

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

Holmeswood Methodist School			
Address	Chapel Lane, Holmeswood, Near Rufford, L40 1UD		
Date of inspection	5 December 2019	Status of school	Voluntary controlled primary
Methodist District	Lancashire District	URN	119403

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

### School context

Holmeswood Methodist is a primary school with 44 pupils on roll. All pupils are of White British heritage. No 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 above national averages. Pupil numbers have risen over recent years.

### The school's Christian vision

Growing Together: Aim High, Believe, Achieve

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can. (John Wesley)

This Methodist mantra accurately reflects our school's uncompromising ambition to make a positive difference to people's lives – children and families within our school, the local community and beyond.

### Key findings

- The distinctly Christian vision is rooted in Methodism and clearly reflects the aspirations and work of the school. Strong partnerships with circuit and diocese enrich the school.
- The headteacher is a strong Christian role model and drives the vision forward in the school community. Leaders are totally committed to providing pastoral care, guidance and support for the families they serve.
- Collective worship is central to the life of the school. It provides daily opportunities for prayer, praise and reflection. Pupils do not currently have opportunities to develop their understanding of worship through planning, leading and evaluating acts of worship.
- Excellent work around character development and courageous advocacy ensures pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education. Pupils speak with passion about respect and equality.
- Religious education (RE) enables pupils to begin to explore core Christian concepts and acquire biblical knowledge. However, leadership and management of RE has not enabled staff to develop the skills needed for effective practice. As a result, pupils' progress is limited.

### Areas for development

- To provide professional development for all staff teaching RE to ensure that they are equipped to support pupils' progress effectively.
- Ensure governors monitor the impact of the Christian vision effectively. This is so that accurate understanding of the school as a church school informs strategic planning.
- Increase pupils' involvement in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship. This is to enable pupils to develop their understanding by more active engagement with the Christian vision and its associated values.

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 school has a clear Christian vision, founded in Methodist theology. This vision accurately informs the aspirations and daily work of the school. Members of the school community proudly articulate the vision. They understand its relevance to their lives and the impact it enables them to have on others. Pupils say the Christian vision teaches them to believe in themselves and to understand beliefs about God. It inspires them to aim high to achieve their goals. One way this is implemented is through the daily challenges given to pupils. The vision is implicitly embedded in some school policies, although most policies do not explain the impact of the vision. Governors have opportunities to monitor the work of the school but do not currently implement a robust system of self-evaluation. As a result, governors are unclear about the current priorities for the school as a Church school.

Engagement with a range of partners supports and sustains the Christian vision. These include representatives of the Methodist Academies and Schools' Trust (MAST) and Blackburn diocese. The headteacher is a member of an established Church schools' cluster. He benefits from joint training and pastoral support from colleagues. In turn, he mentors a less experienced Methodist headteacher. A partnership with other small schools results in increased enrichment opportunities for pupils.

The headteacher lives out the Christian vision for doing all the good you can, displaying admirable commitment and dedication to the school. He is passionate about providing pupils with a solid base of basic skills and a broad and rich curriculum. A wide variety of enrichment experiences means pupils' character development is a strength. As a result, pupils move on to the next phase of their education as confident, resilient and enthusiastic learners. Relationships between all members of the school community are excellent. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They say the school instils a love of learning in their children. Parents value the support given to them by the school during difficult times. The sense of belonging in this school, as all 'watch over one another in love', is tangible. The school community is described by its members as a family. The close partnership with the Methodist chapel, local churches and the village community, strengthens this.

This is a highly inclusive school. The Christian vision for making a difference to people's lives ensures pupils with a range of needs are welcomed and nurtured. The school knows the needs of its families and pupils extremely well. Resources are strategically allocated to ensure all are given the chance to succeed. A 'Relax Kids' specialist supports the good mental health of pupils and adults. Consequently, the emotional and academic needs of pupils are met, enabling all to flourish. 'Think Sheets' encourage pupils to reflect on their behaviour and promote forgiveness and reconciliation. Pupils say it is important to give people a second chance. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good. The school's approach to relationships and sex education ensures all pupils value themselves as unique and instils respect for others.

Collective worship is seen as a focal point in the school day. Worship themes link to core Christian values which pupils apply to their lives. A daily pattern of prayer enables pupils to become reflective and contemplative. Some pupils say they use prayer to help them and think about forgiveness. They say prayers comfort them when they are sad. One pupil said, 'If you're in a bad situation you can trust God. He's always with you.' Many pupils value and respect the prayers of others. They write their own prayers and feel secure to share them. Pupils sometimes offer spontaneous prayers during worship. Reflection areas around school are under development. These provide good support for spiritual development. The local church community supports the development of worship well. The Methodist minister contributes to worship and pupils celebrate Christian festivals in church. This helps children to understand the diversity of Christian practice and tradition. The 'Faith Journeys' led by the church community enable pupils to develop worship and explore Christianity as a living world faith.

RE develops pupils' knowledge of the Bible, Methodism and major world faiths. Parents say their children enthusiastically discussed a visit to a Hindu temple, linking this experience to the festival of Diwali. This gives pupils a good understanding of difference and diversity. As a result, pupils treat others with dignity and respect. RE ambassadors attended a local RE conference. This inspired them to explore core theological concepts for example, creation. RE encourages pupils to ask questions and gives them a safe space to discuss their own beliefs. Cross-curricular opportunities to explore Christianity lead to abstract artwork depicting the light and dark sides of the Easter story. Assessment systems are in place but, as yet, do not sufficiently impact on planning and

progress. Teachers have had few opportunities to benefit from seeing effective practice or to engage in professional development for RE. As a result, the expectations around the depth of pupils thinking and outcomes in RE are not sufficiently challenging. Consequently pupils' progress is limited.

The Christian vision inspires pupils to take social action and 'do all the good we can.' The school planned and hosted a successful conference about environmental issues, which included a speaker from Greenpeace. As a result, pupils took action to reduce plastic waste. Pupils show good stewardship towards God's world by taking care of school pets, growing vegetables and feeding wildlife. Spiritual development is enhanced by countryside hikes and residential visits. Pupils engage in a range of charitable activities and chose to support Sport Relief to enable children to drink clean water. They understand that their global companion link with a child in Uganda helps to transform her life. They raise money so she can attend school and seek medical treatment. This gives pupils a clear understanding of global inequality. Pupils have an impact in their local community by collecting food for a foodbank.

The whole school community is very proud of the care, love and opportunities all pupils receive at Holmeswood. The overwhelming message is that in this school, everyone gets the chance to shine.

Headteacher	Relph Higson
Inspector's name and number	Anne Barker 959