



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Wellfield Methodist and Anglican Church School

Wellfield Drive Burnley Lancashire BB12 0JD

Previous SIAMS grade: Good

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Blackburn Diocese and the North Lancashire Methodist District

Local authority: Lancashire

Date of inspection: 14 January 2016

Date of last inspection: May 2011

School's unique reference number: 119492

Headteacher: Janet Pay

Inspector's name and number: Carol Berry NS 324

School context

Wellfield is a voluntary aided school of 209 pupils situated in an urban residential area in Burnley. It draws children from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The number of children with special educational needs and disabilities is below average. There are fewer than usual disadvantaged pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding. Most pupils are of White British ethnicity. The headteacher was appointed in January 2014 and the chair of governors in December 2015. In the last few years there have been significant changes in leadership and staffing. The headteacher took on responsibility for collective worship and religious education (RE) in September 2015.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Wellfield as a Church of England and Methodist school are good

- Christian values are central to the life of the school. They result in excellent behaviour, a calm and nurturing learning environment and very good relationships.
- Effective Christian leadership from the headteacher is driving forward school improvement and resulting in improved achievement, a caring ethos and collective worship which engages pupils.
- There are excellent links with the churches which support the school and the local community. These enrich collective worship and contribute to pupils' social skills.
- The creative work of the worship group has resulted in significant improvements in collective worship.

Areas to improve

- Provide staff training for RE. This is to ensure that assessment is used effectively to monitor children's progress, to plan for challenging lessons and give pupils feedback which is focused on RE skills.
- Ensure pupils learn about and engage with other faiths and cultures, so that they demonstrate more understanding of and respect for diversity.
- Develop a shared vision of spirituality so that curriculum planning in all subjects includes planning for spiritual development and learning about Christian values.

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

Children have an excellent understanding of Christian values. They apply them to their relationships and to their behaviour choices. Consequently this is a supportive and caring learning community, where children know they are valued and enjoy their education. Each week, a 'Gospel Values T-shirt' is given to a member of each class. Children discuss who deserves this and so are confident in explaining how Christian values work out in practice. They make links between Christian values and Bible stories. For example, they talk about the way Daniel had to trust God. Older children demonstrate an excellent sense of responsibility for younger children. They care for them through the 'Gardeners and Seeds' programme and through the mentor system. Parents say the school is 'like a family' and that it is 'always friendly and welcoming'. In this nurturing and caring learning environment, children make good progress and achievement is good. Attendance is very good and there have been no exclusions in recent years. Children learn to be compassionate and caring individuals through the school's support of a variety of charities. The links with the local community effectively support their social education. A parent said that visiting an old people's home with the school choir had given her daughter 'confidence in speaking to people in different situations.' There are some opportunities for spiritual development in subjects beyond RE, but staff do not at present have a shared vision for spiritual development. There is no planning for learning about Christian values in the wider curriculum. There is, at present, no sustained link with another part of the world and some children have had little opportunity to learn about other faiths and cultures in RE. Currently there are few opportunities for pupils to engage with people from other faiths. As a result, children's understanding of diversity is limited. However, this has been identified as an area for development by the school and improvements are already taking place.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship inspires pupils and is relevant to their lives. They are enthused by inspiring worship leaders and lively music. Planning ensures that pupils engage with a range of Bible stories, values, festivals and important Christian beliefs. Children experience different Christian traditions and prayers in worship. They use the traditional Celtic prayers, which they say as they light candles at the start of worship, to help them to explain beliefs about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Parents enjoy attending the special celebration assemblies and say they often talk about worship at home. They say that collective worship makes an impact on them through their discussions about worship with their children. Children have an outstanding understanding of the purpose of prayer. The use of prayer in worship is effectively supported by the vibrant school environment, which is rich with interactive prayer activities for pupils. They explain how they use prayer in different ways, saying, 'prayer is helpful when we are really upset,' 'God will help you,' and 'prayer helps us to be tolerant of each other'. Collective worship is often innovative, as when classes moved around school to visit the prayer stations they had made to celebrate Christmas. The worship group is making an excellent impact on pupils' attitudes to collective worship. This group of pupils evaluate worship, making suggestions for improvements. Recent innovations have included 'more jazzy music' in worship and the use of dance movements to some songs. Some pupils have planned and led parts of worship, both in school and in local churches. Pupils say they would like to do this more often. Local churches make excellent contributions to collective worship. This is through the dedicated service of clergy and other leaders who lead worship regularly in school and support planning. The school often uses the buildings of the partner churches for worship for special events, such as harvest.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

RE is valued by the school. It is well resourced and allocated an appropriate proportion of curriculum time. Some teaching in RE is good. The best lessons make a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral education by providing a safe space to consider big questions. Work on Bible stories often includes creative activities to engage pupils with the story and help them empathise with the characters. There is some good teaching about other faiths and cultures. For example, Year 1 experienced an exciting day exploring Hindu faith and culture as part of their topic on India. Children's thinking and exciting activities are recorded in the class 'Big books'. Curriculum planning is good. The Christian elements of the curriculum make use of the diocesan syllabus. Pupils explored distinctively Methodist history and expressions of faith during a 'Wesley week'. However, although curriculum plans regarding teaching about other faiths are in place, at present these have not been fully implemented by all classes. Consequently, many children know very little about other religions. The standard of teaching and learning in RE is not consistent across the school. Children make good progress in Key Stage 1, but this is not sustained in all classes at Key Stage 2. Assessment procedures are not secure and no exemplars of levelled assessments are available to support teachers. Assessment is not used to inform planning and consequently some lessons lack challenge. Assessment is not used to ensure that feedback to children focuses on developing RE skills. As a result, progress overall is satisfactory and attainment is not always in line with national expectations. A system of monitoring of RE is in place and lesson observations correctly identify issues for improvement. The school development plan includes actions already being implemented to drive forward improvements in RE. These include training to equip teachers with the skills and subject knowledge they need to deliver excellent RE which challenges pupils.

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

The school's Christian vision is for a caring school where children are nurtured and Christian values are at the heart of everything the school does. The Christian vision is shared effectively and results in a caring learning environment which is a fulfilling place to learn and work. Both children and parents are able to explain how Christian values affect the life of the school. The headteacher lives out the Christian vision, providing effective leadership which is moving the school forward. She is supported by a dedicated leadership group and committed staff team who play a vital role in implementing the vision. Effective leadership has resulted in raised achievement in literacy and numeracy. Both collective worship and RE meet statutory requirements. Since the headteacher took over responsibility for the leadership of these areas, there have been significant improvements. Her leadership has been effectively supported by the diocese. Leadership of collective worship is excellent and results in outstanding outcomes. Effective evaluation, involving pupils through the worship group, has played a significant role in securing improvements in collective worship. Although outcomes in RE are satisfactory, monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher correctly identifies areas for development. A priority has been the provision of training to support staff new to working in a church school, as well as developing possible future school leaders. The response made to the focus for development from the last SIAS inspection report has helped to move the school forward. Governance is good. Governors have been involved in self-evaluation and have challenged the school regarding collective worship and RE. Local partnerships make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school, but there is currently no sustained global link to help children to understand and respect other cultures. The partnership with both the Anglican and Methodist churches is excellent and mutually enriching. Local clergy, including those from the local Anglican church and the Methodist Circuit, make valued contributions to collective worship. The school is used for an Anglican service on Sunday and a Methodist children's worker runs the Christian clubs in school.