



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Eccleston C of E Primary School	Eaton Road Eccleston CH4 9HD
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese/Methodist District	Chester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade:	Outstanding
Local authority	Cheshire West and Cheshire
Name of multi-academy trust/ federation	N/A
Date/s of inspection	6 October 2016
Date of last inspection	September 2011
School's unique reference number	111349
Headteacher	Katie Cade
Inspector's name and number	Jean Forward 625

School context

Eccleston C of E Primary School is smaller than average and is in a rural setting. It lies within the Grosvenor Estate close to the city of Chester. Most pupils are White British. However, some families are from a non-Christian faith background. The number of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium has increased in recent years and is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs or disability is below the national average. At the end of Year 6 in 2016, pupils reached the government floor standard for progress.

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

- The outstanding Christian leadership of the headteacher and her vision for the development of the school ensure that the school's Christian ethos is at the heart of daily life.
- The school is extremely successful in creating a loving, caring and inclusive environment rooted in Christian values. This has a direct influence on pupils' well-being and progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is excellent and is rooted in the school's Christian ethos and commitment to Christian values. Pupils become increasingly confident and self-assured in their social skills, understanding of faith and appreciation of the world around them.
- Links with the parish church are extremely strong. As a result, pupils have a clear sense of belonging to the wider Christian community.
- The governing body provides highly effective support and challenge through commitment and expertise. This results in strong Christian leadership and self-evaluation.

Areas to improve

- Provide opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship independently in order to deepen their understanding of the elements of worship and broaden their spiritual development.
- Introduce a selection of responses to open and close collective worship in order to strengthen the pupils' experience and understanding of Anglican tradition.

