

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. Oswald's Church of England Primary School			
Address	Howgill Close, Burneside, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 6QR		
Date of inspection	14 June 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary School
Diocese	Carlisle	URN	112314

Overall Judgement	Grade	Good
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 Judgements		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

St. Oswald's is a primary school with 87 (4-11) and 107 (2-11) pupils on roll. The school has a low level of religious and cultural diversity and few pupils speak English as an additional language (17%). The proportion of pupils who are considered disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The headteacher has been in post for three years. The school has increased in size from 77 (4-11) in 2016.

The school's Christian vision

Inclusive, creative, aspirational, experiencing life in all its fullness. John 10:10. St. Oswald's is a school where we;

- Develop the best possible relationships between all individuals in the school community.
- Provide a happy, safe and highly stimulating environment where children can learn effectively.
- Offer high quality learning opportunities that are challenging, relevant and meaningful to the children.

Key findings

- This is a creative and inclusive school community, which is perfectly summed up by its Christian vision. Creativity in art and music has been used to build community links at many levels.
- This is a happy and harmonious school, where due to inspirational leadership all children and adults can flourish. The confident and articulate pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour, compassion and care for the environment.
- Strong partnerships with the church, schools and diocese have provided key opportunities for children to explore faith. This is demonstrated through creative approaches to collective worship.
- Curriculum planning in religious education (RE) is effective. Pupils value RE, especially as a safe place for discussions. However, assessment procedures do not yet accurately challenge and support all pupils.
- The creative curriculum including a whole school residential experience offers many opportunities for spiritual development. However, cross curricular planning for spiritual development has not been reviewed in line with the vision.

Areas for development

- To evaluate the impact of the vision, so that there is a continuous process of deepening understanding and implementation.
- To implement a rigorous system of assessment in RE. This is so that staff are equipped to support the progress of all pupils effectively.
- To review cross curricular planning for spiritual development in line with the vision. This is so that pupils can experience progressively deeper opportunities to investigate and articulate spiritual and ethical issues.

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's Christian vision provides focus for everything they do. It has built on a well-established vision which was refined and refocussed following an inspirational visit to a church in Liverpool. A parent said, 'without a shadow of doubt the vision is being lived out'. The vision is underpinned by Christian values. The values are one tool used in implementing the vision. They provide themes for collective worship and the 'ethos days'. There is a vibrant link with the local church. Pupils enjoy working with the local vicar and church volunteers. Leaders are involved in monitoring the inclusive and distinctive Christian vision. One governor described the process of reviewing this as 'making explicit the implicit'. However, the impact of the school's Christian vision on all members of the school community has not yet been evaluated. The school has successfully addressed issues raised in the last SIAMS inspection.

The school's vision is clearly expressed through the curriculum, with many opportunities included to experience life in all its fullness. The school has a highly creative curriculum including forest schools, inspirational art and music. Pupils use the school site to experience 'woodland wonder' and staff regularly recognise moments of awe and wonder in learning. The school is proactive in identifying areas of teaching and learning where additional support is required. The whole school has benefitted from a recent residential experience. Leaders ensure that everyone can attend by sourcing sponsorship towards the costs. This is a practical outworking of the school's vision of inclusion and experiencing life in all its fullness. The residential contained many opportunities for pupils to quietly reflect and to consolidate a sense of belonging. However, opportunities for pupils to experience progressively deeper moments of spiritual development are being missed.

One of the ways the Christian vision of the school is explored is through worship. Pupils experience very significant opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship in a wide variety of settings. There is a pupil-instigated 'ethos team' who lead worship in school, for other schools and at church. A team from St. Oswald's led a diocese wide ethos conference. Pupils created and led a range of activities for other schools to explore the Christian value of hope. As a result, pupils, parents and staff value worship highly and it permeates all aspects of school life. A member of staff said, 'The ethos days have transformed our school from inward looking to outward looking.' Even the youngest pupils can talk with confidence about the value and importance of worship in school and their lives. Worship is a joyful and celebratory experience. This is exemplified by high calibre sung worship. There are opportunities throughout the school day for reflection and prayer, with well used reflective spaces in classrooms. Pupils pray confidently in a range of contexts. This includes prayers before lunch, in class, collective worship and impromptu prayer. The school's Christian vision is used effectively as the overarching structure for planning collective worship. Pupils explore life in all its fullness during worship via a variety of experiences, from quiet reflection to kite-making on Ascension Day.

The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. Leaders have created a very caring and supportive atmosphere, giving considerable thought about how to implement this. One example is the introduction of mixed age seating at lunchtime. The school community demonstrate forgiveness and reconciliation at all levels. There are effective processes in place for the protection of all members of the school community. Curriculum opportunities are carefully planned to ensure pupils respect and celebrate difference and diversity. For example, the visit to Liverpool gave a meaningful contrast to pupils who live in a rural village location. The songs sung by the whole school on the day of inspection included songs from India and Israel.

Leaders make decisions which model how to live well together. One example is how the very active school council has raised funds to provide playground activities. They take responsibility for looking after these resources and devised 'the box of doom' for dealing with disagreements over games. The school council are proud of the work they have done 'to stop people being mean to each other'. Leaders have prioritised mental health training for staff. Staff spoke warmly of the opportunities they receive to prioritise their own well-being and flourishing.

Leaders take their responsibility to develop aspiration seriously. Governors describe their role as 'seeing the best in every child and encouraging them to see that bit further'. Pupils are empowered to effect change within and beyond school and feel well supported in this. Pupils led worship on creation and climate change. As a result,

they campaigned to remove plastic straws from school milk. Pupils were able to link this clearly to the importance of protecting God's creation. The school has responded to this by introducing a unit in RE on the environment. Pupils are involved in a campaign for a zebra crossing in the village and enjoy working with the local police as 'mini police'. There are other examples of the way in which pupils have taken the initiative in raising funds and awareness. Although pupils demonstrate active awareness of needs locally and globally, they are not always able to verbalise the link to justice.

RE effectively supports the vision of a creative and inclusive school. Learning on stewardship and creation utilised the school grounds and the visual arts effectively. Life in all its fullness is explored in RE through the study of biblical leaders. Curriculum planning is effective and regularly reviewed. Opportunities to learn about promoting respect for people of other cultures, faiths and beliefs are well planned. However, pupils at present have fewer opportunities to understand Christianity as a worldwide faith. RE leaders work closely with staff, supporting planning and suggesting resources. The vicar plays an important role in supporting and developing RE in school, including taking part in Understanding Christianity training. This has resulted in high quality teaching and learning. Teachers also share their expertise outside of school.

This is a creative, inclusive and inspiring school of which all should be proud.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Pupils are flourishing in and through RE at St. Oswald's. The quality of teaching and learning is good and is monitored both formally and informally by school leaders. Most pupils are making good progress, including the most able pupils. Progress for all pupils is at least in line with core subjects within the school and locally. However, assessment procedures do not yet consistently underpin sound progress thus enabling all pupils to know how to make rapid progress. The use of scrapbooks for Key Stage 1 pupils to record their learning works well. Pupils enjoy RE, they have very positive learning attitudes and discuss with enthusiasm recent learning on the theme of creation. RE meets statutory requirements and is given a high priority by the school.

Headteacher	Gill White
Inspector's name and number	Ruth Houston 947