

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

### St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Hive Street Hollinwood Oldham OL8 4QS	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Manchester</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Oldham
Date of inspection	17 November 2016
Date of last inspection	November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	VA 105705
Headteacher	Daniel Whittle
Inspector's name and number	Gillian Rhodes 657

#### School context

St Margaret's is a larger than average primary school. Its admission number increased from 40 to 45 in September 2016. The school serves Hollinwood, a community with high levels of disadvantage. The percentage of children eligible for additional pupil premium funding is significantly above national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. The pupil population is diverse. Pupils of White British heritage make up the largest group. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is significantly above national average with 28 different home languages spoken. The headteacher has been in post since September 2016. He was previously deputy headteacher at the school.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Margaret's as a Church of England school are good

- The clear expression of the Christian values of hope, faith and love inspires the ambitious vision and high expectations of the headteacher for the development of the school and its pupils.
- Positive behaviour and relationships throughout the school are attributed to the effective 'reflect and repair' approach which is rooted in the school's Christian values of love and forgiveness.
- Biblical material and the teachings of Jesus Christ are central to collective worship which is inclusive and encourages moral and spiritual reflection in pupils of all faiths.
- Pupils' good knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and values of a range of world faiths and of Christianity as a multi-cultural global faith result in respect for diversity and difference.

#### Areas to improve

- Embed Christian values explicitly in all aspects of school life so that all members of the school community can clearly see and describe their impact on the lives and achievements of pupils.
- Promote the spiritual development of pupils more effectively by providing a range of opportunities for personal prayer and reflection in a variety of formal and informal settings.
- Develop pupils' spiritual awareness and understanding by extending opportunities for pupils to respond creatively in religious education (RE).
- Provide opportunities across the whole curriculum to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) understanding.

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

The school's distinctively Christian values are expressed by leaders, staff and pupils. The core values of faith, hope and love provide the basis and inspiration for teaching and learning, behaviour and relationships. A 'reflect and repair' approach to behaviour is rooted in the Christian values of love and forgiveness and recognised as effective by pupils and staff.

The school's ambition to be 'A Place to BECOME' promotes bravery, energy, creativity, openness, motivation and empowerment. The linking of these attributes to biblical quotations supports the recognition that they have a foundation in the Bible and in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Christian values are not as yet embedded in all school documentation and publicity.

Members of the wider school family are increasingly aware of the positive impact of Christian values on the lives and achievements of the pupils. From their starting points, the majority of pupils make good progress and the school is working diligently to improve attainment. Attendance is below national targets and an action plan is in place to address this. The plan makes specific reference to Christian compassion and love as well as promoting resilience and persistence.

A recent audit of pupils' SMSC development resulted in the St Margaret's Promise. This is prompting the identification of opportunities to develop SMSC understanding across the whole curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. These opportunities are not as yet fully realised. The introduction of open-ended homework activities which involve pupils' parents and families is already demonstrating increased SMSC awareness.

Through RE and collective worship pupils develop respect for diversity and difference in other faiths. Black History Month and links with a Christian community in El Salvador effectively promote understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. The importance of RE is recognised by the whole school community. Through RE this diverse community is unified by respect for difference and recognition of shared values.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship is at the heart of school life. Children and adults in school recognise the importance of coming together for prayer and praise. All participate fully in worship which includes biblical material and the teachings of Jesus Christ and also recognises and respects the diverse faiths of the school community. Collective worship includes prayers, responses, hymns and readings which reflect Anglican traditions. The vicar of St Margaret's church leads school worship in the church regularly. Eucharist services and celebration of festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest play a key role in developing children's understanding of liturgy and of the Church's year. Artefacts on the worship table symbolise the Trinity. Children have some understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Collective worship themes emphasising the Christian values of hope and love prompt pupils to raise money and support local, national and international charities. Pupils recognise that their support for the Trussell Trust Shoebox appeal, Children in Need and Wellsprings demonstrates God's love in action.

