

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Derby St James CofE VA Infant	
Address	Leonard Street, DE23 8EG
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
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.' Matthew 25: 35
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's carefully chosen vision enables them to respond compassionately towards the community that they serve. The school's leadership, at all levels, is unrelenting in embracing every opportunity to support emerging needs. Leaders use the school's vision to help them make strong decisions. Developments are further enhanced through local collaboration with other schools. Nevertheless, leaders recognise that developing their church school partnerships will further develop their vision. The vision enables the school to arrive at key Christian values which are used in the school's prayer. Collective worship is invitational and benefits from the wider Christian community's engagement. Pupils are yet to take a leading role in collective worship. Religious education (RE) nourishes and engages the pupils' interests. They are confident learners, articulate and knowledgeable. Staff ensure that learning for all pupils, including the most vulnerable, is tailored to their individual needs. The children begin and end their school day with prayer. Each classroom has thoughtfully constructed prayer areas. However, pupils are yet to regard these as opportunities for spiritual reflection.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a common understanding of spirituality. This will enable pupils and adults to share and respond to their experiences, enhancing their spiritual growth. Improve leaders' use of available partnerships to develop knowledge of effective school leadership. Develop the ways in which the pupils interact with and lead collective worship so that the experience is even more memorable and contributes to personal growth.

Inspection findings

The school's distinctive Christian vision is rooted in the bible. It is a driving force in guiding the school's love towards its community. It is the foundation for the school's response to significant need. Families turn to the school for support and the school's response is consistent.

St James' is a safe harbour where everybody is received with dignity and respect. Leadership and staff live the vision every day. Every opportunity is taken to value everyone as God's child. They are highly motivated to meet diverse emerging needs. They leave no stone unturned in their desire to be the difference needed for each pupil to flourish. The school is consistently mindful of the most vulnerable in their care.

Many challenges face families who relocate into this community from far away. Some are here only for a brief time. The school works tirelessly and lives out the vision, 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me'. Leaders demonstrate what they believe is important. New arrivals are not strangers for long. They are welcomed into this loving community, which is eager to nourish everyone on their journey. Through this advocacy the school enables hope to blossom. The school follows a higher calling, enabling everyone to flourish. Pupils learn from their new friends and help them feel welcome.

The welcome received by every pupil and adult enables everyone to feel they belong. Staff have unconditional positive regard for each pupil and each other. Pupils learn to respect others through the example set by adults and they are kind and considerate. Pupils are proud of their school and behave well, demonstrating positive learning behaviours. They are so enthusiastic about their learning. It is impressive that they discuss how the school's Christian values, derived from the vision, impact upon their school experience. Pupils are grateful for their friendships and know that it is important to say sorry when they have disagreements. The pupils are proud of their learning and have the drive to do their best.

Governors and staff consistently demonstrate how every pupil is precious. They listen to the pupils' life stories to inform decision making. Governors regularly attend during the school day to monitor developments and to encourage the staff team. They see how the welcome each pupil receives enables them to settle into their school environment. They analyse the need to support language development. This creates a deep love of learning through improved access to the curriculum. Leadership ensures each decision is directly influenced by the school's vision and that is promoted through their actions. Every adult has high aspirations for these pupils.

Staff embrace challenges and focus upon solutions. The vision refers to nourishment and staff use this when referring to nourishing pupils' development. They feed pupils' love of learning and natural curiosity with engaging activities. When learning about the story of Jesus calming the storm, pupils were sitting in a cardboard boat furnished with oars. Enacting the story brings it to life for pupils regardless of academic ability.

Governors and staff care deeply about ensuring that pupils are safe and loved. Their actions go beyond the school gate, supporting families with external agencies and signposting sources of help. Staff also make sure the environment is safe for pupils as they come to and go from school. Paths are diligently checked to remove anything that may cause harm.

Staff are mutually supportive, positively contributing to the school's development and the wider community. They focus upon creating and maintaining a learning environment which has high aspirations. Staff regularly review the curriculum, ensuring it is fit for purpose. They work hard to modify provision to meet different learning needs. Staff speak passionately

about creating a unique environment that works for their pupils. New arrivals are assessed quickly so that they can be supported efficiently.

Governors care deeply about staff wellbeing. They are mindful of workload and challenge the staff to find a good life work balance. The teaching team feel their work is appreciated, they are valued and they are always listened to. This sustains a strong and professional team.

Many pupils arrive without English as their first language. The school focusses its attention upon developing language skills to enable pupils' learning. Staff receive training to meet pupils' learning needs, building partnerships with other local settings to enhance curriculum and learning. The school's expertise is recognised by the local authority, inviting the headteacher to network with other schools.

Additional training is accessed to support vulnerable pupils. The behaviour policy includes restorative approaches with kindness driving the principles of the school's behaviour management.

The distinctive Christian vision is the foundation for the school's collective worship which is regularly referred to. Collective worship benefits from the wider Christian community's engagement. Daily collective worship provides a focus for the pupils, providing dedicated time and space for them to reflect. Pupils talk about Jesus, the friend who forgives, because of collective worship. By referring to the school's vision this special time enables pupils to think about relationships. They are reminded about how they can be loving towards others. Collective worship is valued as a deeply shared experience. It is invitational, peaceful and respectful. Staff from different faiths come together to organise worship. Their collaboration enables pupils to learn about different faiths. However, pupils are yet to take ownership of collective worship to further enhance their experience.


Pupils are shown how acts of kindness impact upon lives. The Christian vision is appropriately supported through charitable days such as 'Children in Need' and the local foodbank. Such activities are organised by staff and pupils are yet to take the lead.

Prayers are said at key points during the day. The pupils contribute to a prayer book which is used during worship. The school prayer invites pupils and adults to reflect upon gratitude and respect. Each classroom has a designated area which invites pupils to pray. The lack of a common understanding of spirituality limits the impact of such dedicated spaces.

The RE curriculum is well designed and develops pupils' curiosity. The pupils are knowledgeable and delight in explaining their learning. Resources such as 'Understanding Christianity' develop pupils' religious literacy. Staff confidently discuss how the curriculum meets the pupils' interests and experience and ensure all pupils have access to learning.

The headteacher, the RE subject leader, undertakes and shares effective professional development, including that provided by the diocese. The curriculum respects the range of faiths within the community.

The distinctively Christian vision is evident in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils and adults flourish because each of God's children is valued and treated with dignity and respect.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good	
	Pupils enjoy RE lessons which support the vision. They recall their learning which helps them with choices. Teaching is enthusiastic, engaging and inspires pupils to become inquisitive. Pupils learn about religions and worldviews, developing deep respect. This enables some opportunities for spiritual reflection. Staff have good subject knowledge and use appropriate questions. The curriculum is inclusive ensuring all pupils access RE. Leaders identify that planning for key skills and concepts is not consistently progressive.			
Information				
School	Derby St James CofE VA Infant	Inspection date	7 November 2022	
URN	112915	VC/VA/ Academy	Voluntary aided	
Diocese/District	Derby	Pupils on roll	112	
Headteacher	Luisa Pancisi			
Chair of Governors	Edward Nkwelle			
Inspector	Mark Millinson	No.	2121	