



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

Banks Methodist School	
Address	Chapel Lane, Banks, Southport, PR9 8EY
School vision	
<p>At Banks Methodist Primary School we strive to follow Jesus' example and learn together with resilience and faith. Through living out our Christian Values we seek to equip our pupils with the resilience to be independent, inquisitive individuals with a love for learning across all areas of the curriculum so that they are able to reach their full potential and flourish to be the very best they can be for themselves, our community and for our wonderful world. We would like our children to appreciate and nurture our society and be the positive change of the future.</p> <p>We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13) knowing that we have to 'be bold, be strong for the Lord our God is with us'. (Joshua 1:9)</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's Christian vision is well suited to its context and underpins highly effective relationships which are caring and fruitful. The school provides a welcoming, safe environment where both adults and pupils know they are valued.</li> <li>• Each individual's uniqueness is celebrated. Bold decisions around provision ensure that every pupil flourishes, whatever their starting point.</li> <li>• The school prioritises good mental health and wellbeing for the whole school community. Genuine Christian love has a significant impact in supporting families in all circumstances.</li> <li>• An impressive breadth of extra-curricular opportunities enhances pupils' individual talents, enabling them to shine and flourish fully.</li> <li>• The school benefits from positive and rewarding links with the relaunched local Methodist team. The partnership has ensured effective governance in upholding the Christian foundation of the school.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed a shared understanding of spiritual development that can be woven through the curriculum. This is in order that pupils access a range of planned, regular experiences that enable them to flourish spiritually.</li> <li>• Extend pupils engagement in social action by broadening their understanding of justice and responsibility. This is to enable them to become effective agents of change.</li> <li>• Align policy and practice with regard to the school's Methodist foundation. This is so that pupils gain a deeper understanding of Methodism through routinely planned curriculum opportunities, collective worship and reflection.</li> </ul>	

### Inspection findings

The school's Christian vision is relevant and shaped by its journey over the last few years. It is rooted in two key biblical verses. These give staff and pupils strength to be bold (Joshua 1:9) and the reassurance that God will support them (Philippians 4:13). This has been particularly pertinent in the aiding the school through changes due to the recent closure of the neighbouring Methodist church. The vision is expressed through key values such as thankfulness and love. The words of John Wesley and Methodist ideals weave through the values, giving an extra dimension and focus. The vision is dynamic in its response to the needs of the pupils and wider school community. For example, the vision's focus on resilience ensures that it is a recurring theme in the daily life of the school. Therefore, pupils and adults flourish.

The Christian vision underpins a thoughtful curriculum, crafted to secure pupil flourishing. Leaders and governors have made bold decisions to ensure that the school is equipped to cater for pupils' specific needs. Likewise, staff frequently and consistently 'go the extra mile' to guarantee that provision is personalised, where necessary. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and other additional needs are secure in their learning. Christian love is lived out through this nurturing approach. Pupils' gifts and talents are enhanced through a rich tapestry of extra-curricular activities. This boosts their learning and self-esteem. In addition, carefully selected educational visits have a lasting impact on pupils in terms of valuable experiences and reflective responses. Governors undertake monitoring in a variety of ways. They are well-informed regarding the Christian character of the school and assess its impact. Leaders are clear as to the effectiveness of the curriculum. They are courageous in their decisions thus enabling flourishing for each and every pupil.

Collective worship is driven by the Christian vision. Interwoven themes of faith and resilience are brought to life through Christian values. Purposely placed first thing in the morning, worship empowers and inspires all for the day ahead. Therefore, this special time is greatly valued by pupils and adults alike. Those leading worship seek out ways in which it is accessible for all. Leaders invite all to join in collective worship, whilst maintaining respect for those of different faiths or none. Pupils gain some understanding of Methodist themes through worship. For example, the words of John Wesley are referenced and 'singing the faith' is embraced with joy. This is strengthened further by local ministers leading worship once a fortnight. The school is also blessed with a blossoming partnership with the local Anglican church. The vicar leads worship in school and St Stephen's Church is used for festivals such as Christmas. This has been effective in sharing Christian love across the wider community. Worship provides pupils with valuable reflection time. Prayer is an important part of school life. Therefore, pupils regularly access moments of quiet through the reflective areas in each classroom. The use of outdoor areas also supports pupils' spiritual development. However, currently there is no shared understanding of spirituality or planned opportunities to develop it, thus limiting its wider reach.

Acceptance is a strong theme that is propelled by the school's vision. Leaders and staff routinely go above and beyond to envelop adults and pupils in genuine Christian love. Hence, there is a strong culture of trust where everyone feels valued and cared for in a safe haven, devoid of judgement. Parents speak of the importance of this and the positive impact it has on both their own lives and their children's. Good mental health and wellbeing are a priority. As a result, families benefit from staff trained in this area and from support provided by outside agencies. The school is adept at delivering individualised strategies that meet specific needs. Consequently, pupils flourish as they are understood and cherished under any circumstances.

The strong sense of community is rooted in the vision. Therefore, positive relationships abound in the school. Adults exude Christian love and care, hence a parent describing staff as 'angels'. Accordingly, pupils also demonstrate good behaviour and courtesy, reflecting Jesus' example and the Methodist theme of 'watching over one another in love'. They want to make right choices. A pupil told their mum

that, 'God would not like it if I had to go to the headteacher's office'. Therefore, on the rare occasions when there are disagreements, forgiveness and reconciliation are used effectively and understood well. Mutually beneficial partnerships resonate with the school's vision. The local Anglican church has provided the school with financial assistance to develop a wildlife area. Likewise, members of the Methodist community provide a range of support, including stepping up as governors. Inter-school partnerships also ensure rich opportunities for staff and pupils alike. Acceptance extends to pupils' response to diversity. Hence, they are resolute in that everyone should be treated in the same way. Pupils have an understanding of justice and want to make a difference. This is particularly evident in their desire to protect the environment. Hence, following a field trip, pupils asked to return to the site to improve the habitat through litter picking. However, currently there are limited opportunities for pupils to be agents for change across a range of different contexts.

The profile of religious education's (RE) within the school reflects the vision. It encourages pupils to be inquisitive and have a love of learning. Leaders and governors have recently agreed a new scheme of work that meets the requirements for a Church school. Therefore, provision in the subject is well mapped out and sequential, enabling pupils to build on prior learning. Pupils enjoy RE. They commented on how it gives them an insight into world faiths and worldviews, as well as into Christianity. Big questions, engaging activities and reflection facilitate pupils thinking deeply about key concepts and ideas. However, topics in the RE curriculum lack opportunities for pupils to develop a deeper understanding of the Methodist faith. Collaborative working with a neighbouring school has been effective in supporting the subject leader in developing RE further. Staff also access training from the local diocese, thus enhancing their approaches.

Banks Methodist Primary School is rightly viewed as a cherished place at the heart of its community. In the words of a pupil, 'it's like being at home but with learning as well'.

The inspection findings indicate that Banks Methodist Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	10 October 2023	URN	119405
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	64
Diocese	Methodist		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Stephen Draper		
Chair	Stephen Wedlin		
Inspector	Jo Williams	No.	863