family explained how learning about prayer and Christian beliefs about hope had helped their child during a challenging time. Parents praised staff who initiated a charity event, raising funds for a children's hospice. All members of the school community are keen to put the words of John Wesley, 'Do all the good you can,' into action. As a result, pupils collect donations for a foodbank and raise money for a village in Ghana.

The school's vision to ensure all children succeed is reflected in the inclusion policy. It welcomes children with a range of educational, emotional and behavioural needs. Leaders adapt the curriculum to motivate specific groups and progress is evident. Resources are allocated strategically, enabling vulnerable pupils to flourish. Pupils speak sensitively about how children with additional needs are helped. The inclusion assistant and nurture room are valued by pupils. They say, 'It calms people down if you're upset.' Pupils feel cared for by staff. They say they are 'extremely kind' and teach them to stay safe. A play therapist works with targeted children. This enables pupils to flourish using imaginative experiences. Pupils are invited to attend the 'JC and Me' club. Pupils attending engage in Bible stories, craft and prayer activities. Being part of this group makes them feel valued and allows them to share their ideas. Leaders are committed to ensuring the mental health and well-being of all pupils and adults. Staff say, 'If you have a bad day, everybody supports each other.'

The Christian vision and values are promoted using the teachings of Jesus. Pupils' biblical knowledge is impressive and eloquently expressed. From an early age, RE develops pupils' understanding of major world religions and the life of John Wesley. Nursery children explore Hindu festivals through rangoli patterns and diva lamps. The RE subject leader drives the subject forward with focus. Robust assessment systems give a clear indication of pupils' progress. This informs future planning. Pupils are beginning to explore core theological concepts using the Understanding Christianity resource. Leaders want to develop and embed this deep thinking by continuing to build teaching capacity through professional development.

Collective worship is seen as an important and enjoyable time to promote the Christian vision. During worship pupils are invited to pray, reflect and respond. Drama is used effectively to help pupils understand Christian ideas. For example, a pupil-led, drama activity provided a strong illustration of learning around the body of Christ in Corinthians. Pupils articulate their understanding of important beliefs about God saying God is a father 'because he looks after us'. The worship council are proud of their role in developing worship. Pupils have, however, only limited independent opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate worship. The inclusiveness of worship is evident in the way individuals are supported during this time. Pupils from different faiths are comfortable to participate due to its invitational nature. Worship impacts on the wider life of the school. One pupil said the learning from Corinthians would make him consider, 'How can I help our school team?' The established links with St Michael's Church of England and Brereton Methodist churches support the development of worship in school. The headteacher engages well with the Methodist Academies and School's Trust (MAST) and recently shared good practice around behaviour management at a national conference.

The Christian vision shines through the school's behaviour policy. Respect is widely promoted and understood by pupils. They talk confidently about not judging each other, equality and respecting the rights of others. Respect for diversity and difference is non-negotiable to these pupils. They value all as unique creations of God. Children's behaviour and their relationships with each other are very good. They play well together during social times, independently organising team games. Play leaders support younger pupils well. Pupils are not afraid to challenge injustice. They confidently give examples of challenging bullying behaviour. The school's Christian vision challenges children to achieve their potential. Pupils say, 'Teachers push us in our learning and push us to our limits.'

The biblical root of the vision, 'Plans to prosper you,' encourages adults to flourish alongside the children. Staff development is aspirational with staff developing as leaders at Hob Hill and beyond. Future church school leaders are developed by attending the national Methodist conference and undertaking professional qualifications for school leadership. The RE leader completed a skills audit with staff, accurately identifying needs for future training. RE meets statutory requirements. The school is candid in its self-evaluation of its effectiveness as a Church school. A range of monitoring strategies have been adopted, including external review. Governors' understanding of how these can help them to rigorously evaluate effectiveness is less evident. All recommendations from the previous SIAMS inspection have been addressed.

The learning environment tangibly reflects the Christian vision. Anglican and Methodist symbols are proudly displayed alongside pupils' achievements, children's psalms and work celebrating the uniqueness of all. Spiritual development is promoted through prayer, reflection, music and a range of enrichment activities. Pupils visit Lichfield Cathedral for the 'Inspire' project. This inspires pupils to transform lives. They work with other schools to reflect on social action issues like homelessness and the plight of refugees. The rural context of Hob Hill enables its pupils to transform the lives of other children. A link was established with a school in a contrasting context. Children from an inner city school visited and shared the beauty of God's world.

The excellent relationships within this school family, as 'they watch over one another in love', bolster and breathe life into the Christian vision. In the words of a governor, 'In this school, all individuals flourish in the sight of God.' The Christian vision, and its associated values shine through every child at Hob Hill.

Headteacher	Ben Preston
Inspector's name and number	Anne Barker 959