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

A strong commitment to its Christian ethos and the development of the whole child underpin the school's work. Pupils talk confidently about the importance of the school's core Christian values in their daily life. The values were chosen following a consultation by the ethos group involving the whole school community. Positive relationships across the school and church community are rooted in a Christ-centred approach and are a key element in the school's success. Pupils' SMSC development is excellent as a result of the focused Christian ethos and the emphasis on nurturing every individual and on supporting families. Consequently, pupils demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and awareness of others. All members of the community know they are valued and the ethos of Christian trust and respect is clearly evident. Pupils are extremely courteous, friendly and confident. They enjoy being members of the ethos group and school council and see these opportunities as a way of serving the school community. Pupils are able to share concerns with their teachers knowing that these will be addressed in a caring way. A pupil said, 'We feel comfortable in our school.' Parents comment that their children are happy and enthusiastic about learning and school life. They say that their children develop positive attitudes and talk about Christian values at home. Parents ascribe the support they receive to the distinctive Christian ethos. They also say that the school and church work closely together for the pupils and their families, providing opportunities for worship and a range of community activities. The school has a strong commitment to Christian stewardship, supporting a range of charities including Christian Aid, Sports Relief and the sponsorship of a child in Somalia. Pupils speak of the importance of showing generosity and compassion to those in need. A pupil said, 'We care for others in the way Jesus cared for everyone.' Quality displays and Christian signs and symbols emphasise the school's distinctiveness and prompt the pupils' spiritual awareness extremely well. Pupils value the classroom reflection areas designed by the ethos group. The pupils involved are able to explain the importance of the areas as a spiritual resource. The school's commitment to widening pupils' knowledge of non-Christian faiths contributes well to cultural knowledge and to positive attitudes. Pupils' attendance is good and behaviour is outstanding (Ofsted 2013). The school's Christian care for and commitment to every child secure these positive results.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The act of collective worship is central to the life of the school. It is vibrant and inspires pupils and staff. Planning incorporates themes based on the school's core Christian values, the Bible and major Christian festivals. As a result, pupils are constantly reminded of the ways in which they can lead a life rooted in Jesus. The school places Christ at the centre of all it does and collective worship enables pupils of all ages to understand how the teaching of Jesus guides Christians. One pupil said, 'We light the candles to welcome Jesus into our worship'. The pupils enjoy worship and engage well with questions which explore values and beliefs. Pupils value times of silence and reflection which are an important part of the school's approach to prayer. Pupils become familiar with Anglican practice through the use of traditional prayers and a clear framework for worship. However, the school does not use traditional responses to open and close worship. Pupils understand that worship plays a key part in the life of faith which the school and the church foster. The vicar of St. Mary's church plays an important part in the weekly pattern of worship. He is involved in leading worship which explores Christian values and the church's calendar. The school worships in the parish church for major festivals including Ash Wednesday and Ascension Day. The school also contributes to Sunday worship on a number of occasions during the year and this enables pupils and their families to feel part of the wider worshipping community. The pupils are involved in these special acts of worship through prayers, reading, music and drama. As yet, they do not have the opportunity to plan and lead worship independently. Pupils have a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and are quick to explain how the school's Trinity day helped them to further their knowledge. The school has systems in place to monitor and evaluate worship. This results in positive developments which extend pupils' experience of the variety of worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The school has a strong commitment to developing all aspects of teaching and learning in religious education (RE) and has been awarded the RE Gold Quality Mark. Progress and standards are comparable to national standards with some children exceeding expectations. This is achieved through excellent and varied teaching and good use of a wide range of resources. The subject is taught in a creative way with a strong emphasis on developing Christian values. There is a clear balance between learning about religion and opportunities for pupils to think about what their learning means to them. Pupils are enthusiastic and say that they enjoy a variety of written activities, research, discussion, drama and art. Evidence of prior learning and thinking skills were demonstrated in a Year 2/3 lesson about Creation. Pupils in Year 6 engaged in excellent discussion about the work of the church before interviewing a group of people who contribute to the local community. Pupils respond confidently when asked to express their opinions and when answering challenging questions. The sharing and careful consideration of ideas and opinions make an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. A pupil commented, 'We all enjoy RE and like the challenge'. Visits to places of worship and the contribution of parent experts make an excellent contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of non-Christian faiths. The well-informed and committed co-ordinator monitors the subject thoroughly using observations, book scrutiny and cross-checking of standards. This ensures high expectations in teaching and learning. Activities with other church schools in the diocesan cluster provide an excellent opportunity to work co-operatively on raising standards. The school's assessment activities and recording of attainment are being developed following a move to assessing without levels. Marking guides pupils and invites them to answer questions and do their best. Professional development plays an important part in ensuring that teaching and learning are of the highest quality.

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

The headteacher has a clear and strong vision for the school based on Christian principles and values. She takes every opportunity to promote the school's distinctive Christian character which guides the school community and enables everyone to do their best. Staff and governors are committed to fostering all aspects of pupils' development and well-being through Christian care and love. In doing so, they recognise the importance of creating a Christian ethos which supports effective learning and the promotion of equal opportunities. The headteacher attributes pupils' successful learning and personal development to the Christ-centred qualities of the school. The school knows its pupils and their families extremely well and meets individual needs through a culture of Christian nurturing and support. Parents recognise the distinctive Christian qualities of the school and speak highly of the respect with which they and their children are treated. Foundation governors are knowledgeable and experienced. They have a clear understanding of their strategic role. As a result, they support the school in a variety of ways and provide a high level of challenge. Action plans for RE and worship are included in the school's development planning and are discussed by the governing body. This ensures that aspects of church school distinctiveness continue to contribute to the development of the school's Christian foundation. The school's Christian ethos is clearly a thread which draws together every aspect of leadership and management. The RE co-ordinator ensures that the subject is taught to a high standard and she is developing clear processes to monitor and evaluate the school's provision. The school is outward looking and works with other church schools in matters of teaching, learning and school improvement. These initiatives strengthen the school's resolve to provide the very best education for its pupils and opportunities for all staff to develop their expertise. A strong partnership with the diocese through discussion and training has resulted in the highly effective development of all aspects of church school distinctiveness. The school's partnership with St. Mary's church is strong and their joint collaboration with families is dynamic and mutually beneficial for the wider Christian community. This enables pupils to develop a strong sense of friendship and love, rooted in Christian service.