

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hey with Zion Church of England/Methodist Primary School

Address	Rowland Way, Lees, Oldham OL4 3LQ		
Date of inspection	7 February 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Diocese / Methodist District	Manchester Diocese/ Manchester and Stockport Methodist District	URN	105694

Overall Judgement	Grade	Excellent
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

Hey with Zion is a primary school with 312 pupils on roll. The school has low levels of religious and cultural diversity and very few speak English as an additional language. 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 (SEND) is below national averages. The headteacher was appointed in March 2015.

The school's Christian vision

'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' (John 10:10)
Within the love of God, we strive to do the best we can for ourselves and for others.

Key findings

- The Christian vision drives every aspect of school life. The stimulating, innovative curriculum has been designed in response to the vision for life in all its fullness. The creative approach meets the varied needs of all pupils, supporting their gifts and talents so that they achieve well beyond expectations.
- Excellent spiritual development is woven across the curriculum. It has a profound impact on pupils' understanding of God's world and their responsibility for others. They learn to disagree extremely well and develop a great respect for diversity.
- The distinctly Christian leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by outstanding senior leaders and skilled governors, has created a vibrant, highly inclusive Christian learning environment in which every member is loved and nurtured as a unique child of God. As a result, the levels of spiritual, personal and academic achievement are exceedingly high.
- Inspiring religious education (RE), supported by excellent assessment, ensures that pupils develop high levels of skills. They gain a deep understanding of important Christian theological concepts. RE has an excellent impact on pupils' attitudes to diversity.
- Collective worship is engaging. It is very well supported by partnerships with Anglican and Methodist churches. It inspires pupils and adults to reflect on their beliefs and helps them to apply Jesus' teaching in their own lives. However, pupils do not regularly take significant responsibility for its leadership.

Areas for development

- Provide more frequent opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for planning and leading worship in different settings. This is so that they deepen their understanding of the nature and variety of Christian worship.
- Support pupils' understanding of prayer by extending their experience of different forms. This is to deepen their understanding of varied prayer styles.

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 vision, founded on deeply embedded Christian values rooted in Bible teaching, directs every decision through which leaders strive to transform pupils' lives. It is highly inclusive and aspirational, ensuring that all are nurtured and supported so that they can make the most of their God-given talents. The distinctly Christian learning environment is continually enriched by the stimulating, highly creative curriculum. Leaders have developed an innovative curriculum founded on Christian values. Partnerships with national and diocesan centres of excellence have been instrumental in its development, whilst ensuring that it is tailored to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are offered a rich diet of cross-curricular themes through which they investigate and explore the world. They are eager, reflective learners who thoroughly enjoy their varied experiences. They aspire to 'make a difference' in the world by, for example, supporting the local food bank. Pupils willingly 'stand up' for others, explaining that Jesus taught how to be brave and strive to do what is right. The link with a Christian community in Gambia supports pupils' understanding of multi-cultural Christianity and world issues. Spiritual and ethical dimensions flow naturally across the curriculum, enabling pupils to challenge stereotypical views. Highly effective links with Oldham's multi-faith community ensure that their understanding of diversity and difference is practical and respectful. The school is a centre of excellence sharing its excellent practice to sustain the Christian vision to do one's best for others.

The excellent induction procedures for staff and governors ensure that everyone is motivated by the school's Christian vision. Governors know the school extremely well. Through their rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures, they have a very clear idea of school performance, attainment and the way in which the vision is being lived out. The harmonious staff team is much valued by parents who recognise all the efforts made to support their children. The wellbeing and mental health of staff and pupils is prioritised. For example, the marking policy has been developed to reduce teacher work load as well as improving the quality of feedback given to pupils. All staff benefit from high quality professional development. This is instrumental in supporting middle leadership roles and the creation of future church school leaders. Leaders ensure that collaborative partnerships with local schools, the diocese and the Methodist Academy and Schools Trust are used effectively to lead to continuous improvement.

The school's highly inclusive nature ensures that the needs of all pupils, including the vulnerable, disadvantaged and those with special needs and/or disabilities, are met. The vision motivates human and financial resource decisions. For example, the appointment of a learning mentor has a very significant impact on levels of attendance, removing barriers to learning and improving the quality of mental health provision. There is a direct link between the Christian vision and the consistently improving, remarkably high standards achieved. Standards of attainment are consistently well-above those achieved nationally, with exceptionally high levels being attained in mathematics. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is remarkably high. All pupils make excellent progress often exceeding expectations. In this way, the school's commitment to maximising achievement and treating others well is fully realised. Provision for spiritual development is exemplary. Pupils share their ideas openly within a trusting atmosphere. For example, a Year 5 pupil explained that although he was an atheist, he felt comfortable expressing his opinions. In this way, pupils are able to disagree well, gain resilience and grow in self-confidence. The vibrant displays of pupils' work across the school reflect the very high quality of their responses. Imaginative art work, extended writing, prose and poetry are used to demonstrate the depth of their thinking and response to experiences, such as the World War I remembrance topic.

RE makes an excellent contribution to the school's Christian distinctiveness and to pupils' spiritual growth. Pupils are excited and inspired by the curriculum through which they develop key skills and concepts. They enjoy the safe space to question, explore ideas as well as the highly creative approaches used. First-hand experiences, such as visits to the mosque and the recent Experience Christmas, provided by the two churches, enhance pupils' spirituality. Outstanding leadership has provided teachers with subject knowledge and resources through which they ensure that the needs of all learners are fully met. This is reflected in class scrapbooks and the highly effective assessment portfolios. Pupils develop high levels of RE skills for their age. They talk knowledgeably about aspects of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, identifying similarities and make effective links between these faiths. Themes studied in RE are threaded across the curriculum. For example, when Year 6 discussed online safety in Personal, Health and Social Education they referred to Deuteronomy 31: 6 'Be strong and courageous', explaining that this would help them resist persuasion to do something they know is not safe.

Collective worship is integral to the daily life of the school. Everyone feels included and able to contribute. 'It is the glue that holds the school together,' commented a member of staff. Bible teaching and Christian values are explored creatively. Their understanding of the Christian concept of the Trinity is age appropriate. Pupils'

knowledge of Jesus' life and teaching is good. They make effective links between parables, Christian values and their own actions and attitudes. Their exemplary behaviour is linked to their understanding of the Christian values of friendship and forgiveness. Pupils experience both Anglican and Methodist practices through the very strong links with clergy from Zion Methodist and St. John's churches. Both are regular visitors, delivering worship in school and church. Older pupils experience the Eucharist and planning ensures that pupils learn of the life and work of John Wesley. Pupils know the Methodist prayer echoed in the school's vision. Parents and others attend worship regularly. A Muslim parent explained that faith was carried through all aspects of the school, but that the way in which pupils of non-Christian faiths were included was of particular note. However, practice in collective worship is not as strong as in other aspects of the school's work. Although pupils often help to act out stories and respond to questions, they do not have regular opportunities to plan and lead worship independently in different settings. Pupils have a good understanding of prayer. They write and use prayers and make good use of reflective spaces. However their understanding of varied and interactive prayer and reflection activities is limited. The evaluation of worship is thorough, engaging pupils, staff and parents. It leads to improvement and identifies the impact daily worship has on the lives of all the school family.

The school's Christian vision makes a powerful transformational difference to the lives of pupils and adults. They are equipped to take on life's challenges and serve others as the school's vision directs.

Headteacher	Andrew Clowes
Inspector's name and number	Anne B. Woodcock 445