

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Salesbury Church of England Primary School

Lovely Hall Lane, Salesbury, Blackburn, BB1 9EQ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Blackburn
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Lancashire
Date/s of inspection	9 February 2017
Date of last inspection	22 May 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	119807
Headteacher	Clare Berryman
Inspector's name and number	Fiona Ashton 860

School context

Salesbury Church of England Primary School is an average sized primary school. The school has a part-time nursery. It has a predominantly White British intake but with approximately 5% of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. The school has fewer than the national average 'school action' pupils but the number of statemented pupils is significantly higher. There is low pupil mobility and a stable staff. The new headteacher took up post in September 2014. An existing member of staff who is also the RE Co-ordinator, was appointed as an assistant headteacher in September 2015.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Salesbury Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The ambitious and inspirational leadership of the headteacher ensures that this Church school is unapologetic about its Christian values. As a result this Christian school provides exceptional opportunities, experiences and outcomes for all pupils.
- Christian values are deeply considered and impact upon the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the whole community. They are evident in excellent behaviour and relationships and celebrated visually throughout the school environment.
- Collective worship has developed significantly since the last inspection and is now an even more vibrant and memorable experience. This inspires pupils in developing their personal spirituality as well as understanding Jesus and the Church.
- Religious education (RE) is rigorously planned by a dedicated and talented coordinator who ensures that learning is memorable, challenging and engaging for learners so that they make excellent progress.

Areas to improve

- To undertake a review of the mission statement that engages all stakeholders and leads to a statement that is owned, embedded and understood by all. This will clarify and encapsulate the aspirations of this community where each pupil is seen as a child of God.
- Develop the RE curriculum so that it further enhances pupils understanding of Christianity as a global faith and their ability to see it in relation to other faiths.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

Salesbury Church of England Primary School holds firm to its mission statement that 'With Jesus at the centre of all that we do, every child of God matters'. Thus, through a relentless determination to do their very best for every pupil, the school ensures that all make very good progress in all areas. In particular, those pupils with additional needs excel socially, emotionally and academically from their individual starting points. Attendance is excellent. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are excited by, and have a love of, learning. Exceptional behaviour and relationships are palpable strengths of the school and prepare pupils for life in the wider community. In this the school is guided by Proverbs 22v6 'Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not turn from it'. This is further demonstrated by the pupils' theological and practical understanding of the Christian values of respect, honesty, forgiveness, trust and fairness. Pupils, in school and at home, are guided by the thought, 'What would Jesus do?' All adults act as positive role models for the pupils. Friendship benches, the honesty book swop, the forgiveness bin and many other initiatives endorse the Christian values that are central to the school. Pupils understand the impact and implications of these values. A year 6 pupil commented that he felt lucky to be part of a community where 'everyone is unique' and where 'we accept everyone'. Parents are very supportive of the school and value the manner in which, as a Church school, it nurtures their children's well-being.

The strong community links that each class has with charities, groups and organisations locally, help pupils to see Christianity in action. These partnerships also build the reputation of the school as a caring community. They also help to develop pupils' understanding of diversity both within the Church and society. Through interaction with initiatives such as the local Methodist lunch club and the Bethany Project which supports orphanages in Africa, pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of Christianity as a diverse and global faith. Impressive curriculum planning and delivery of the Prevent agenda has encouraged pupils to be aware and respectful of other faiths and cultures. This includes visits to places of non-Christian worship and visits from members of other religions including a Buddhist. RE, which was 'good' at the time of the last inspection, is now outstanding. In addition to excellent classroom teaching and learning that is in line with the expectations of the diocesan syllabus, pupils participate in themed 'reflection days'. These days augment pupils' RE and make it truly memorable as well as contributing to the school's overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The collective worship experienced by this school community is vibrant, joyful and memorable. Inspirational and overtly Christian, worship is thoroughly and thoughtfully planned to reflect the Church year and to promote pupils understanding of the Christian values. The headteacher leads in this area but collaborates effectively with pupils and the local vicar, who also leads worship on a weekly basis either in school or in the church. Pupils show a mature appreciation of the significance for believers of Easter and Christmas as well as the liturgical seasons of Lent and Advent that precede them. Exploring the nativity in different countries is but one of the many ways in which the school develops pupils' understanding of Christianity in a global context. The 'Exploring Easter' experience is a good example of the exceptional collaboration between the school and the local vicar. Harvest Festival and the Rose Queen are others. This enriches the pupils' experience of worship and cements the school's place at the heart of the local church community.

