

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Woodchurch Church of England Primary School, Wirral	
Address	Church Lane, Woodchurch, CH49 7LS
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
<p>"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst." John 6:35. Rooted in the teachings of Jesus, the power of the Holy Spirit and God's love, we continue our Christian history and tradition serving our community. Seeds of faith are planted, enabling growth as a family and individuals, living life in its fullness; flourishing in the world; walking in the footsteps of Jesus. "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed... nothing will be impossible for you." Matthew 17:20</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deeply held Christian vision reflects the school's history and context and drives leaders' actions. Believing that nothing is impossible, everyone feels loved and aspirations are high. • Driven by the vision of service, staff care deeply about the families they serve. Relationships are paramount and an emphasis on belonging means that difference and uniqueness are celebrated. Strong pastoral support along with a focus on mental health enables flourishing, resulting in a notably strong sense of community. • Pupils link their work with charities at a local level to the bread of life. They are less able to discuss social justice so they are not yet acting as advocates for change. • Collective worship is well planned and evaluated. Strong links with the church support pupils to follow 'in the footsteps of Jesus'. Pupils lead worship but do not yet plan. Opportunities for further spiritual reflection are limited. • Religious education (RE) is well led and resourced. Pupils have a secure understanding of Christianity and the teachings of Jesus. However, they have a less developed understanding of other major world religions.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities for pupil vision ambassadors to work alongside leaders. This is so that pupils can impact areas for development and further embed the vision. • Broaden the experiences that pupils have to engage in social action at a national and global level. This is to develop their understanding of social justice and how they can be advocates for change. • Deepen pupils' understanding of a wider range of world religions. This is so that pupils have a better understanding of the impact world religions have on society and culture.



Inspection findings

Woodchurch is a school steeped in history. It dates back to 1665 when William Gleave bequeathed money for a school which would provide 'care, guidance and spiritual support to the community it serves'. Current leaders have developed a Christian vision which honours this original aim. This vision is rooted in theology and is underpinned by the concept of service and high aspirations for all. All leaders, staff, pupils and parents alike are able to articulate the school's vision and its theological roots with genuine passion and practical examples. For example, pupils talk about the bread shelves in church as a way that people can help others. Pupils compare this to a modern day foodbank and can explain how this links to the concept of the bread of life.

The vision is a critical factor when leaders consider school policies, development plans and actions. Leaders, including governors, are committed through training, reflection and self-evaluation to making the school the best it can be. For example, the school recently reviewed their approach to behaviour. The behaviour policy is now rooted in restorative justice with pupils praised in public and reprimanded in private. They are encouraged to reflect and to live out Jesus' call to love one another. Pupils understand the high expectations that staff have of them and respond positively.

Driven by the vision that nothing is impossible, leaders are committed to supporting pupils to be the best they can be. Pupils link the parable of the mustard seed to the idea that they 'can be anything they want to be'. Consequently, hope and aspirations are high.

The school places a strong emphasis on mental health and wellbeing which allows pupils to live 'life in all its fullness'. Initiatives such as My Happy Mind have been implemented to ensure a consistent approach to promoting positive mental health. Pupils explain how this has helped them to become more resilient. Pupils with additional needs are well supported. Leaders have highlighted attendance as an area of concern but have clear strategies to improve this. As a result, the needs of the whole child are being met and this ensures that all learners, including the most vulnerable, are flourishing.

Staff training at all levels is given a high priority, including training for their roles in a Church school. Staff are able to recall many ways in which they have been supported at difficult times in their personal lives. Consequently, staff feel valued and supported and staff mobility is very low.

Subject leaders have made a concerted effort to culturally diversify the curriculum in response to their school's predominantly White British context. For example, pupils are taught about Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade and this is linked to the abolitionist Harriet Tubman. Pupils' understanding of diversity is furthered with initiatives such as Diversity Week. By broadening the curriculum's cultural diversity, pupils understand that the 'family and individuals' they are growing with extends beyond their predominantly White British context.

The Oracy 21 Project is being skilfully used to encourage pupils to discuss and debate ethical issues. Pupils enjoy this aspect of learning. One Year 4 pupil explained how they enjoy RE because 'Just because someone disagrees with you, doesn't mean you are wrong.' Pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and good teaching is deepening their understanding of the teachings of Jesus. Pupils are less confident when discussing other world religions. RE is well led. Leaders engage regularly with training and work alongside other schools and the Diocese of Chester to develop RE.

Worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring and provides opportunity for reflection. For




example, during a creative worship about Remembrance, pupils decorated stones to represent local people who died in the war. This provoked thoughtful responses from pupils about war and peace. Pupils visit church once a month where each class leads a service and parents attend. Pupils, through the vision ambassadors, are involved in leading worship but do not yet have a role in planning. Leaders monitor and evaluate worship effectively. This has led to change, with worship becoming more interactive and enjoyable for pupils. The impact of this is that pupils are more engaged with worship. Adults describe how worship provides them with a safe space for reflection. Pupils engage in prayer alongside adults and can explain how this helps them in difficult times. There are spaces in each classroom for personal reflection which are used by pupils. Opportunities for wider spiritual reflection are not yet fully embedded. This inhibits how deeply pupils understand and engage with the world.

Reflecting the vision's commitment to service, the school is at the heart of the local community. Leaders have seamlessly incorporated this into school life. As a result, staff feel inspired to go above and beyond to support vulnerable families, such as by supplying emergency food parcels. The school works in close partnership with the local nursery and high school. This means that the whole family is supported and enabled to grow, as defined in the vision. Parents speak highly of the way the school cares for families, including during the pandemic. The impact of this is that parents have faith in the school and relationships are strong.

Pupils support their own community, such as collecting food for the Food Bank or raising money for the local hospital. They link this to the Christian vision of 'whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst'. However, pupils are less able to look beyond their own lives or to suggest ways of making the world a fairer place. Therefore, their understanding of how they can be advocates for social change is underdeveloped.

The strong partnership with Holy Cross Church means that school and church work together with a shared goal of supporting the families they serve. Initiatives such as Messy Church are well attended. Parents note how well the school and church work together to support families. One parent describes the school and the church as being 'as one'. As a result, the school is more firmly 'rooted in the teaching of Jesus'.

Woodchurch is an outward looking school and one which is truly living out its vision of serving the community and inspiring hope. It is a place where relationships are paramount. The school's distinctively Christian vision is tangible and is the driving force behind its work as a Church school. There is a strong sense of belonging and all members of the community know that they have value. As a result, pupils and adults alike are enabled to grow and to flourish, knowing that nothing is impossible.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good
	<p>The RE curriculum uses high-quality resources, including the diocesan syllabus and Understanding Christianity. The RE curriculum is rich and varied and as a result pupils make good progress. Pupils are challenged through the use of big questions and this is leading to deeper thinking. RE is well led and has a high priority in school. A robust system of monitoring means that leaders are continually striving to improve the quality of teaching in RE.</p>		
Information			
School	Woodchurch Church of England Primary School, Wirral	Inspection date	9 November 2022
URN	105067	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided
Diocese/District	Chester	Pupils on roll	204
Headteacher	Brian McGregor		
Chair of Governors	Debbie Jeffrey		
Inspector	Joanne Hyslop	No.	972