

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Westwoodside Church of England Academy

Address Nethergate, Westwoodside, Doncaster, United Kingdom, DN9 2DX

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Overall grade **Good**

The impact of collective worship **Good**

School's vision

'Be a light for other people. Live so they will see the good things that you do.' Matthew 5 v 16 Building on our shared Christian values, we empower every unique person in our community to be a light for other people, to be lifelong learners equipped to embrace the opportunities of the future and make the world a better place to live.

Key findings

- Westwoodside School is an inclusive, compassionate and caring community where everyone is valued and nurtured as the unique person God created them to be. Opportunities for spiritual development and reflection are sometimes missed as the school lacks a clear shared view of what spirituality means to them.
- The Christian vision is shared by the whole school community, empowering pupils to be lifelong learners and making a tangible difference to others. This is not communicated clearly through key policies, so lacks a strong impact across the curriculum.
- Pupils are valued and their voice is heard. They live out the school's vision and values through care for each other, social action and opportunities to challenge injustice. Through this, this school stands as a beacon of love and hope in the community.
- Collective worship, springing from the Christian vision, is valued, biblical and inclusive. It is developed and enriched by strong opportunities for pupil leadership. Collective worship influences the lives of both pupils and staff, enabling them to flourish.
- Enquiry-based religious education (RE) develops curiosity through questioning, although expectations of what pupils will learn in each lesson sometimes lack clarity.

Areas for development

- Strengthen the impact of spirituality across the school through a clear shared understanding of what spiritual development means at Westwoodside.
- Ensure that learning objectives and success criteria in RE are tightly focused. This is so that expectations of what and how pupils will learn are clear, consistently communicated and therefore understood by all learners.

- Embed the Christian vision across the whole curriculum by ensuring that key policies fully reflect the vision, enabling all learners to flourish.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

At Westwoodside, the Christian vision, 'be a light for other people', is clearly attributed to the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:16. This vision enables all to flourish because it is inclusive, aspirational and deeply rooted in the school's local context. Distinctively Christian associated values of perseverance, respect, hope, love, friendship, compassion and thankfulness flow naturally from the vision. These values are given life and relevance through key Bible verses and stories, and impact strongly on the life and work of the school. However, the school's Christian vision and values are not consistently communicated by, or driven through, key school policies. Therefore, their impact on the curriculum as a whole is not fully embedded. Through effectively planned monitoring and evaluation, governors know the school well. They are willing to make bold and courageous decisions to ensure that pupils and staff are given the best possible support. This is an unequivocal expression of the school's Christian vision. Leaders describe the whole school community as 'family', and demonstrate a high level of concern, care and compassion for pupils, parents and staff. They are proactive in making connections with other church schools and organisations as an outworking of the vision. The school benefits from a strong partnership with the parish church, who made every effort to sustain the relationship throughout the recent pandemic. High quality professional development ensures that staff and governors are given every opportunity to flourish personally and professionally.

The school vision for enabling every child to flourish as lifelong learners is raising expectations across the school. Provision is inclusive, with a sustained focus on individual nurture and support, enabling all members of the school community to thrive. Staff know pupils exceptionally well and strive to meet the needs of each individual with compassion and hope. Parents appreciate the lengths to which the school goes to inclusively meet even the most challenging of needs. The curriculum is rooted in the local context and pupils' place within that. However, the whole school curriculum does not flow coherently from the school's Christian vision and associated values. Whilst opportunities exist that support pupils' spiritual development, the school lacks clarity on what spiritual development really means for them. Consequently, the school does not take full advantage of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to question and explore spirituality.

Westwoodside is characterised by the tangible care that pervades the whole life and work of the school community. Inspired by the distinctively Christian vision, pupils are empowered to be outward looking. They make a meaningful difference through social action, including meeting needs which they themselves have identified. These have included class charities, a plastics campaign and a strong partnership with a local care home. Supplies have been sent to Ukraine through a local church organisation, which pupils describe through the Christian value of respect, framed by Jesus' parable of The Good Samaritan. Pupil voice is valued and pupils feel affirmed and listened to in their roles as school, eco and worship councillors.

Mental wellbeing for staff and pupils has been given high priority as a clear expression of the school's Christian vision. Staff talk with conviction and emotion about the difference that the 'school family' has on their wellbeing. The values of hope and love have helped carry the school through a 'dark period' during the recent pandemic. Strong, compassionate support makes a tangible difference to the whole school community. Parent forum sessions offer tea and cakes, asking the question, 'how can we make life easier for you?' A recently appointed counsellor and an emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) work tirelessly to support pupils, staff and families. Pupils are proud of the difference they make to the life of the school, such as the introduction of a friendship bench. They 'shine' through their positive behaviour and relationships and treat each other well. As one pupil said, 'we shine as bright as we can, by helping each other, saying sorry and trying our best in everything'.

Westwoodside is highly inclusive and welcomes all with dignity and respect as children of God. The vision, 'let your light shine', drives a culture of care, respect and hope. All pupils, regardless of background, disability, gender, identity, religion or sexual orientation, feel accepted as the person God made them to be.

Autism awareness training for parents and a popular Makaton club for pupils support an understanding of the needs of others. Through relevant sex and relationship teaching, pupils understand choices in relationships and celebrate difference and diversity. The school's behaviour focus of 'relationships, routines and responses', supports all in treating others as they wish to be treated. Pupils are keen to challenge injustice and enjoy articulating the difference they make. They feel listened to and their viewpoints are treated with respect.

Collective worship is valued at Westwoodside, with a tangible sense of community and belonging. Worship is inclusive yet invitational; everyone's involvement is welcomed and valued, but without compulsion. Engaging worship flows from the school vision and values, with sensitive opportunities for prayer and reflection. Each of the school's Christian values is explored as a half termly theme, with the value of love running through. This gives pupils and staff space to grow spiritually and reflect on the challenge, 'when have you let your light shine?'. Through collective worship, pupils are gaining a secure biblical understanding of the teachings of Jesus, with relevance and meaning. Whole class evaluation of collective worship regularly leads to meaningful change. This has included the introduction of new songs, reflection time and the use of Makaton. Worship councillors have clear, well defined roles. They enjoy leading worship, including at celebrations of key festivals in church.

RE lessons are active and creative and are becoming more enquiry led over time. Quality questioning supports pupils in thinking deeply, such as Reception children considering, 'How did Jesus feel?' The school have been supported by the Diocese to map out the RE curriculum in a way that builds progression and makes connections. Pupils understand the activities that are required of them. However, learning objectives and success criteria are not always clearly focussed on what pupils need to learn and what is expected of them. Therefore, opportunities for deepening understanding can be missed. Recent monitoring of RE by governors and senior leaders is accurate and astute, identifying clear areas for development. Visitors from several faiths respectfully enrich the curriculum. Pupils are developing an understanding of a range of beliefs, but this can lack depth in some religions studied. Use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource is supporting pupil knowledge of key biblical concepts and Christian tradition.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	14 June 2022	URN	138713
Date of previous inspection	04 November 2015		
School status	VC	NOR	154
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation			
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Lincoln		
Headteacher	Simon Watson		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Below National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)	The school has a relatively new team and had three changes of headteacher in five years. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has been leading the school as acting headteacher since January 2022.		
Inspector's name	John Clapham	No.	0775

