

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Christ Church Moreton CofE Primary School

Upton Road, Moreton, Wirral CH46 0PB

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Outstanding**

**Diocese**

**Chester**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Wirral

Date of inspection

17 November 2016

Date of last inspection

November 2011

Type of school and unique reference number

Voluntary Aided 105076

Headteacher

Amanda Donelan

Inspector's name and number

Frank Driessen (675)

#### School context

Christ Church CE Primary School is a larger than average school serving the town of Moreton, a community which comprises a mix of private and social housing. The present head teacher has been in post since September 2015. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly lower than the national average. A below average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as a second language. The head teacher supports the diocese in delivering training and support to other church schools.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Moreton Christ Church as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong and passionate Christian leadership of the head teacher has ensured that distinctively Christian values are deeply embedded in the life and actions of the school. A talented and committed team of staff, governors and the incumbent supports her very effectively.
- Because of its welcoming and affirming ethos as a Christian family, the school has a clear awareness of its role at the heart of the parish. This is, indeed, a school that sees itself as in service to its community and families and fully demonstrates faith in action.
- There is outstanding care and support for all children and families who are placed in the centre of this most welcoming and inclusive Christian community. All are nurtured as being precious and unique in the eyes of God.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop overseas links with other schools and Christian communities to broaden pupil's understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith.
- Ensure that pupils' learning in religious education involves deeper levels of enquiry and reflection so that more outstanding learning outcomes and even greater levels of spiritual maturity are achieved.

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

The success of Christ Church Moreton CE School in developing and maintaining its distinctive Christian character is due in no small part to the promotion by all stakeholders of a verse from Colossians 3:14, 'Whatever you do in word or deed, do in the name of Jesus'. This gives a very secure bedrock upon which are built the deep and caring relationships between all members of the school and extended community. Pupils and their families are valued as unique and precious in the eyes of God. Pastoral care is outstanding. There is an emphasis on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable children who are nurtured and supported to ensure that they succeed. Pupils delight in coming to school and attendance has consequently risen. Achievements are celebrated weekly with the emphasis upon rewarding those who demonstrate Christ Church Christian values in their everyday actions and attitudes.

The continuous promotion of Christian values and the consistent drive to raise achievement has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning and creates a caring, supportive and happy school which pupils enjoy attending. They immerse themselves in all their learning, notably in worship and RE. One pupil commented, 'Our school helps us learn more about Jesus and God'. Aspirations for all pupils are high and pupils make good to outstanding progress. Standards continue to improve. The impact of well-taught and effective RE makes a valuable contribution to the Christian ethos. Children demonstrate a real enthusiasm for the wide range of creative experiences that are open to them. Staff challenge pupils to tackle the big 'What if...?' questions and pupils answer them with empathy and confidence.

Vibrant Christian displays, inspirational texts and well-used prayer areas add greatly to the richness of the ethos. They make a major contribution to the spiritual development of all members of the school community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the outstanding impact its values have upon their children and wider family life. One parent said, 'Our school lives out the meaning of its Christian values very deeply'. A Muslim parent added, 'The school is highly inclusive. We have been made to feel a real part of the school family'.

Pupils have a developing understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith through their charitable support for Samaritan's Purse. This understanding, however, lacks breadth and depth. The school council, ethos group and head boy and girl are very representative of the powerful 'pupil voice' which has brought much beneficial change to the school. The calm and purposeful atmosphere also contributes successfully to the spiritual environment of this thoughtful and caring school. It lives and breathes its distinctive Christian character and sees itself in service to the community and its families.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective worship is a meaningful and inspirational experience. It is valued by all children regardless of background. Worship is Christian in character and offers children the opportunities to reflect, pray and experience the awe and wonder of the world around them. Acts of worship are imaginative and involve enthusiastic levels of participation by all attending. Pupils demonstrate a reverence for the spiritual dimension of worship which is further enhanced by the joyful and exuberant singing. Prayer is highly valued and is a significant strength of the school. Its impact travels beyond the school boundaries. Parents cite examples of their children writing prayers at home. Pupils understand and articulate the purpose and value of prayer within their daily lives and to the wider world around them. Highly innovative links to many aspects of school life are made. These offer a rich mix of themes that are delivered in a way that is responsive to the needs of pupils. They are challenged to see the relevance of Bible stories and scripture in their lives today. 'Bible stories teach us lessons from life and for life,' commented one child. This reflects the aspirational nature of the worship and considerably promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Collective worship is set firmly within an Anglican framework with pupils developing a very good understanding of Anglican worship. This is because of the occasions when they attend the church for services that include Easter, Harvest and Christmas as well as the excellent involvement of the incumbent. Many parents and the extended family attend services with much enthusiasm. There is a strong focus on enabling learners to develop a firm understanding of Jesus Christ and that of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils have frequent opportunities to lead acts of worship and are very confident when doing so.

