

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Scotforth St Paul's Church of England Primary and Nursery School	
Address	Scotforth Road, Lancaster, LA1 4SE
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	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
<p>Learning, growing and caring as part of God's family.</p> <p>Jesus (the gardener) nourishes and tends us as we learn and grow, so that we can all flourish. As a vine, we are one, but all unique and special to Him. We care for each other, as God cares for us. John 15:5</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's Christian vision nourishes and permeates all aspects of school life. Passionate and dedicated leaders, including governors, have a deeply theological understanding of the vision which shapes every decision they make. This results in a vibrant and loving community where pupils and adults flourish as part of God's family. Inspirational collective worship is life-giving and has a transformational impact on pupils and adults. It is invitational and highly inclusive. Prayer and reflection branch out from worship into school and, at times, family life, resulting in phenomenal spiritual flourishing. Exceptional church links are mutually beneficial and enhance the life of school and church. The vision to care as part of God's family results in an extraordinarily inclusive community. Pupils and adults flourish due to the high priority leaders give to wellbeing and the innovative approaches which support this. The recently renewed wider curriculum is diverse and thought-provoking. Lessons prompt pupils to ask big questions and to think about justice. Pupils develop a strong sense of compassion. This leads some pupils to take action as courageous advocates. Rich and creative Religious Education (RE) results in high levels of engagement from pupils. It makes a profound contribution to pupils' character and spiritual development. Pupils enthusiastically explain some theological concepts. However, some pupils are less secure in explaining more complex theological ideas.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build upon pupils' existing knowledge of theological concepts to deepen their learning and enable more pupils to articulate complex theological ideas. Consider the best way to share the school's transformative practice of collective worship, prayer, and deep reflection so that the school's vine grows and flourishes even further.

Inspection findings

The school's inclusive Christian vision is securely rooted in Bible teaching. The vision expresses the school's desire for pupils and adults to learn, grow and care as part of God's family. This leads to a strong sense of belonging throughout school. Pupils refer to the vision as a source of wisdom. They make links between the school Bible verse and the way they live their lives. Pupils from a range of cultures and faiths learn, grow and flourish together. They are tended to by loving and committed school staff, leaders and governors who wholeheartedly live out this vision.

Governors articulate a deeply theological understanding of the vision and how this leads to flourishing across school life. They effectively monitor the impact of the vision, and successfully strive to uphold the school's Church of England foundations. Strategic decisions are ethical and vision-driven. Governors articulate how the appointment of the vibrant and engaging headteacher was firmly rooted in her embodiment of the vision. She leads with deep Christian conviction, guiding and tending to the school just like the gardener tends to their vines. Consequently, pupils and adults feel deeply cared for and emulate that care towards others.

The school's vine is extremely well nourished by many vitalising partnerships. A strong and beneficial relationship with Blackburn Diocese results in staff keenly engaging with support and training. This has a transformative impact on the school community. Close links with St Paul's Church result in deeply enriching spiritual and pastoral support for pupils and adults. The school have a range of connections with other churches, Christian organisations, local universities, and sports partners. These rich, mutually beneficial, and hope-filled partnerships make a remarkable contribution to pupils' character development and spiritual flourishing.

Inspirational collective worship is at the very heart of school life and has a transformational impact on pupils and adults. Worship expresses the vision to be part of God's family. It is invitational and highly inclusive. Consideration is given to pupils with additional needs, so they can fully access worship. Care is taken to ensure that pupils see Christianity as a living, diverse, and world-wide faith. Multicultural images of Christ and resources which depict the Anglican communion support pupils' understanding of global Christianity. Music and Bible stories interweave with Christian values. This leads some pupils to question, 'What would Jesus do?' As a result, collective worship and Christian values have a direct impact on pupils' actions and attitudes. Worship leads pupils and adults to reflect deeply. It also impacts on the life of St Paul's Church. This is resulting in changes to church policy and opportunities to mirror school themes during church services. Consequently, collective worship leads to flourishing for many pupils and adults within and beyond the school community.

Exceptional support for the pupil worship team ensures that pupils are given progressive opportunities to develop skills of worship leading. Pupils make a strong contribution to the development of worship through insightful feedback. One example is when pupils said they felt unclear on the meaning of the prayer at the start of worship. As a result, the team created three visuals to help others gain a deeper understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.


RE is skilfully led. Rich and creative opportunities to explore a broad and balanced curriculum lead to high levels of engagement from pupils. Drama, art, poetry, visitors and games enrich lessons which are made accessible for all. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to reflect on their own ideas and beliefs. This often flows over into conversations at home about religion and prayer. Consequently, pupils flourish in their thinking. Prayer is a natural response for many pupils when learning about challenging themes such as injustice. As a result, RE

makes a profound contribution to pupils' character and spiritual development. Pupils enthusiastically learn about a range of faiths, which supports their understanding of religions practised within the school community. Pupils engage well with religious texts and develop skills to interpret and understand these. Theological concepts are taught, throughout school, using the Understanding Christianity resource. As a result, pupils can articulate some of these religious ideas, in an age-appropriate way.

The recently implemented wider curriculum stems from leaders' intentions to live out the school's vision and values. Pupils and leaders attended a racial justice conference last year, which led to innovative changes in the curriculum. Diverse and inclusive, the new curriculum explores themes such as injustice and how to care for God's world. A new commitment to learning outdoors is leading to richer conversations about the natural world. A curriculum emphasis on black history month led to learning about justice and inclusion. Consequently, pupils demonstrate high levels of compassion and charity. In some cases, pupils take action to make a difference on issues they care about. Learning about food poverty has led one child to regularly volunteer at a local foodbank. Another pupil was inspired to help homeless people, which led to her setting up food parcels with the church. Consequently, the wider curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' character development and is inspiring some pupils to become agents of change.

Collective worship, RE and the wider curriculum are expertly woven together to nourish pupils' spiritual development. Pupils make organic links between Christian values, their learning, and their thinking. Reflection areas, along with the use of thought-provoking questions, support pupils and adults to reflect on the meaning and mystery of life. As a result, pupils thrive as deep-thinking learners, and this has a phenomenal impact on their spiritual development.

The vision that each person should flourish leads to a highly inclusive school. Leaders know the school and individuals within it well. Adults attest to the school's transformative impact upon their lives. Innovations, such as the reading dog, who listens to reluctant readers, ensure that pupils build up self-confidence. Approaches to support the wellbeing and flourishing of vulnerable pupils, have been introduced in response to increased need. The roles of learning mentor and play therapist lead to improved social, emotional and mental health amongst pupils. Relationships within the school are strong. Pupils demonstrate exceptional levels of care for one another. Leaders intentionally support the wellbeing of staff. As a result, the school workforce feels valued and are highly committed to the outworking of the vision. This is a school where every person is nurtured, so they can grow, learn, care and blossom together as one. By tending to the needs of individuals, the whole vine flourishes.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good	
	As a result of engaging and reflective RE lessons, pupils are enthusiastic and respectful, learning about a range of world faiths. Care is taken to make RE accessible and inclusive for pupils of all abilities, and assessment processes reflect this. Monitoring ensures their accuracy. As a result of good teaching, pupils of all abilities make good progress. In some cases, pupils' responses go beyond age expectations. However, some pupils are less secure when talking about more complex theological ideas.			
Information				
School	Scotforth St Paul's Church of England Primary and Nursery School	Inspection date	16 November 2022	
URN	119533	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	
Diocese/District	Blackburn	Pupils on roll	203	
Headteacher	Katie Walsh			
Chair of Governors	Keith Weatherill			
Inspector	Alison Rice	No.	2103	