

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Darrington Church of England Primary School	
Address	Denby Crest, Darrington, WF8 3SB
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

School's vision
<p>Shine, Share Flourish.</p> <p>We shine our light for each other.</p> <p>We share Peace, Respect and Friendship.</p> <p>We flourish and grow together.</p> <p>Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light to my path. Psalm 119</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's strong Christian vision is at the heart of all decision making in this caring and welcoming community. Leaders are ambitious in their plans to continually improve as a church school. This results in pupils and adults flourishing. • Opportunities for spiritual development are offered across all areas of the curriculum. This exceptionally rich culture of reflection enables pupils and adults to thrive. The school is currently developing its outdoor reflection area to further enhance provision. • Pupils have a deep understanding of social injustice. They speak passionately and knowledgeably about how they can make a difference. They are empowered through leadership roles to be agents of change. • Driven by the vision, inspirational collective worship is an integral part of this deeply Christian school. Pupils confidently relate its transformational impact on their lives. Leaders are developing links with local churches to enrich the worship. • Religious education (RE) is exceptionally well led by the experienced subject lead. The RE curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. Pupils have a well-developed understanding and knowledge of Christianity and world faiths.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop links with other churches so as to introduce pupils to a range of worship.

Inspection findings

Offering a warm welcome to all, Darrington is a happy and dynamic school. Leaders articulate clearly how the deeply Christian vision shapes all actions and policies of this excellent school. Genuine care and ambition for all is at the heart of all decision making.

Governance is a strength of this standalone academy. Diocesan support facilitated the most recent review the vision. It also helps to identify ways to continue to develop as a church school. The linking of governors to specific areas, as well as more robust monitoring, supports evaluation of the vision. The informal partnership with church schools in Wakefield provides support and challenge. It also offers opportunities for staff from this small school to share good practice. Professional training of all staff is a priority and has a transformational impact. They feel valued and empowered as a result.

Exceptional support mechanisms are in place to support the varying needs of pupils, families and staff. Leaders have been quick to respond to the increasing numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). Considerable investment in resources and training, as well as deployment of staff, have been implemented to meet needs. Parents of pupils with SEND are extremely well supported through regular communication and opportunities to speak to specialists from Wakefield. The one-to-one support offered to pupils suffering emotionally and with anxiety is transforming lives. Pupils and parents both attest to how this is supporting the development of coping mechanisms, confidence and improved self-esteem. As a result, pupils thrive.

Relationships between all members of the community are exceptionally strong and supportive. Behaviour is very good. Pupils explain that they show forgiveness in keeping with their school value if they fall out. Parents refer to school being like a 'big family where all are respected and included'. Parents value that leaders will support them in times of difficulty. Attendance is high as pupils enjoy learning in this vibrant environment. Central to the vision for all to flourish, opportunities for leadership and personal growth abound. Outdoor play and learning, music and extra-curricular sporting clubs are some of the many enrichment activities on offer.

Leaders ensure that Darrington is an integral part of the community it serves. The annual carol service in the Tithe Barn is an outward manifestation of their Christian vision in action. Pupils show appreciation of local elderly residents by inviting them to a coffee morning and presenting them with gifts at Christmas. This is explained as 'sharing and shining our light'.

Spiritual development is a key strength of this school. Planned opportunities within the curriculum offer pupils opportunities to explore spiritual and ethical issues. 'Candle time' at the end of the day is valued as a time to reflect on values and give thanks for the day. 'Spiritual journeys' centred around a theme, such as Lent, based on a series of tasks promote highly effective reflection and contemplation. The impact of this experience for staff and governors is profound. Evaluations and discussions with adults show the transformational impact of 'making time for oneself in life'. Reflection areas in school are used for stillness, reflection and for reaffirmation. Plans are currently underway to develop the large outdoor area to further enhance opportunities for reflection.

Driven by the vision, pupils are empowered to be agents of change. They recognise their role in the community and how they can make a difference. The inspiration for their current fundraising focus was a pupil in school who independently fundraised for the local clothes bank. Pupils are unanimous in their advocacy that it is important to support local causes. They are also adamant that, for human dignity, it is important to donate new items. On the day of inspection the pupil leaders had launched their Easter appeal for new clothes for the

same charity.

Pupils' understanding of social injustice is informed by, and, transformed by, the curriculum. Topics, including one on Civil Rights, inspire pupils to challenge injustice and to make a difference. For example, their raised awareness of child labour prompted letters to football kit suppliers. Pupils are passionate about everyone having a part to play to improve the world. The lack of diversity within the community has been the driving force for some curriculum decisions taken by leaders. Work on protected characteristics and Pride celebrations have all supported pupils' understanding of the need for tolerance and respect. Pupils fully embrace diversity and difference.

Collective Worship enriches the life of all. The school has a well-developed sense of liturgy with the light of the vision, prayer and song at its heart. At inspection, pupil leaders, known as Worship Wonderers, led an inspiring worship on Joseph and his brothers. Entirely planned by the pupils, they ensured that the drama was accessible to all, including the youngest. The maturity and confidence of the pupil leaders was exceptional as they gathered answers and also led invitational prayers. Singing in parts by the whole community is both uplifting and moving. The resource 'Picture News' is impacting significantly on pupils and inspiring them to act. For example, one pupil raised over one thousand pounds for the earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria. Major festivals, such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter, are celebrated in the local church. Members of the Pontefract Congregational Church also lead worship. Leaders are currently pursuing opportunities with other religious organisations to introduce pupils to varying forms of worship.

The headteacher, a member of the Wakefield Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), leads RE with integrity and compassion. Regular, high quality professional development for all staff is pivotal to the success of this core subject. Pupils benefit from highly- skilled staff who ensure that the carefully crafted curriculum probes and challenges. RE is enjoyed as a safe place for pupils to explore their own thoughts and ideas. Big questions are debated with confidence, such as the one observed at inspection on analogies for the meaning of life. Class books capture an overview of learning. However, individual reflection books show real depth of understanding and progression through the years. Arts projects, which are an integral part of the curriculum, excite pupils. They eagerly share their work explaining their interpretation of a recent theme 'We have more in common than divides us'. Displays of pupils' work are of an exceptionally high standard. Visits to places of worship including a mosque, synagogue and cathedral support pupils' understanding of Christianity and world faiths. RE in Darrington celebrates diversity and clearly embodies the school vision of showing respect to all.

Information			
School	Darrington Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	23 March 2023
URN	140110	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Leeds	Pupils on roll	126
Headteacher	Lyndsay Ranby		
Chair of Governors	Ian Brown		
Inspector	Mary Connor	No.	2132