

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Wensley Fold Church of England Primary Academy

Address	Manor Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 6LX		
Date of inspection	22 November 2018	Status of school	Primary academy inspected as Voluntary Controlled
Diocese	Blackburn	URN	139514

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

Wensley Fold is a primary school with 418 pupils on roll. The school has a very high level of religious and cultural diversity and most pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is in line with national averages. The headteacher has been in post since January 2017. The deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2017. Wensley Fold is a School Direct teaching school.

The school's Christian vision

'Make each day count'

'Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom' (Psalm 90: 12)

All are inspired to fulfil their aspirations through the shared Christian values of respect, friendship, trust, courage and perseverance.

Key findings

- The exceptionally strong leadership of the headteacher has created a vibrant Christian learning community in which every member flourishes. Dedicated staff and highly skilled governors share the Christian and inclusive vision which inspires and directs all aspects of school improvement.
- Deeply embedded Christian values have an extremely strong impact on pupils' exemplary behaviour and their remarkably positive attitudes to life and learning.
- Pupils' outstanding spiritual and personal development results from the experiences provided through the highly creative curriculum, religious education (RE) and collective worship.
- Inclusive, nurturing relationships based on Christian love and hope, inspire all members of the community. They provide the foundations upon which everyone achieves their potential and make the most of their God-given talents.

Areas for development

- Extend pupils' experience of alternative styles of Christian worship, so that they can more fully understand the different ways in which Christians across the world worship.
- Deepen pupils' understanding of the teaching of Jesus through parables, so that they can make more explicit links between this and their knowledge and use of Christian values.

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

Wensley Fold's vision is based on deeply embedded Christian values and practice. It is highly inclusive, ensuring that all are valued and supported so that they make the most of their God-given talents. 'Making each day count' nurtures the skills and abilities of every member of the school community. As a result, pupils develop a deep love of learning and respect for God's world and all people. Leaders' commitment to continuous improvement is demonstrated by the innovative and courageous decisions taken to develop the curriculum and become a School Direct teaching school. The school is a centre of excellence, providing initial teacher training and effectively supporting other schools in their development. Staff morale is extremely high. They feel valued and respected because their wellbeing is considered at all levels of decision making. All staff benefit from excellent, well targeted professional development opportunities. This supports middle leadership and the development of future school leaders exceptionally well. Leaders have secured high quality leadership of RE and collective worship. As a result, both make substantial contributions to the school's Christian distinctiveness and performance. Senior leaders and governors have established a thorough, highly effective self-evaluation process. Governors know the school very well. Through regular monitoring visits, they have a very clear idea of school performance, achievement and the way in which the vision is being lived out. Thorough monitoring and evaluation systems ensure that pupil progress is tracked and individual needs identified. All aspects of school improvement are successfully driven by the shared Christian vision.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that the school offers. They are excited and inspired by the highly creative curriculum which is continually enhanced by outdoor learning and specialist drama, music and art lessons. High quality teaching is targeted exceedingly well to meet the learning needs of all pupils. Vulnerable pupils, and those with special needs and/or disabilities are extremely well-supported. This is because staff are unwavering in their belief that every pupil is loved by God and worthy of their very best efforts. Governors ensure that financial and human resources are used effectively so that all pupils can flourish and achieve. For example, the provision of innovative speech and language support for those with English as an additional language ensures that early years pupils make outstanding progress in this area of their development. Pupils make extremely good progress from their starting points. Standards of attainment are consistently above national averages. Disadvantaged pupils achieve remarkably high standards because leaders are successful in removing or reducing barriers to learning. For example, the impact of the family support worker can be seen in improved attendance and parental engagement. Parents confirm that their children are extremely happy, excited by their learning and joyful in their relationships. They are confident that this is because every child is valued as unique, loved and supported. This exemplifies the school's inclusive Christian vision remarkably well. A parent explained that the school 'empowers their children for the future'. They are ready to 'take on the world'.

Reflection is integral to learning across the curriculum, through which Christian values are threaded seamlessly, as a clear expression of its vision. Pupils are confident, articulate and reflective learners who are eager to share their ideas openly and honestly, within a non-judgemental atmosphere. They discuss issues related to injustice and discrimination, challenging stereotypes and identifying ways in which they can 'make a difference'. For example, one extra-curricular club seeks to 'change the world bit by bit'. They visit homes for the elderly, litter pick and are establishing their own food bank. The superb, vibrant displays of work across the school exemplify the exceptionally high quality and depth of pupils' responses to their varied experiences. Inspirational drama, music and art teaching is instrumental in developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem. For example, pupils and staff overcome their fears to present performance poems and the school debating team present their ideas on issues such as gender. As a result, their spiritual and personal development is excellent. RE and collective worship make significant contributions to this. Through their work in RE pupils consider the meaning of belief and the way in which this is reflected in diverse cultures and ways of life. They recognise the many similarities between Christianity and Islam, referring to shared values, characters from holy scriptures and the importance of prayer. Pupils' understanding of global and local issues is effectively reinforced through links with a school in France and the charitable causes they support, such as the international children's charity Unicef and Nightsafe, a local charity for homeless young people. Year 6 pupils explained that they help the homeless and less fortunate because they want everyone to be as safe as they are. The school's support for an asylum-seeking family exemplifies their advocacy.

Collective worship is central to the daily life of the school. Pupils' attitudes are extremely positive because all are included and involved. Pupils participate actively, answering questions and helping to act out stories, so levels of engagement are very high. The ethos group help to plan and deliver worship regularly. This addresses, and exemplifies the successful development of, an issue from the previous denominational inspection. Thorough planning supports the school's vision, exploring Christian values and themes imaginatively. Pupils' understanding of

God is well developed. The vast majority of pupils are Muslims. They talk about Jesus as the Son of God and are familiar with events in his life celebrated at major festivals. They also refer to the Christian belief in the Trinity. A Year 5 member of the ethos group described how they use three candles to remind them of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, they do not make explicit links between Jesus' teaching through parables about Christian values and the use of these in their own lives. Links with the local church continue to be developed and strengthened. The vicar supports planning and is a regular visitor, helping to lead worship in school and church. The church is used for special services at festival times, such as harvest and Easter. Parents attend these services in ever-increasing numbers. This exemplifies the school's Christian inclusiveness and excellent relationships with parents and the local community. Pupils enjoy and benefit from visits to the church and Blackburn Cathedral. However, their experience of different styles of Christian worship, led by visitors from other Christian faith groups, is limited. As a result, their appreciation of diversity within Christian worship is limited. Prayer and reflection are key features of daily worship. Pupils use the Lord's Prayer daily. They write their own prayers, some of which are displayed around school and used during worship. The outdoor reflection spaces recently created within the natural woodland area are used eagerly by pupils. The peace they experience is reflected in prayers and remarkable art work. Senior leaders and governors monitor and evaluate collective worship thoroughly. Frequent feedback from pupils, staff and governors is used to inform future planning. This ensures that daily worship continues to have a very positive impact on everyone's spiritual growth.

All members of Wensley Fold's vibrant, distinctly Christian learning community are united in the belief that the school's Christian vision and values are lived out daily. The vision makes a powerful, exemplary and truly transformational difference to the lives of pupils and adults.

Headteacher	Donna Simpson
Inspector's name and number	Anne B. Woodcock 445