Festivals from other faiths are celebrated on a regular basis. These enrich the pupils' worship experience and further promote excellent cultural cohesion. Evaluation of the different aspects of collective worship is very thorough and often leads to significant improvements. Pupils have a clear understanding of the role and purpose of collective worship. One child commented 'Worship gives us an understanding of how we can follow in Jesus' footsteps. It shows us how God wants us to be'.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding**

Scrutiny of work and observation of lessons show that standards of teaching and learning are at least good with areas of outstanding practice observed. However, not all lessons are consistently at this challenging level. Standards of attainment of all learners are at least in line with national expectations and often higher. Through the newly introduced assessment system teachers are aware of the progress of pupils. This has begun to inform future planning for all abilities. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic nature of the subject leader ensures highly effective monitoring and evaluation of RE. This gives a clear picture of the quality of provision as well as children's good progress in their learning. The creation of an innovative and inclusive curriculum delivers outstanding personal, social, spiritual and cultural outcomes. The introduction of a key 'What if...?' question for each lesson ensures an increasingly challenging and deep focus upon the teaching and learning.

Through this dynamic approach, pupils are successfully encouraged to examine the difference religion makes in their lives. Further effective planning results in the cross-curricular exploration of ideas. This enables pupils to apply learning skills across other areas of the curriculum which lead to high levels of engagement. Pupils exhibit a very open attitude and enjoyment of RE. One Y6 child enthusiastically shared, 'Teachers are just as excited about their teaching as we are about our learning!' The best of lessons inspire pupils to fully engage in deep learning through enquiry and reflection. Pupils have exemplary Bible knowledge and fully understand the relevance and impact of the Bible in their lives. One child said, 'Bible stories help us make good decisions in our life'.

Its outstanding effectiveness enables children in the Foundation Stage (FS2) to respond to the question 'What would make Jesus smile?' by answering, 'Helping somebody like the Good Samaritan did'. An older child asked, 'If God's all-powerful, why can't He stop wars?' Pupils' understanding grows because they reflect upon and discuss issues that are relevant to them, such as the importance of faith in helping them understand the impact of religion on believers. In a discussion about why they studied other faiths one child observed, 'We become more tolerant towards other religions and have respect for them'. A Muslim child replied, 'I have made lots of friends since I came here and they all respect me'. Governors recognise the importance of RE in developing the distinctive school ethos and ensure requirements are met. Leadership of religious education is, therefore, given high priority and has a role equal in importance to other core subjects.

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

'The children need to leave us knowing they are walking with Jesus' is how the head teacher sums up her powerful and aspirational vision for the school. Her clear-sighted leadership and personal faith significantly contribute to the overwhelming success of Christ Church Moreton as a highly distinctive church school. One parent described her as being 'totally motivated by her Christian values'. Parents recognise the school's many distinctive qualities and are keen to encourage and support the strong Christian ethos because of the positive impact it has upon their children's lives. The assistant heads, staff and governors promote this very distinctive school vision with great passion. The outstandingly positive relationships throughout the school are a direct consequence of this and demonstrate the key role that Christian values play in the community.

The strategic drive to improve academic performance is strongly supported by the governors. Essential to this is the further development of the school's distinctive Christian nature and governors act as well-informed critical friends who set the school's strategic direction. 'A living faith,' commented the dynamic chair of governors, 'needs to surround the curriculum and underpin academic aspiration.' A highly effective example of this is seen in the innovative development of the school's engaging and inspiring curriculum. Consequently the provision for the development of the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is outstanding. There is a highly accurate, honest and secure self-evaluation in place. This is a school that knows itself extremely well.

Governor scrutiny ensures that all aspects of school life are underpinned by the provision of RE and collective worship. The issues for development from the previous inspection have been fully met. Effective training for the staff and distributed leadership roles ensure that there is good preparation for future leadership in church schools. The outstanding work of the vicar and the governors' community committee ensures the continued building up of the close relationships and extensive links between the school, church and community. This considerably enriches the school's distinctive Christian identity. Community cohesion is well enhanced through a wide variety of community-based activities. The pupils support the school's wide range of charitable works well with one child pointing out that, through prayer, 'we can ask God for the things that other people need'. Christ Church Moreton is a school at the heart of its community, driven by the outworking of Christian values in action.