

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bakewell Methodist Junior School	
Address	Stoney Close, Bakewell, DE45 1FR
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
'Living life in all its fulness' John 10 v10
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vision and values reflect the Methodist commitment to the value of all people. They are fully embedded throughout the school. As a result, supportive relationships help all to flourish. • The well-developed curriculum enables all to thrive. Though pupils are aware of some global issues and concerns, they lack the confidence to challenge injustice. • There is a nourishing understanding of spirituality that permeates the school community. A focus on 'big questions' significantly contributes to this. • Collective worship is set within the framework of worship in the Methodist tradition. It contributes to spiritual flourishing. Whilst Bible stories and Christian concepts are explored, insufficient focus is given to enabling pupils to recall and express these. • The Religious Education (RE) curriculum is thoroughly planned. It is effective and ambitious. Assessment systems are secure so that teachers know how well pupils learn in RE.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend links with the Epworth Education Trust so that the school can share good practice, as well as further benefit from support and challenge. • Develop pupils' awareness of, and confidence to discuss, global issues in order that they can be empowered to challenge injustice. • Explore ways to develop the teaching of Bible stories and related Christian concepts. This is to enable pupils to develop understanding of their significance for Christians, expressing them in age-appropriate ways.

Inspection findings

Leaders have successfully embedded the Christian vision to create an inclusive, harmonious school community. The Methodist commitment to value all people is central. This is a place where everyone can 'live life in all its fullness'. All work and worship together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. Pastoral care provides compassionate support for pupils and families. This is much appreciated by parents who rightly talk passionately about the help they receive. The Methodist principle of 'Do all we can' motivates staff and governors to give pupils the best offer. They know their pupils exceptionally well and tailor provision to enable success. Those with additional needs, or who may be vulnerable, are quickly identified, receive high quality interventions, and thrive. Governors know the school well. They are passionate that no pupil should miss out on visits or experiences. Whatever support, practical or financial, is required, they find a way to provide it. Staff feel valued as part of this team. They embrace new opportunities as part of their professional development. A member of the ancillary team being given opportunity to undertake training to lead forest schools being an example. This is most clearly a Methodist school that 'watches over one another in love'.

The values of creativity, diversity, resilience and aspiration are the foundation of all aspects of school life. The curriculum is designed to give pupils a wide range of opportunities so they can flourish. Reading is a particular focus. Pupils read from the list of 'Bakewell's Brilliant Books'. A variety of texts, including those from diverse cultures and social settings, ensures development of their understanding of the world. Through the wider curriculum every pupil is encouraged to see themselves as unique with different skills and talents. This supports their wellbeing. They are thoughtful and reflective learners. Issues concerning the disadvantages and deprivations across the world are discussed in geography topics. One pupil rightly explained that, 'we need to think about these things to better care for our world'. However, most lack the confidence to discuss and challenge injustice. Asking 'big questions' is encouraged. It is a way in which the school expresses its approach to spiritual development. This inspires everyone to explore their relationship with themselves, each other, the world and 'the beyond'. In exploring crime and punishment, pupils challenge one another with questions such as 'did the punishment fit the crime?' Adults speak of the way these discussions support their own spiritual development as they listen to, and talk with, pupils. Reflection areas in classrooms are linked to 'big questions' such as 'who should we look up to?' Pupils and adults write their thoughts and prayers, some of which are used in worship. This opportunity to 'write prayers and think' encourages the spiritual growth of all.

Well-planned acts of collective worship are integral to school life. These are experienced in the broad Methodist tradition with singing, prayer and reflecting together being key elements. Pupils rightly declare that, 'worship helps us to think about God'. With support from adults, they have explored the words of some songs and hymns used. This enables pupils to understand their meaning. One correctly explained that, 'singing helps us to say what we believe'. Bible stories are used in worship and in RE. However, pupils are not able to readily recall these with clarity. The Methodist minister leads worship as well as providing pastoral care to the head teacher. He supports adults and pupils in understanding what it means to be part of a Methodist school. This contributes significantly to their spiritual development. Visits to the Methodist church in Bakewell for special services create a strong link with the school. Staff and pupils monitor worship, enabling all to feel involved. Pupil leaders are enthusiastic about the role they play in leading and planning. They talk about how this helps them 'understand more about worship and why it's important'. Much of the worship they lead focuses on the value of aspiration. Through this they raise their own and their peers' hopes



for the future. A pupil, impacted by exploring this value, wrote ‘Live not out of fear, and make the most of life, be determined because it will all be worth it’.

RE promotes a questioning approach to learning. The curriculum enables a diverse range of religions and world views to be explored. Pupils are interested in, knowledgeable about, and very respectful of these. This is a result of good RE teaching. They are well informed about John Wesley, his life and teachings and see these as relevant to their lives. In learning about John Wesley’s ‘heart-warming’ experience, pupils reflect on what ‘warms’ their heart. ‘My heart is warmed by my family – fun times we share together’ one pupil rightly commented. Pupils discuss some Christian concepts such as the Holy Trinity. They correctly explain that the Holy Spirit is with us now to ‘help us live like Jesus’. Other concepts are not as well understood or expressed. A well-planned approach to assessing pupils learning in RE ensures that teachers know how well pupils are learning. These, alongside ambitious curriculum plans, ensure that pupils do well and thrive.

The school readily embraces links with its formal partners, including the Church of England infant school from which pupils transfer. Transition activities and joint events ensure that pupils know both schools well. When beginning in year 3 they are confident and secure. Support provided by the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST) is highly valued. More recently assistance from the Epworth Education Trust, the academy trust which the school is joining, is proving invaluable. Assistance with creating a courageous and inspiring curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils being an example. These partnerships deepen understanding for staff, leaders, and governors of what it means to ‘live life in all its fullness’ in a Methodist church school.

Information			
School	Bakewell Methodist Junior School	Inspection date	25 May 2023
URN	112870	VC/VA/Academy	
Diocese/District	Methodist	Pupils on roll	68
Headteacher	Sarah Owens		
Chair of Governors	Hugo Reynolds		
Inspector	Jane Lewis	No.	27