

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Bishop Lonsdale Church of England Primary Academy, Eccleshall</b>	
Address	Shaws' Lane, Eccleshall, Stafford, ST21 6AU
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>Believe, achieve, inspire.</p> <p>We will aspire for the very best teaching and learning experience for every child. Where every child and adult can flourish and achieve both academically and spiritually, knowing that 'everything is possible for someone who has faith.' (Mark 9:23). Equality and inclusion are at the core of our safe and caring community. 'Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter. We are all the work of your hand.' (Isaiah 64:8).</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led with humility and passion, the empowering Christian vision drives every aspect of the work of the school. Supported by strong partnerships and an openness to learn, leaders are on a journey of continuous improvement. Pupils grow as confident, independent learners and adults flourish professionally and personally. However, regular monitoring of the effectiveness of RE is not fully developed.</li> <li>• A carefully constructed curriculum engages and inspires all to achieve. Enhanced by creative use of the school grounds and local cultural capital, opportunities are found to embed learning and support spiritual growth. A culture of reflection enables pupils and adults to develop in profound and transformative ways.</li> <li>• Exceptional effort is taken to ensure inclusion of all, understanding of difference and celebration of diversity. This reflects Bishop Lonsdale as a safe, caring school family serving as a beacon of hope for the wider area.</li> <li>• Bishop Lonsdale is a naturally worshipping community. Pupils and adults share equally in learning, reflection and celebration, flourishing spiritually as a result.</li> <li>• Religious education (RE) is highly valued as an academic subject and is seen as vital to pupils' full development. The well-constructed RE curriculum enables learning and personal growth. However, the consideration of non-religious worldviews is not fully incorporated.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the extent to which the local academy committee monitors the effectiveness of RE. This is to support the development of leaders and the impact of the curriculum.</li> <li>• Develop the RE curriculum to include more structured exploration of non-religious worldviews. This is to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the ways in which belief impacts on life and culture.</li> </ul>

## Inspection findings

Bishop Lonsdale is both an inspirational, loving community and a highly effective Church school. Acting with humility and a deeply Christian-driven moral imperative, leaders live out their vision for the school. This is based on biblical teaching about God as 'the potter', shaping the development of each individual. Pupils thrive and grow as confident, independent learners, believing that 'all things are possible'. Adults flourish, nurtured in a loving, caring culture that provides both support and opportunity. The lives of many pupils, staff and families have been transformed by the loving acceptance and actions of the school. Bishop Lonsdale is well-served by its strong partnerships with the local church, diocese and academy trust. Each partner shares the values of the school, providing regular advice and training. Leaders and staff are open to new ideas, keen to learn and encouraged to apply what they learn. This contributes to Bishop Lonsdale being a vibrant, highly effective and constantly improving Church school. The local academy committee is hard-working and very efficient in its role. Committee and school leaders are guided and well-supported by the academy trust, while free to implement their unique Christian vision. All policy and decision making are informed by this vision and there is a clear, regularly reviewed plan for development. However, the monitoring of the effectiveness of RE is not fully developed.

Inspired by the highly aspirational vision, the curriculum is designed to ignite interest and meet the needs of all learners. In each subject great care is taken to ensure that resources, experiences and a variety of teaching styles provide motivation. Very good use is made of local visits and visitors. All subject leaders benefit from academy-led 'quality learning circles' for training and sharing good practice. This is enhanced further by highly effective use of the extensive school grounds. Regular forest school sessions are held on site for each class. These provide opportunities for environmental projects and support for creative learning across the curriculum. Pupils who sometimes struggle in a classroom setting flourish through opportunities to learn outside. Engaging with the natural world is one aspect of a wider, intentional approach to spiritual development. A shared language and understanding of spirituality are threaded through all school activities. Pupils and adults are continually drawn to moments of deep reflection which support learning and personal development.

Across the school, pupils are highly motivated to achieve in their learning and make a difference to their community. Forest school activities promote care for the natural world and prompt enthusiastic engagement with environmental issues. Strong connections to a charity for people who are homeless provide inspiration for a number of successful social action projects. This helps pupils to see themselves as agents of change and contribute to a culture of service. The Christian vision encourages them to seek solutions to challenges, and this extends to communities beyond the school.

A desire for healing and wholeness motivates leaders to work tirelessly in support of pupils and their families. Many have been supported over extended periods to ensure that situations are transformed. The commitment to inclusion goes beyond tolerance to a sense of heartfelt celebration of difference and diversity. Confident in the Christian foundation and vision of the school, leaders embrace those of all faiths in a loving community.

Carefully structured, passionately led worship is the heartbeat of the school. Planning is based on termly values themes but also responds to current events and the Church calendar. Pupils, leaders, teachers, clergy and members of the academy committee share in leading acts of worship. Leaders' plans are supported with a range of resources and an openness to regular training and new ideas. This ensures a variety of fresh perspectives and approaches with a clear and consistent purpose. Worship is powerfully and inclusively open. Pupils and adults feel welcome, comfortable and able to engage without pressure. There is

a natural, joyful atmosphere of community in whole school worship. Regular class and key stage worship provides opportunity for deeper discussion and exploration of sometimes challenging ideas. As a result, all are nurtured and encouraged in their spiritual development. Pupils also develop an impressive knowledge of biblical teaching and understanding of how it relates to their lives. Worship experiences extend into the wider community, with regular involvement in the activities of the local 'churches together' group. This ensures that pupils learn to appreciate different traditions alongside Anglican liturgy and practice. The local church is used regularly for celebration of festivals and to support learning in RE. There is, therefore, a mutually beneficial spiritual life shared between the school and the wider community.

High priority is given by leaders to RE as an academic subject. The curriculum is well-structured, with many similarities to that of other curriculum areas. A recent focus on key vocabulary has helped to support development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. This has also ensured development of religious literacy. Units of work build on prior learning and key questions are clearly identified in knowledge organisers. Teachers are able to assess what and how pupils' are learning through consistent use of question boxes in each lesson. The balance in these, between knowledge recall and personal response, ensures that opportunity is given for critical reflection. Pupils learn about Christianity, a number of world faiths and core religious concepts. However, structured consideration of non-religious worldviews is not fully developed.

Leadership of RE is well-supported by senior leaders, the diocese and the academy led quality learning group. This results in highly effective professional development for all teachers, leading to growth in their confidence and pupil flourishing. Learning is enhanced by visits to places of worship and annual whole school celebration of interfaith week. Monitoring of the effectiveness of RE is carried out by leaders but not by members of the academy committee.

Bishop Lonsdale is a profoundly caring and nurturing community. Driven by a belief in possibility, lives are moulded and shaped by love.

Information			
School	Bishop Lonsdale Church of England Primary Academy, Eccleshall	Inspection date	12 July 2023
URN	143351	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Lichfield	Pupils on roll	271
MAT/Federation	St Chad's Academies Trust		
Principal	Claire Jones		
Chair of Trust Board	Clare Furnell-King		
Inspector	Peter Barfoot	No.	2216