

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Agnes' Church of England Primary School

Hamilton Road, Longsight, Manchester, M13 0PE

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Manchester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Manchester
Date of inspection	26 April 2018
Date of last inspection	June 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Controlled 105500
Headteacher	Shoab Uddin
Inspector's name and number	Gillian Rhodes 657

School context

St Agnes' is a two-form entry school serving a richly diverse local area. The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, mostly Pakistani and Bangladeshi, with a growing number of recent European arrivals. The proportion of pupils receiving additional Pupil Premium funding is above the national average. The percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education and health care plan is below average. However, the proportion of pupils who receive school funded SEN support is above average. The substantive headteacher is currently on secondment. The deputy headteacher is acting headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Agnes' as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The faith-centred vision of school leaders ensures that the school has a deeply Christian character and serves the needs of its diverse community.
- Pupils' understanding of the purpose of prayer and their ability to engage confidently in personal prayer ensures a high level of spiritual development.
- Christian values of respect, justice, tolerance and peace underpin all aspects of school life and result in excellent pupil conduct and extremely positive relationships between all members of this diverse community.
- As a result of links forged through the school's Peace Mala project, pupils develop excellent understanding of local, national and global communities.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that collective worship is planned systematically and delivered consistently in all settings so that pupils always have rich worship experiences.
- Fully implement monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by all stakeholders, particularly pupils, in order to understand and further develop the impact of worship on the life of the community.
- Develop pupils' understanding of diversity and difference in the Christian faith so that they fully understand its multi-cultural, global nature.

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

The moment you enter St Agnes' school building, its distinctive Christian ethos is made clear. The school's mission to provide 'aspiration and life in all its fullness' and 'peace and happiness through dignity and respect' is declared in a beautiful wooden wall motif. The means to achieve this is also explicitly stated in the motif as 'by encounter with the Love of God'. Christian values of respect, tolerance, peace and justice are deeply embedded in all aspects of school life. The school's accreditation as a Rights Respecting School recognises these Christian values in action. Pupils and adults speak confidently about how this results in excellent pupil conduct. The highly regarded Peace Mala project demonstrates and cements the respect and tolerance which permeate this multi-faith and culturally diverse school community. Peace Mala rainbow bead bracelets are visible evidence of pupils' knowledge of a wide range of world religions. They are worn with pride by peace ambassadors who support positive play and friendship. Excellent relationships between all groups highlight how tolerance and shared values unite the community.

Pupils generally enter the school achieving below age-related expectations. From these starting points the vast majority of pupils make good progress and achieve at or above national average standards. Pupils describe learning as fun. Attendance is in line with national targets and the school works with both rigour and compassion to discourage persistent absence. The school places high value on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Pupils have recently worked with their local Member of Parliament, learning about the plight of refugees and particularly those separated from their families as a result of flight from their home countries. This has led to a deep sense of moral and social justice. Through religious education (RE) pupils learn about world faiths including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Pupils have good knowledge of Christian beliefs and understand that their origins are in the Bible. They are able to make comparisons, highlight similarities and note differences between world faiths. They do not yet experience the diversity within the global Christian faith.

The language of faith is familiar to the majority of pupils. They are confident to express their beliefs and have strong spiritual awareness and understanding. This is effectively promoted through 'Encounter with God' activities in RE. Pupils are encouraged to write prayer diaries, reflect on thoughts for the day and carry out service to others. Pupils are prompted to consider complex questions of meaning and purpose such as, 'Is peace more important than money?' RE challenges pupils to think about codes for life for those of faith or no faith. However a wider variety of creative activities in RE would ensure pupils find it not only challenging but inspirational and exciting.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is a key part of school life. It is a conduit for understanding of Christian values and for promoting shared values across the school's diverse context. Inclusive worship engages all pupils, who participate eagerly in sensitively chosen prayer and praise. Collective worship regularly includes biblical material which is related to the school's core values. For example, Jesus' selection of his disciples was linked specifically to the theme and value of friendship. Through celebration of Christian festivals, pupils gain some knowledge and experience of Anglican traditions. Festivals of other faiths are integrated into worship themes. Consequently pupils know that their own faith and religious traditions are also valued and respected. Themes for collective worship are linked to school core values, to the Peace Mala project and to the principles of a Rights Respecting school. In the short term they are carefully planned. However, spiritual and moral reflection and challenge are not yet planned for systematically or over time. Collective worship includes teaching about Jesus and others central to the Christian and other faiths, linking their actions to values and social and moral responsibility, particularly charity and service to others. Pupils' understanding of key Christian concepts such as the Holy Trinity is developed through study in RE.

