

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

### Leyland Methodist Infant School

<b>Address</b>	Canberra Drive, Leyland, Lancashire. PR25 3ET		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	24 January 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Voluntary Controlled
<b>Methodist District</b>	North Lancashire	<b>URN</b>	119401

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<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>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Good</b>

### School context

Leyland Methodist Infant School has 207 pupils on roll. The school has very low levels 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 in line with national averages. There have recently been significant changes in leadership structure. Since July 2018 the school has been working in collaboration with the Leyland Methodist Junior School and the executive headteacher has responsibility for both schools.

### The school's Christian vision

To love, serve and celebrate together. Within God's love for everyone, our school family is committed to serve by: celebrating everyone's unique God-given talents; giving the best of ourselves for all the world; doing all the good we can together. This is rooted in the Bible and the words of John Wesley.

### Key findings

- God's love is evident in supportive relationships. Children learn to be compassionate and kind. Staff support each other through life's challenges and pastoral support from the Methodist ministry team is much valued. The school is sharing its excellent practice in providing post-trauma support with others.
- The decision to collaborate with the junior school is beginning to enrich both schools through the sharing of expertise. The executive headteacher and deputy headteacher now work in close partnership. They provide strong Christian leadership. Developing a shared vision is at an early stage, but is already well-understood by teachers and pupils. Teachers confidently explain how its biblical roots affect their practice.
- Vibrant collective worship, greatly enriched by the strong partnership with the local Methodist church, inspires pupils and helps them to apply Christian values to their own lives.
- Religious education (RE) is very well-led. Effective assessment strategies are being developed and underpin pupils' progress in their learning. This ensures that pupils are challenged appropriately in lessons.
- Decision making and funding is informed by the shared vision. The school prioritises support for children and families with particular needs, including behavioural and emotional difficulties. Investment in supporting vulnerable pupils through the 'honeycomb classroom' makes a significant impact.

### Areas for development

- To continue the process of developing and sharing the school's Christian vision, so that all members of the school are able to fully explain its impact on their roles.
- Staff to develop a shared understanding of spiritual development, which draws on the school's Christian vision and values. To plan for this in the wider curriculum, beyond collective worship and RE, so that spiritual development is secured by routine curriculum planning.

## **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 infant school has a longstanding Christian vision. Since the decision was made to collaborate with the junior school, the two schools have worked together, with church leaders and governors, to articulate a shared vision. The idea of the Church as the body of Christ, different parts with different gifts, underpins the way staff work together. This and the parable of the talents express the vision for sharing expertise between the schools for the benefit of all pupils. For example, the RE co-ordinator from the infant school is working with both schools. The two schools are at an early stage of their shared journey and recognise that they are only at the start of embedding and implementing the shared vision. However, the vision is already well-understood by teachers and leaders. Pupils understand the simplified expression of the vision, 'To love, serve and celebrate together'. Vibrant displays in the hall support their understanding. Staff often discuss the vision with pupils, asking questions such as, 'Is this sharing together?' or 'Is this action loving?'

Documentation, such as joint policies, are now being developed to further explain the impact of the vision on practice. However, some members of the school community, including non-teaching staff, have not yet been involved in the process of thinking deeply about the vision and reflecting on how it affects their roles.

Vibrant collective worship enthuses pupils and is an important way in which the vision is shared. It is greatly enriched by input from the Methodist ministry team. Sign language is effective in helping pupils to remember significant ideas, including Christian values and the words of songs. Pupils readily sign the vision. The Methodist tradition of expressing faith through song is reflected in worship, for example, the 'Vision Song' written by the Methodist minister. His 'Wesley Can Can' teaches children the words of John Wesley. It has been shared beyond the school and was danced at the Methodist Conference by the President. Planning secures a sound understanding of important Christian beliefs, and festivals. Understanding of prayer and Christian values is effectively supported by the reflection areas in each classroom. Pupils explain how prayer helps them to cope with difficult situations and fears. They take responsibility for leading class worship, supported by helpful wipe-clean planning sheets. Staff find worship a valuable time for reflection. A teacher explained how it helped her to think and pray when she faced difficult challenges in her work. Parents and the wider church community value opportunities to share in special services.

Behaviour is outstanding. The vision for celebrating the gifts of all is implemented through a positive approach to behaviour management. There are a plethora of awards given to children to celebrate, for example, Christian values or great effort. The way children understand and apply Christian values also has a significant impact on behaviour. In this secure learning environment, where they know they are valued, pupils aspire to give of their best and make sound progress. They grow in confidence and older children welcome the chance to take on leadership responsibilities. Collective worship effectively supports spiritual development and teachers readily grasp opportunities for spiritual development as they arise. However, there is no routine planning for spiritual development which reflects the school's Christian vision and ethos in the wider curriculum beyond collective worship and RE.

The executive headteacher and the leadership team provide strong Christian leadership which is driving forward improvements in achievement. The school is committed to succession planning. The leadership structure ensures that responsibilities are shared and supports the growth of future leaders. Staff have been well-supported by training for their roles in a church school. Training and conferences run for Methodist schools have made a positive impact. The vision for developing the unique talents of each valued individual informs funding decisions. The development of the 'honeycomb classroom' provides personalised learning for pupils with learning, emotional and behavioural needs. This development is another example of shared expertise between the two schools. It has been well-supported by the co-ordinator for special educational needs in the junior school. Mental wellbeing for pupils and staff is a high priority and there are clearly identified procedures for identifying and supporting pupils at risk.

The vision for the school as a loving Christian family, serving its community, underpins highly supportive relationships. The commitment to love and compassion means that pastoral and practical support often extend into the wider community. Parents say staff 'can't help you enough'. The school experienced a very difficult time during the illness of the much loved, long-standing headteacher. The whole community shared their grief following her death. Pastoral support from the Methodist ministry team was invaluable. This included support for the immediate school community, families and older children who have left the school. This vision for a compassionate community means that the school is a highly supportive place to work. Staff say that in times of difficulty they hold each other up, that 'as one crumbles, another is strong'. A member of

staff who experienced the Manchester Arena terrorist attack described the deputy, then acting headteacher, as ‘a diamond’ and a ‘rock’, with the result that the school became her safe place. The exemplary support she received is being used to inform guidance for post-trauma support given to other employers.

Pupils gain an understanding of what it means to be compassionate through strong support for charities. This supports their understanding of Christianity as a global faith as they seek to ‘do good to all the world’. They are beginning to gain an understanding of the need to work for justice as they explore differences in the way people live and ways in which this might be unfair. They have a strong respect for diversity. The school secures dignity and respect for all.

The recently appointed RE and ethos leader is providing effective leadership. She provides strong support for teaching and learning. Understanding the ‘big picture’ of the Christian story has been well supported by work with a silk artist. RE makes a significant contribution to the way in which children value diversity through enabling children to meet people of different faiths. It provides a safe space where children are able to explore big questions and learn to disagree well. Pupils of different faiths and cultures are confident in talking in RE about the way in which their families celebrate at home. Effective use of assessment and a coherent curriculum support children in building RE skills, including interpreting sacred texts and asking big questions, as they progress through the school.

There is excitement about the future as the schools progress together on their shared journey.

Executive headteacher Deputy headteacher and head of infant school	Kathryn Melling Nicola Rogerson
Inspector’s name and number	Carol Berry 324