



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Michael with St John Church of England Primary School	
Address	Swallow Drive, Blackburn, BB1 6LE
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
<p>Guided by our Christian values, we strive to inspire and raise aspirations. We will nurture our children so they are equipped to overcome life’s challenges and make a positive contribution to society. We endeavour to instil love and respect for one another, working together to create a happy school community.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘With God all things are possible’ Matthew 19:26</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school’s Christian vision is clearly articulated and firmly rooted in the Bible. The shared understanding of and commitment to the vision enables everyone to thrive. • Inspired by the vision, leaders have created a warm, welcoming environment. Everyone is encouraged to treat one other with dignity and respect and believe ‘with God all things are possible’. • Adults live out the vision through their commitment to serving all pupils and their families. This has created a strong culture of hope and aspiration. As a result, pupils are compassionate and beginning to develop as advocates for social justice. • Deeply inclusive and invitational collective worship gives opportunity for spiritual growth for pupils and adults alike. The worship life of the school supports the embedding of the school’s Christian vision. However, monitoring and evaluation does not always inform future planning. The involvement of pupil leaders, the pupil ethos team, is currently developing. • High quality religious education (RE) enables pupils to flourish as they develop deep respect and curiosity regarding a range of religions. The RE lead is updating the syllabus in line with recent changes to the locally agreed syllabus.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop collective worship systems of monitoring and evaluation to inform future planning. Involve the pupil ethos team and support them to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship alongside adults. • Strengthen and broaden opportunities for pupils to initiate and lead a range of social action, so that they can develop and become courageous advocates. • Ensure the new RE syllabus is fully embedded by September 2023.



Inspection findings

St Michael with St John is a welcoming, nurturing and supportive primary school. The Christian vision, driven and supported by all leaders, inspires pupils and their families. Positive relationships and a strong culture of respect and care at all levels drive high aspirations. Pupils understand the vision well. They readily refer to the Bible quote, 'With God all things are possible' to remind and encourage one another. Pupils, staff and parents give numerous examples of the vision in action. Love and compassion are evident in the way adults and pupils support one another.

The school's Christian vision which 'strives to inspire and raise aspirations' underpins the curriculum. The assistant head and supporting staff team ensure that the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) are met within the classroom environment. Teaching assistants reflect the vision by nurturing pupils through targeted support programmes. In this way the school equips pupils to overcome life's challenges.

Leaders demonstrate their commitment to serving all pupils and their families, living out the vision. Through studying the lives of different inspirational people, pupils' understanding of courageous advocacy is growing. The school recently achieved Bronze award status in Christian Aid's Global Neighbours scheme and is working towards Silver. By working on these awards pupils have learnt practical ways to make a positive contribution to society. Pupils gain understanding of how to become advocates for change, developing a wider understanding of social action. Underpinning all of this work is the vision which supports pupils to 'make a positive contribution to society'. Pupils are beginning to apply their knowledge and understanding so that they personally can be advocates for social justice.

Parents hold the staff and school in high regard, praising the commitment of the staff for their unwavering support of the community. Nurture, love and respect are evident. Parents speak with enthusiasm about the inclusive nature of the school. The school is rightly proud of being an inclusive school which respects all pupils' faiths and is sensitive to requirements. For example, the school provides a quiet, reflective space during Ramadan for pupils who are fasting. Leaders give consideration to decisions about when to organise clubs. This is to enable pupils to engage fully in school activities as well as, for example, attending the mosque. This means pupils can engage fully in a range of school activities whilst being committed to their faith. Through charitable work pupils understand how rapidly changing circumstances and unpredictable events can have immediate impact on many lives. One such event was the floods in Pakistan. Pupils immediately responded with a fundraising event. The pupils' comms team are active in the local community. They lead a weekly litter-picking activity within the community. They are also currently working on a road safety issue they have identified outside school. Pupils are working with the road safety team, police and fire service to organise a workshop to encourage safe drivers.

Driven by the vision, pastoral care is at the centre of the school's approach to mental health and wellbeing. The pastoral team support pupils within school, referring to relevant external organisations as required. The PSHE curriculum equips children with strategies to support themselves and use language they can understand to talk about their own mental health. Adults and pupils talk about how well supported they are in maintaining their mental health. Pupil prefects and playground buddies play a significant part in helping everyone play together and create a happy school community.

RE is highly regarded and a priority on the school development plan. The RE lead is keen to ensure the curriculum gives pupils opportunities to flourish. Lessons are well planned and they engage and challenge pupils. A robust monitoring and evaluation system is in place. The school is in the early stages of adopting the recently updated locally agreed syllabus. Staff receive good support and appropriate professional development. As a result, they teach the RE syllabus with confidence. Pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories and sound understanding of Christianity. Effective teaching of RE supports pupils to develop curiosity and deep respect for a range of religions. The school is highly regarded in the diocese and has a strong and positive relationship with their diocesan link. This is evident in the support received when developing the vision and ongoing support for the RE lead and staff development.

Collective worship is an integral part of the school day. Pupils joining the school quickly learn the symbolism of the lighting of three candles in worship. Moments like this and familiar responses such as 'Peace be with you' offer pupils and adults spiritually rich experiences. Worship enables everyone to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Sensitive planning and leading enables everyone to be present with integrity. Pupils have different opportunities to engage and respond. Leaders are skilful at helping everyone to feel involved. They set very high expectations of inclusion. As a result, pupils listen exceptionally well to one another. Leaders have created 'The Woodland', a dedicated space for reflection, prayer, meditation and silence. This concern to nurture and support pupils' spiritual development is driven strongly by the vision. One result of such provision is that pupils and adults are confident that the school community values and respects their faiths and beliefs. Within the space is a prayer tree. Pupils and adults make use of this by adding their own prayers and reading those written by others. Pupils wrote the school prayer and this has become a daily feature in every class. Its shared authorship brings pupils together, regardless of their different religious beliefs. The priest plays a significant part in the life of the school. Pupils know him well and talk about him enthusiastically at home. Parents like his approachability and value his support. He works closely with the ethos team, supporting them as they work with different classes to deliver collective worship. The priest is currently working with staff and pupils more in leading and evaluating collective worship.

'With God all things are possible' reverberates through all that the school does. The leaders and staff show genuine compassion and care for each other. Parents and governors recognise the dedication of staff to inspire pupils to flourish.

Information			
School	St Michael with St John	Inspection date	16 January 2023
URN	119356	VC	VC
Diocese	Blackburn	Pupils on roll	301
MAT/Federation	N/A		
Headteacher	Sarah Murphy		
Chair of Governors	Bhawna Patel		
Inspector	Tina Astley	No.	C.21/22