

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Bridget's Church of England Primary School				
Address	Main Street, Parton, Whitehaven, CA28 6NY			
Date of inspection	02 May 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
Diocese	Carlisle	URN	112296	

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 Judgement		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

St Bridget's Church of England Primary School has 102 pupils on roll. The school has little 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 above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also above national averages. The headteacher has been in post since January 2019.

The school's Christian vision

At St Bridget's school we want our children to be happy, caring, hard-working, achieving, responsible and resilient and become the best that they were created to be. The motto 'Letting Our Lights Shine' links to the vision and Matthew 5:16. 'In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'

Key findings

- The Christian vision of the school is understood and owned by all. The local church and school work seamlessly together, as two parts of a whole.
- The inclusive Christian vision informs all aspects of school life. It is highly visible in their personalised approach to responding to individual needs. This means that all feel they can become the best they were created to be.
- The school's vision for pupils to let their light 'shine before others' means the school are keen to equip pupils to serve the wider community, nationally and globally. This vision informs the design of the curriculum. The curriculum allows many opportunities for spiritual development. However, planned opportunities for spiritual development now need to be routinely incorporated across the curriculum.
- Collective worship is highly valued by all. The support of local clergy has a big impact on the engaging nature and relevance of collective worship. Pupils enjoy planning and leading many aspects of collective worship in a range of contexts.
- Religious education (RE) is important to pupils and they have very positive attitudes towards the subject. Learning in RE is well planned and 'Big Questions' are used effectively. However, learning in RE is not yet effectively underpinned by assessment, as systems for assessment are in a state of change.

Areas for development

- Continue to develop, grow and monitor the impact of the Christian vision across the school community. This is so that all can identify the impact of it in their lives and so that self-evaluation informs strategic planning.
- Ensure that rigorous systems of assessment in RE are fully in place. This is so that effective assessment supports pupils in improving their work and ensures that tracking of pupils' progress and attainment is secure.
- Enable planned opportunities for spiritual development to be incorporated routinely across the curriculum. This is so that pupils have regular opportunities to explore and articulate their spiritual understanding.

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 new headteacher has shown strong leadership in developing and refining the school's vision. This has been extremely well supported by members of the community. The vision permeates school life and all school community members express it confidently. The curriculum is a clear expression of the vision, with many opportunities for pupils to 'let their light shine'. For example, pupils have been involved in a visit to the local foodbank. This linked with the school value of justice. Pupils are passionate about injustice and give many examples of how they are enabled to create change. The vision is underpinned by a series of Christian values, selected by pupils. The values are a key way the vision is put into practice, for example, by providing themes for worship and RE. The impact of the school's vision now needs careful evaluation. This is so that all recognise its impact on their lives and that self-evaluation informs planning for the future. The school has successfully addressed issues raised in the last SIAMS inspection.

The vision for pupils to grow as responsible citizens, enabling the light of God's love to shine to others, is evident in the mutually beneficial partnership with the local community. One example was the way in which the school contributed to rejuvenation of the village parade and ensured that less mobile residents were able to participate. Another example is the beautiful mural in school, developed with the local community.

A real strength of the school is its bespoke curriculum which is shaped by the vision. This includes the 'beach schools' programme and the John Muir environmental award scheme, which Year 6 pupils are working towards. These develop the qualities of responsibility, hard work, care for others and the environment. Pupils say, 'we are really lucky to live by the beach, we should look after it'. The vision, values and themes for worship draw the curriculum together. The school has a flexible curriculum and reacts quickly to local and national issues. This allows opportunities for spiritual development including work on asylum aid and the use of Big Questions in worship and RE. However, opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum now need to be formalised in planning and evaluated in order to inform future developments.

The school responds to pupils' individual needs. This is exemplified by a display that said, 'We may all be different, but in this school we all swim in the same sea.' There are well-developed processes for identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils and those with additional learning and personal needs. These contribute to pupils making sound progress. The school is proactive in identifying areas of teaching and learning where outside support is beneficial. Their approach to supporting pupils with attendance issues is personalised and effective, enabling pupils 'to be the best they were created to be'. Staff have received mental health training and parents recognise that the school wants their children to be 'happy in their own skin'. One way the staff are enabled to flourish is by being given time to prioritise their own children. Access to diocesan and national church school training is in place and this is valued by staff and governors. A member of staff said, 'We are given lots of positive praise and made to feel valued and respected.' Staff as well as pupils flourish at St Bridget's. This is evidenced by long serving members of staff and the number of school families who come from outside of the catchment area.

The behaviour of pupils is a significant strength of the school. Evidence of the vision is seen in exceptionally happy and caring relationships. Justice is one of the school's values. Pupils are keen to explain that they are treated fairly and therefore treat each other fairly. The school has consciously developed a wide range of local, national and global charity and church links. This successfully helps pupils to understand, respect and celebrate difference and diversity. There are very few examples of homophobic or transphobic bullying. Nevertheless, the school is not complacent and has arranged appropriate staff training.

The partnership with the local church is profound and well-established. As a result, pupils feel the church is 'theirs'. The vicar leads regular worship, runs a weekly "Making Waves" club and a highly valued staff Bible study group. Powerful multi-generational links are built through the bell ringing club and the 'Time for Everyone' lunch club. Pupils thrive on opportunities such as school services and the new 'School Church' which enable them to demonstrate leadership and contribute to their community.

Collective worship is integral to school life and permeates the school day. Clergy, visitors and pupils contribute

enthusiastically. Pupils' leadership of all aspects of worship is embedded. There are regular and age appropriate opportunities for follow-up and evaluation of worship by pupils. Governors enjoy regular monitoring of aspects of school life and as a result are well informed about collective worship. Creating prayer and reflection spaces has helped pupils understand prayer. Many pupils pray confidently in worship and in prayer spaces around the school. Some have created their own reflective spaces at home. Pupils enjoy singing, and at their request, new hymn books are now being used. Follow-up questions devised by pupils and distributed at worship were linked to the vision and contribute to the evaluation of worship.

Carefully mapped cross curricular RE and stand-alone opportunities for RE mean that pupils can thoughtfully engage with core theological concepts. RE is a core subject and pupils both value and enjoy it. RE is based around the local authority syllabus with good use of 'Big Questions'. This results in a safe place for pupils to explore their own and other's views. Pupils benefit from established links with a diocese in the USA and an Anglican church in El Salvador. Therefore, they understand Christianity as a living world faith. Staff engage in professional development and as a result of this are changing the processes used for RE assessment. Rigorous systems of assessment for RE need to be fully in place. This is so that the tracking of pupil progress and attainment is secure and informs planning.

St Bridget's school is truly a 'light shining' at the heart of its community.

Headteacher	Ruth Colley
Inspector's name and number	Ruth Houston 947