Prayer is central to collective worship and the life of the school. Pupils have a strong understanding of the relevance and importance of prayer to their personal spiritual journey. They write and use prayers often. The prayer stations in all classrooms play an important part in this, with prayers displayed and cherished by pupils. Collective worship takes place in a variety of settings within school. Pupils experience whole school, key stage and class worship. School leaders and other members of staff lead worship regularly. However, class worship is not always systematically planned and delivered to ensure consistency of standards. The vicar of St Agnes' church is increasingly involved in leading worship in school. Pupils visit church at key times in the church's calendar such as Advent and Pentecost. This developing co-operation is respected and valued by parents who are growing in confidence to support and participate in these events.

Feedback on collective worship is gathered by leaders who identify areas for improvement and draw up action plans for development. Systematic monitoring does not yet include all stakeholders and as a result, the impact of collective worship on all members of the community, especially pupils, is not yet fully evaluated. Pupils enjoy worship and value opportunities given to participate and take responsibility for aspects of worship. Whilst pupils read prayers and relish role-play, they do not have opportunities to enhance their spiritual development by planning and leading worship independently.

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

School leaders express and consistently model a vision for the school as a Church of England school. School staff declared, 'We shout about our core values.' The vision is rooted in these core Christian values which are explicitly linked to the values of the other faith communities in school. In addition, these values are promoted and lived out through the school's Peace Mala project and the Rights Respecting School accreditation. Governors are involved in monitoring the impact of these key projects in school, ensuring that they promote core values and their vision for the school. The involvement of link governors and regular visits to school by all governors enrich leaders' evaluations of St Agnes' as a Church of England school.

The leadership of RE and collective worship is given high priority and support. The subject leader is passionate about her role and responsibilities and fulfils these effectively. Training for middle leaders has been accessed through the diocese. Pupils' SMSC development, behaviour and attitudes are developed not only through RE and collective worship but across the whole curriculum. The 'Cornerstones Curriculum' promotes links across topics and highlights spiritual and moral questions. Extra-curricular activities such as sport, music, visits and community involvement broaden the social and cultural horizons of the pupils in this close-knit local community.

School links with parents and families are strong with many parents being former pupils of the school. Social events and curriculum workshop sessions for parents and carers welcome them to the school. Fund-raising projects bring families and the school together in a common cause. The Vicar of St Agnes' church is a visible local presence who links the school, the church and the community. Joint school and church events such as the Advent celebration are increasingly supported by parents. School links with the local mosque and faith leaders are strong. Pupils are involved in a variety of local appeals and events such as the Big Clean-up in Longsight. They demonstrate Christian and faith-centred values in action through support for national and international charities including Macmillan Cancer Care and refugee aid organisations. School leaders promote the aspirations of pupils and the wider school community through developing links with local businesses.

The symbol of the dove of peace is central to the St Agnes' Peace Mala project and to the sense of harmony which permeates the school. A small wooden peace dove has been taken by members of the St Agnes' family around the country and the world. The Diocesan Director of Education took the dove to Pakistan when he visited the diocese there.

Living out its core Christian values of peace, justice, tolerance and respect ensures St Agnes' is truly an outward-looking Church of England school at the heart of its diverse community.

SIAMS report, April 2018 St Agnes' C of E VC Primary School, Longsight, Manchester M13 0PE