In collective worship the invitation to pray and reflect is appropriate for children of all faiths or none. The St Margaret's prayer wall is a significant focal point in the school's entrance area. All members of the school community are invited to add their thoughts and prayers to the wall. Consequently pupils are increasingly making use of prayer in their own lives. Pupils' experiences of prayer and contributions to prayer are not yet fully developed in a range of settings such as reflection areas in classrooms.

Older pupils relish the opportunities they have to set up the hall for worship, organise the music and prepare the worship table. Pupils successfully planned and led worship as part of Black History Month. They have also led worship which highlights the beliefs and values of other faiths. Staff and clergy lead worship regularly. Visitors from El Salvador provided interesting experience of other Christian traditions.

Monitoring and evaluation of worship is carried out by senior leaders and pupils. A wider range of modern and traditional hymns was introduced at the request of pupils. Senior leaders recognise that a wider variety of worship leaders would enrich the experiences of pupils.

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

Religious education is given a high profile in the school curriculum and is considered to be a core subject. The majority of teaching is good with lesson plans showing that teaching and learning are appropriate for pupils of all ages and abilities. Explicit links are made with school values of faith, hope and love. A Year 4/5 lesson asked 'How can you be more Christ-like?' and pupils responded by relating examples of how they live out the values.

A new syllabus for RE was introduced in September. Monitoring and evaluation already show its impact on teaching. Pupils are developing skills of enquiry, interpretation and reflection and applying these to understanding the impact of religion on believers. School action plans for RE highlight the development of creativity in pupils' responses to the teaching of RE in order to promote their spiritual awareness and understanding.

Assessment is built into the new syllabus and these systematic procedures inform planning, teaching and learning. Assessment and monitoring and evaluation of standards in RE show that pupils have secure knowledge of Christianity and the Bible. Visits to places of worship and visitors from faith communities enable pupils to make links between the practices, beliefs and values of the range of world faiths studied.

The subject leader for RE has high expectations for the development of the subject and for pupil progress and attainment. Monitoring and evaluation systems include work scrutiny and lesson observations. The subject leader has built an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development in RE. Clear feedback is given to teachers of RE. As a result there is increased consistency in expectations for teaching and learning and improved standards. The subject leader accesses professional development and networking opportunities and is consequently well informed on developments in RE.

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

The headteacher, school leaders and governors, articulate a vision for St Margaret's school, its future development and its pupils which is rooted in the Christian values of faith, hope and love. Governor visits and the headteacher's reports to governors ensure that all leaders have a good understanding of the school's performance as a distinctive Church of England school.

Collective worship, RE, school values and the St Margaret's Promise that the school is a Place to BECOME all now combine to support the development of the school and its pupils. The SMSC development of pupils is promoted through RE and collective worship. Senior leaders are engaged in identifying opportunities for this throughout the whole curriculum.

Strong links between the school, the church and the community are developing. For example, the innovative Messy Church session brought groups in the community together. It was held in school and organised by members of the church congregation. Large numbers of children and their families attended. The vicar's regular presence at school effectively reinforces community links. The school welcomes parents and carers and encourages them to support their children's learning. Stay and play sessions and ladies' and gentlemen's days provide opportunities for parents to take part in learning activities in the classroom and develop the confidence to repeat the activities at home. Open-ended homework challenges are designed specifically to involve parents and families and to promote shared learning. Parents from the very diverse local community feel part of the school family.

The school has good links with the diocese. Training and network groups accessed by the headteacher and the RE and worship leader support the development of St Margaret's as a distinctive church school. The headteacher has made impressive changes in a short period of time. These are already having significant impact on practice in RE and worship and on the school's character. St Margaret's has made great steps towards achieving its vision to be a Christian school for all.

SIAMS report November 2016 St Margaret's CE Primary School, Hollinwood, Oldham OL8 4QS