



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

St. John's Church of England Primary School			
<b>Address</b>	School Lane, Burscough, Lancashire L40 4AE		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	22 May 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	VC primary
<b>Diocese</b>	Liverpool	<b>URN</b>	119376

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

### School context

St. John's is a primary school with 174 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is well below national averages. Although the overall percentage of pupils who have special educational needs/disabilities is below the national average, the proportion of pupils with Educational Health Care Plans is above the national average. The school was judged to be good by Ofsted in 2017.

### The school's Christian vision

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Love your neighbour as yourself.*  
(Mark 12: 30-31)

Through Jesus Christ, our vision is to deliver exciting, engaging opportunities to enable our children to develop a love of learning and achieve their best. We aim to provide an environment in which all are loved and valued and where we can live out our Christian values.

### Key findings

- Strong Christian leadership on the part of the headteacher and assistant headteacher is central to the school's Christian vision and purpose. Members of the governing board are knowledgeable and committed, providing a high level of support. However, development planning for Church school distinctiveness is not clearly identified within school improvement targets.
- Relationships across the school community are extremely strong and rooted in Christian love and care. As a result, the school is a happy and harmonious place where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Strong subject leadership in religious education (RE) ensures that *Questful RE* and *Understanding Christianity* learning approaches are taught well and pupils are engaged in and enjoy their learning.
- The partnership with the parish church is strong. Clergy and other members of the church community are regular visitors to the school. They support worship, RE and the pupil ethos committee.
- Varied and invitational worship lies at the heart of the school day. It inspires all members of the community and encourages spiritual reflection and development.

### Areas for development

- Include detailed action plans for areas of Church school distinctiveness in the school development plan in order to support the staff and governors in their strategic monitoring.
- Further develop pupils' involvement in worship by giving them opportunities to plan and lead worship independently. This will support their spiritual development and understanding of the structure of worship.
- Enhance existing systems for evaluating worship in order to include the views of all in the school community.

**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**

St. John's Christian vision is clearly articulated and understood by all members of the school community. It is rooted in a biblical context and has the school's core Christian values at its heart. As a result, it is lived out in all areas of the school's daily life and inspires strong relationships and partnerships. The Christian vision informs school policies and practice. However, Church school distinctiveness does not feature in the areas for action in the school improvement plan despite a strong commitment to developing worship and RE. Members of the governing board bring a wide range of skills, experience and understanding to their role. As a result, they are able to support the strategic development of the school and ensure that the Christian vision motivates decision-making. The school has strong links with the Diocese of Liverpool, accessing professional development and direct support. As a result, staff and governors are well-informed in matters relating to current thinking in Church school education. Further partnerships with the local cluster of schools and Edge Hill University provide mutual benefits in terms of furthering pedagogy and sharing expertise.

The school's Christian vision provides a clear focus for curriculum development in order to meet the unique needs of every pupil. At the foundation of pupils' learning are the school's core Christian values which inspire and support everyone. The school knows its pupils well and all are encouraged to aspire to be the best they can be, knowing that they are special in the eyes of God. Data shows that pupils make good progress and in 2018 attainment was above national and local averages. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is supported by a wealth of enrichment activities and extra-curricular provision. This means that every pupil has the opportunity to flourish through the development of new knowledge and skills. Pupils enjoy their learning, are happy and have their spiritual needs met. They are curious and are encouraged to ask and answer challenging questions. The school is able to employ a range of intervention strategies to support learning. The appointment of an emotional literacy support assistant and a counsellor ensures vital wellbeing support for pupils with more complex needs and demonstrates Christian love in action.

The core Christian values support the character and moral development of pupils and enable them to 'follow in Jesus's footsteps'. The range of opportunities the school offers clearly strengthens pupils' aspirations for the future and builds resilience and the determination to persevere. The core Christian values support pupils' moral and character development extremely well and this prepares them for future relationships and roles in the wider community. The school supports a number of charities locally, nationally and worldwide. This results in pupils developing awareness of diverse needs and concern for justice. A strong link with the Pearl of Africa project in Uganda broadens pupils' understanding of issues related to poverty and disadvantage in a global context. They respond with Christian compassion and a desire to help, often organising charitable activities to support a named child through education. Pupils have a number of opportunities to take on leadership roles and develop a sense of purpose through their involvement in the school council, ethos committee and as librarians and playleaders. They see these roles as an opportunity to serve their school community in Christian love.

Through its Christian vision, the school provides an inclusive and strong community built on mutual respect. Because of this, pupils' behaviour is excellent and they explain that Christian values encourage everyone to be thoughtful, kind and forgiving. A pupil said, 'Christian values help us to be good friends to one another.' Instances of bullying are rare and pupils say that they feel extremely safe at all times. Parents speak of the warm and welcoming atmosphere and the many ways in which the school 'nurtures the whole child' and demonstrates 'love and respect for everyone'. Staff speak of the Christian vision as the 'bedrock of the school's ethos', underpinning all relationships. They feel supported professionally and personally. Consequently, all members of the community feel valued and they are able to flourish as children of God. This positive approach means that everyone in the school community is treated with dignity and respect, with mental health and wellbeing a priority.

The school's Christian vision informs the approach to collective worship. It is central to the daily life of the school and supports the spiritual development of all members of the community. It is planned to include biblical teaching, the exploration of Christian values and celebration of major festivals in the church calendar. Worship is clearly invitational and inclusive in that it offers everyone the opportunity to engage on a personal level. Pupils and staff enjoy and are inspired by the stories, music and opportunities for prayer. Reflection areas and pop-up prayer spaces support pupils' understanding of prayer extremely well. Staff, clergy and members of St. John's congregation lead worship and provide a variety of styles and content, thus extending pupils' experiences. Each class has the opportunity to lead worship for the whole school on a half-termly basis. This results in a greater appreciation of the structure of worship and supports the development of pupils' understanding and confidence. As yet, pupils do not plan worship independently. The school worships in the parish church on a number of occasions for major

Christian festivals. Consequently, pupils have a greater sense of belonging to the wider family of St. John's. Systems have been developed to evaluate worship but do not include all members of the school community.

RE is taught in a creative way using different teaching styles with an emphasis on using religious text as a starting point. The RE subject leader has a clear programme for monitoring teaching and learning and this results in on-going subject development. Individual RE books and class records show that pupils enjoy a range of activities including written tasks, role play and art. Pupils respond to challenging questions with confidence and are always ready to share their ideas and opinions. Collaborative activities and discussion lead to the development of theological ideas. As a result, pupils are engaged and excited to learn. The diocesan syllabus and *Understanding Christianity* are used well to inspire pupils and extend their knowledge and understanding. The curriculum also incorporates teaching about a range of world faiths and pupils respond with interest and enjoyment.

Headteacher	Karen Cartwright
Inspector's name and number	Jean Forward 625