

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School

Emerson Road, Ribbleton, Preston, PR1 5SN

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish

Overall grade **Good**

The impact of collective worship **Good**

School's vision

Brighter futures built with Ambition, Courage and Respect; filled with Love, Hope and Faith

Key findings

- The school's Christian vision and values reflect the Methodist commitment to the value of all people and are fully embedded throughout the life of the school. This has resulted in supportive relationships that help all members of the school community to flourish.
- Leaders are passionate about discovering how Methodist principles of education can be applied to transform a diverse community, historically lacking in aspiration.
- The recently developed curriculum has been designed to reflect the school's vision, its associated values and the needs of the local community. Though aware of some global issues, pupils lack the confidence to challenge injustice.
- Worship encourages pupils to reflect on issues of faith and belief but does not currently enable pupils to experience and develop an understanding of Methodist tradition and worship practice.
- Effective religious education (RE) teaching successfully enables pupils to develop and compare their knowledge and understanding of different faiths.

Areas for development

- Enhance adults' and pupils' experience and understanding of Methodist worship and tradition so that the whole school community reflects the breadth of Methodist practice.
- Build on current good practice to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community so that spiritual wellbeing is further strengthened.
- Develop pupils' awareness of, and confidence to discuss, global issues in order for them to feel empowered to challenge injustice.

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

Leaders have very successfully embedded the school's Christian vision to create an inclusive, harmonious school community where all feel loved and nurtured. Pupils and staff of all faiths and none work and worship together in an atmosphere of mutual support and understanding. The school's outstanding pastoral care provides compassionate and non-judgemental support for pupils and families. This is much appreciated by parents who talk movingly of the help they have received. Everyone is welcome to visit the 'heart room', either for quiet reflection or to talk through an issue. The school dog, Wesley, is popular with all and enhances the family atmosphere appreciated by many. A free breakfast club, subsidised by Greggs and the school, is well-attended. Prompt referrals are made for early help. Assistance is given with access to food banks and other services for struggling families. In this way the school lives out its values of love and hope for the benefit of the whole school community.

The consistent use of the principles of restorative justice reflects the school's values of love, hope and respect. This leads pupils to show a mature understanding of each other's individual needs. As a result, bullying and prejudicial language are rare and pupils feel safe in school. They are confident that if they have a problem staff will deal with it effectively. Pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs are very well supported. Every effort is made to meet their needs and enable them to make progress with their learning. This reflects the school's vision of brighter futures for all.

Rooted in the school's vision, the ambitions that leaders have for the pupils and the community are very evident. Pupils recognise that what they learn now affects their futures and are keen to do well. They talk about always trying to do their best and having the courage to try new things. Inspired by the vision, pupils have high aspirations and talk of wanting to work in information technology, healthcare, teaching and music. Attendance is prioritised with many rewards and incentives, reflecting the school's vision of brighter futures for all. In order to achieve those brighter futures leaders have introduced a new curriculum. This is specifically designed to give pupils a wide range of life experiences and help them to develop aspirations for their future. There are opportunities such as the chance to learn to ride a bike and regular visits and visitors. All pupils learn a musical instrument and residential visits are subsidised, to ensure no one misses out for financial reasons. Everyone is very enthusiastic about the outdoor learning sessions introduced this term for all pupils. The school council is involved in developing the new outdoor learning area. Funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used mainly to provide increased levels of staffing. This improves staff and pupil wellbeing and ensures that all pupils are supported to progress with their learning and achieve their potential. During the pandemic the school lived out its Christian vision by making determined efforts to ensure that all pupils had access to the technology and other resources they needed. Those struggling to learn at home were encouraged to attend school. These actions reflect the Methodist commitment to the value of all people. Through its focus on values such as ambition, courage and hope, which are central to the vision, the school empowers its pupils to succeed.

Pupils are encouraged to be curious and reflective learners. Questions such as 'was conscription moral?' enable them to develop a thoughtful approach to what they are taught. The RE curriculum promotes a questioning approach and encourages pupils to compare and contrast the teachings of different faiths. Pupils are interested in, knowledgeable about, and very respectful of all major world faiths. This is a result of good RE teaching and a wide range of faiths being represented in school. They are also well informed about John Wesley and his teachings. Reflective areas are provided in each classroom where pupils can write prayers and think, supporting their spiritual growth. As a result of the impact of the school's vision on teaching, pupils and adults live out the values of love, hope, faith and respect. Pupils and adults support each other to succeed. More widely, pupils are aware of environmental issues and climate change. Activities such as litter picking and collecting crisp packets to help the homeless are initiated by pupils. This shows some understanding of how they can begin to help improve their own school and local community and are keen to do 'all the good they can'. Their knowledge of wider issues of deprivation and disadvantage, however, is more limited. Most lack the confidence to discuss and challenge injustice.

The school has found the support and resources of the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust very beneficial during the pandemic. For a variety of reasons, however, links with the local Methodist circuit are not as strong as they have been in the past. As a result, apart from occasional online worship led by ministers or the headteacher, worship has been largely class based during the pandemic. Pupils and staff have missed the opportunity to worship together as a school. Pupils welcome the chance to discuss and reflect on Christian teaching and are keen to write and share prayers. They all feel included and enjoy leading and participating in class worship. Class floor books provide an effective evaluation of the impact of collective worship through pupils' reflective comments. Staff are, however, not generally trained or knowledgeable about Methodist tradition and worship style. Opportunities for the sustained spiritual growth of both adults and pupils could therefore be improved.

The school received the Wellbeing for Schools Award in 2019. This reflects the school's focus on creating a sense of belonging that embraces and celebrates difference. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they get from the headteacher with their professional development and their wellbeing. The previous deputy headteacher completed a Christian leadership course before moving on to headship elsewhere. The committed RE lead feels that she has the training and support she needs to undertake her role effectively. She provides training for other staff and is a member of a local network of RE leaders giving her the opportunity to share good practice. As a result, teachers feel confident to deliver the RE curriculum effectively, enabling pupils to make good progress.

Overall, strong and effective leadership has resulted in the creation of an inclusive school community rooted in Christian values and clearly based on Methodist principles. As a result of the vision, all are made to feel welcome, valued, encouraged and supported to flourish.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	24 November 2021	URN	119354
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2014		
School status	Voluntary controlled	NOR	265
Name of MAT/Federation	N/A		
Methodist District	Lancashire District		
Headteacher	Fran Nickson		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic and faith backgrounds. Over half are of Indian/Pakistani heritage.		
Inspector's name	Carolyn Whiteway	No.	933