Within school worship, a Bible, a candle, a cross and a form of greeting that is deeply rooted within the Anglican doctrine of the Trinity are used regularly. This ensures that pupils understand that worship is, as one them explained, 'a special time with Jesus'. Pupils were observed engrossed in a worship based on the Parable of the Lost Sheep. It was differentiated so that it was accessible to all and planned so that pupils were still reflecting upon its message much later in the day. Parents and pupils explained that this is not unusual and that children use the language of Christian values naturally at home. Pupils value highly the reflection tables that are in each classroom and were keen to explain the different ways in which these areas are used for prayer and individual quiet times. Opportunities for pupils to be independently prayerful and reflective are creatively encouraged. For example, a pupil explained, 'the little ones phone God for a chat!' There are inviting, very well used and liturgically relevant prayer stations throughout the school environment. These include benches where pupils can ponder on a scripture verse, a prayer garden with peace doves made by the sewing group from years 3 and 4, and trays where you can write to God in the sand. Pupils are particularly proud of the school logo of crossed keys, created during an activity week, and made of stones decorated by pupils to represent the school's chosen Christian values.

In response to the previous SIAS inspection, the role of the pupils' worship group has developed significantly. They share in the planning and evaluating of worship as well as preparing a half termly worship themselves. They enjoy their collaboration with their counterparts at a neighbouring Church primary school and are proud of their role in caring for the reflection tables and prayer spaces. Governors are very well informed about the quality of collective worship both

through the reports that they receive and their own observations. One governor explained that 'When I worship with the children, I am uplifted for the day'.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The RE Coordinator is a member of the senior leadership team, and is an immensely capable, dedicated, enthusiastic and truly reflective practitioner. She inspires and encourages her colleagues and as a result RE teaching is always good and frequently outstanding. Pupils have a love of their learning in RE and achieve excellent outcomes that are in line with other core subjects. Achievement is accelerated because the curriculum is carefully matched to the pupils' needs and delivered in an interesting and challenging manner. However, most pupils' understanding of Christianity as a world-wide faith lacks depth. Philosophy for Children (P4C) is but one of a range of strategies that are used to ensure pupils extend their thinking in RE. There is a 'dig deeper' approach that means that Year 2 pupils confidently explained that 'You can't have the Church without the people' and 'You can have your church anywhere'. Similarly, older pupils can clearly and accurately explain the complex theological concepts of sin and salvation. They use religious vocabulary with confidence and are able to make links between Jesus' teaching and example and their own lives.

Each year group studies a different world faith. One pupil was thus able to explain the importance of the Torah for a Jew while another explained how a Hindu blessing is received. The pupils learn about the core beliefs, practices and cultural origins of each religion and augment classroom learning with visits to places of worship and visits from members of different faiths. Learning in RE is made even more exciting for pupils because of the thoroughly well planned Reflection Days that are now embedded in the life of the school. These themed days allow further exploration of the Christian values that are considered in both RE and collective worship. For example, a recent day sought to rebalance pupils' focus on what they were receiving for Christmas with a focus on the nativity story and the plight of the homeless in modern Britain. The school is confident in its evaluation of standards in RE because rigorous, regular, monitoring occurs. This includes both internal moderation of pupils work and external standardisation of work with the local cluster of Church primary schools. This initiative has confidently and successfully addressed an issue raised at the previous inspection. There is a link governor with responsibility for RE and the coordinator provides regular evaluations of standards, progress and initiatives in RE to the governing body.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding.

The school's distinctively Christian mission statement 'With Jesus at the centre of all that we do, every child of God matters', although not frequently alluded to, actively informs all aspects of leadership and management. The experienced and pro-active governing body provides highly visible support and challenge to the school. It is rightly proud of this welcoming, happy and successful church school but equally determined that this is sustained and that the school continues to develop. Governors hold the school to account through formal meetings, informal visits and excellent links with curriculum leaders. Evaluation of the school's distinctively Christian character is as integral to this process as it is to development planning. The relatively recently appointed headteacher is inspirational and reflective. Governors, staff and parents commented on the difference that she has made to this already good school. A member of staff described her as 'a special and amazing headteacher, passionate about her job and the outcomes for all members of this church school community'. She is assisted in this by her talented leadership team, ensuring that the school's Christian distinctiveness is explicit, widely understood and provides a firm foundation for the school. Staff receive exceptional support for both their well-being and professional development from both the headteacher and the governors. Difficult but necessary decisions are taken with the needs of all in mind and after much prayer and reflection. Excellent continuing professional and career development emanates from the school's forward looking, non-complacent approach. This results in highly skilled and committed practitioners and prepares them for current and future leadership roles in church schools.

Pupils are independent, confident and trusted. They are given tremendous scope to develop their leadership skills and voice through the school council, the worship group, the Eco council and the new digital leaders. Key Stage 2 pupils are proud of their responsibility to act as buddies for younger pupils and parents commend the way that this helps new entrants settle quickly. Excellent links exist between the school and the local church. They pray for, know and care about each other. This is a forward-looking school. It is confident in its provision for children but uses strong links with the diocese and local church schools to share good practice that further benefits the children. Parents regard highly the manner in which the school engages with them and the encouragement they are given to voice their opinions. This school continues to be outstanding. Pupils are successful and caring. Parents attribute this to the headteacher's Christian leadership and, as one parent stated, staff who are 'compassionate, understanding and want the best for and from the children'.