

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Halebank Church of England Primary School

Vision

At Halebank we celebrate who we are, as a safe and nurturing family, within the local community and the wider world. We inspire natural curiosity and develop a passion for lifelong learning whilst providing enriching opportunities for all individuals to flourish and achieve their ambitions. As God intended, we joyfully celebrate culture, diversity and individuality in all their forms, whilst embracing our enriching Christian values.

‘Let your light shine.’

Matthew 5.16

Halebank Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Strengths

- Rooted in meeting the needs of the school community, the vision inspires leaders to build a hopeful and aspirational culture. They ensure that it underpins the life and work of the school, supporting adults and pupils to ‘let their light shine’.
- The school’s supporting values of love and compassion create a hopeful culture in which adults and pupils are deeply valued. Their achievements are celebrated joyfully, enabling them to feel cherished and accepted.
- Leaders have created a curriculum that is carefully crafted to empower pupils to ‘let their light shine’. This is because adults support pupils with a range of needs through creative teaching approaches. Thus, pupils flourish and find success in their learning.
- Collective worship instils a sense of community and is deeply valued by pupils and adults. Sensitive encouraged by adults, pupils reflect thoughtfully together on biblical themes, understanding the meaning of these within their daily lives.
- Leaders have creatively adapted the religious education (RE) curriculum to meet pupils’ diverse needs. Interactive lessons meaningfully engage pupils and challenge their thinking.

Development Points

- Develop a whole school approach to spirituality. Use this to plan opportunities to nurture spiritual growth throughout the curriculum and in the wider life of the school.
- Strengthen pupils’ understanding of Christianity as a global religion. This is so that pupils appreciate that Christianity is a diverse faith and that Christians practise their religion in a variety of ways.
- Extend pupils’ understanding of justice and responsibility. Use this to empower pupils to recognise how they can actively make a positive difference within and beyond their school community.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision of 'Let your light shine' is deeply cherished by staff and pupils at this small, welcoming Church school. The vision is a sensitive and aspirational response to the needs of pupils. It instils a powerful sense of moral purpose and commitment in leaders and staff. As such, leaders make bold decisions in fostering hope and high expectations so that pupils and adults feel valued and experience success. The inclusive school ethos means that pupils, including those that have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well supported and nurtured. The vision shapes strong, compassionate relationships between staff and pupils. As a result, pupils are happy, behave well and feel safe in school. Governors know the school well and monitor how well the vision meets the needs of the school. Consequently, they offer effective support, challenging leaders to ensure that pupils thrive. Leaders benefit from high-quality diocesan support that deepens their understanding of how to lead a Church school effectively.

Motivated by the school's vision, leaders prioritise wellbeing. Exceptional support for staff enables them to flourish professionally and personally. Leaders are mindful of workload and sensitively care for staff when they need it. Consequently, staff feel valued and work as a united team. This enables them to support pupils and each other. Leaders are committed to ensuring that the diverse range of pupils' needs are met effectively. Supportive pastoral care, especially at the start of each day, enables pupils, including those who are vulnerable, to be ready to learn. Pupils treat each other well and older pupils care for younger pupils at playtimes. They see the value of showing and receiving kindness. Emanating from the vision, the school's rules are embedded well. As such, pupils know how to be respectful to each other and to adults so that they live well together. Leaders and staff take time to foster trusting relationships with families. As a result, parents and carers are supportive of school and are confident to let staff know about any concerns that they have. Partnerships with St Mary's Church and the wider community foster a sense of community spirit in pupils. For example, through singing at church coffee mornings pupils value the importance of building positive relationships across generations.

Motivated by the vision to inspire 'a passion for lifelong learning', leaders have made courageous decisions in developing a bespoke curriculum. Thus, the curriculum is carefully crafted to build resilience and provide pupils with the building blocks that they need to experience success. This is evident in the aspirational focus on core skills. Staff work tirelessly to ensure that pupils, including those who have SEND, access learning at their own pace. Leaders carefully target resources so that pupils have access to a range of experiences, such as drama lessons. Consequently, pupils find learning relevant and memorable, enabling them to thrive. Learning opportunities are thoughtfully crafted to inspire pupils' natural curiosity and to enhance their understanding of the world beyond their local community. They access a variety of experiences, such as a joint spirituality day with another local primary school. In this way, pupils are beginning to appreciate that learning has a spiritual dimension. However, the development of a shared understanding of, and language to speak about, spirituality is in its infancy. This means that planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual flourishing throughout the curriculum are underdeveloped.

The recently revised RE curriculum is of high profile within the school and effectively meets the needs of pupils. Leaders have ensured that it is well sequenced and relevant. They have creatively adapted the curriculum to ensure that it meets pupils' needs. Teachers deliver lessons that are engaging, memorable and applicable to pupils' lives. As a result, pupils access learning at their personal level of understanding, supporting them to flourish. The curriculum engagingly explores core concepts and beliefs within a variety of world religions and worldviews. As a result, pupils appreciate and respect diversity. They articulate an understanding that all viewpoints are valid and



that similarities and differences are to be celebrated. They use religious vocabulary confidently to demonstrate their understanding of key concepts. For example, within Christianity, even younger pupils are able to explain the events of Easter and the meaning of specific terms like 'resurrection'. However, pupils have less understanding that Christianity is a diverse, world faith and that Christians practise their religion in a variety of ways.

In their commitment to enable all individuals to flourish, leaders promote positive relationships that encourage people to take responsibility for each other. Motivated by the vision and values, leaders teach pupils to appreciate diversity. Thus, pupils have a sense of justice. One pupil explained, 'Everyone is different in their own way'. They are taught about global inequality and know that some people are not treated fairly. They learn how to be responsible for themselves and others within the school environment. Through taking on a range of leadership roles, such as school councillors or librarians, pupils are beginning to understand that they have a voice in decision making. Close links with the local community support pupils to begin to take action to care for others and their surroundings. For example, staff involve pupils in litter picking to clean the neighbourhood. Themes within the curriculum and collective worship enable pupils to recognise that people can act to protect the environment and challenge injustice. However, pupils have a limited understanding of how they can take action themselves to make a positive difference.

Collective worship and prayerful reflection are central to the daily life of the school and rooted in its vision and values. Whilst the school is at the early stages of expressing how worship fosters personal, spiritual growth, pupils and adults value its nourishing impact. Thoughtfully positioned at the start of each day, collective worship is treasured as a unifying experience for this close-knit community. Leaders skilfully plan themes that embrace a variety of Bible stories, as well as exploring world issues through a Christian perspective. Worship is led thoughtfully by a variety of adults. Pupils with a range of needs are supported sensitively so that they can actively participate. Through careful exploration, pupils consider how Jesus' teachings can help people understand the big questions of life. Themes help pupils know how to treat each other with love and compassion. For example, whilst exploring the Bible story of The Last Supper, pupils understood that shared meals with friends have a special value. 'It's about the love that is poured out on it,' said one pupil. A recent, fruitful partnership with clergy from the local church is already enriching the worship life of the school through enhancing its variety and depth.

Information

Address	Heathview Road, Halebank, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 8UZ		
Date	27 March 2025	URN	111244
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	92
Diocese	Liverpool		
Headteacher	Claire Warner		
Chair of Governors	Hayley Roach		
Inspector	Susan Sullivan		