



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

Boltons Church of England Primary School	
Address	Bolton Low Houses, Wigton, CA78PA

### School vision

Using Christian values as our guide, we are continually building a creative, imaginative and joyful community where we aim that all:

- can develop their spirituality
- are valued and respected as children made in the image of God
- can flourish and live life in all its fullness

Romans 12:10 sets the benchmark by which we want our school to be judged. In applying Jesus' command to 'Love one another as God loves us', our school aims to be a place where love is a way of life, received as you come into the school and taken out as pupils, visitors and staff go out into the world.

### School strengths

- Authentic and inspiring examples of servant leadership from school leaders and governors ensure that the school's vision is central to all decisions.
- Pupils are valued and respected and this defines how they treat one another in love according to the school's Christian vision.
- The school's curriculum provides intentionally planned opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually and live life in all its fullness. The impact of this is carefully monitored by school leaders and adapted to meet pupils' needs.
- Impactful collective worship is varied and accessible to all. Opportunities to reflect are highly valued as is the opportunity to gather together as a whole school family.
- Boltons Church of England Primary School is a highly inclusive school in which gifts are recognised and 'everyone is accepted as they are.'

### Areas for development

- Embed the school's newly-worded vision with wider stakeholders, including parents and carers, so that they are able to fully support the school in fulfilling its vision.
- Systematically plan for pupils to have opportunities to develop an understanding that they can be agents of change in their local community and beyond.
- Further develop the school's curriculum for religious education (RE) so that taught religions are understood as diverse, living faiths.

## Inspection findings

It is clear that love is a way of life at Boltons Church of England Primary School. This begins the moment the very youngest pupils enter school and are warmly greeted by their older school 'buddy'. It continues through to enhanced transition with local secondary schools for pupils at the end of their primary school journey. At this school, pupils are cared for as unique individuals made in the image of God.

School leaders and highly committed governors ensure that the school's Christian vision is central to decision making. As a result, the vision is a well understood and consistently applied driving force that ensures pupils and adults flourish here. The wording of the vision has been recently revised to reflect the school's current context, although the fundamental principles remain unchanged. The vision is firmly embedded throughout school and is indeed 'a way of life'. There is not however a consistent understanding of the school's newly-worded Christian vision amongst wider stakeholders, including parents and carers. As a result, they are unable to fully support the school in fulfilling its vision.

Governors strategically monitor the impact of the school's vision and make regular, purposeful visits to the school. As a result, they are assured that the school's Christian vision is enabling all to flourish. Leaders at all levels are keen for school to develop further and have identified positive steps to enable this. Wider school partnerships with the diocese and local church support the professional development of staff and enrich collective worship.

The school's approach to spiritual development is carefully mapped, across curriculum subjects where appropriate, and is well understood by all. It inspires pupils to find awe and wonder in the 'little things' in nature and the qualities and talents of one another. Opportunities for reflection are highly valued by pupils as a time when they can 'just be still or talk with God.' Pupils are unafraid of engaging with life's big questions and have planned opportunities to do so. They have been taught to disagree well and are respectful of the ideas of others.

Collective worship is seen as a time for the school to gather together as a whole school family. Parents and carers value opportunities to join their children in worship. It is engaging and reflective of the Anglican foundation of the school. Pupils are keen to participate and are clear that everyone responds in their own way. Many sing joyfully and others choose thoughtful contemplation. Pupils and staff are clear that each contribution is important. Worship is also a time when pupils say they 'think about others'. During a service in the local church, pupils' thoughtful prayers revealed a real sense of hope for their community and the wider world.

Undeterred by size, this small school offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils. School leaders have thought carefully about the school's context when designing their curriculum. For example, pupils are explicitly taught about different views and events in the wider world across a range of subjects. The curriculum for RE is well led and clearly sequenced. The RE lead has applied her strong subject knowledge to ensure that the curriculum is accurate and challenging. Pupils are proud to talk about their RE work and are clear that it is 'important to understand different views.' Where needed, the curriculum is thoughtfully adapted so that all pupils can learn key knowledge and respond. The school is beginning to re-establish visits and visitors to the school post-pandemic. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 were keen to apply their knowledge during a visit to the local church. The school's curriculum for RE does not give opportunities for pupils to experience taught religions as living, diverse faiths.

Boltons Church of England Primary School values pupils and adults for who they are. The school recognises the gifts that each pupil has been given and intervenes quickly where extra support is needed. This is evident in the decision of governors to invest significantly to enable school to best support pupils' social and mental health needs. School works closely and proactively with families and a range of external agencies to provide effective support. This enables vulnerable pupils to be included in the full life of the school. The authentic headteacher leads by example in how she cares deeply for pupils and adults and is ambitious for their future.

As a result of a shared commitment to the school's Christian vision, pupils' behaviour towards one another is exemplary. They seek opportunities to support one another and value each other's differences. At Boltons Church of England Primary School, pupils' voices are heard and valued. Those who struggle to communicate their thoughts are supported so that they too can share their feelings and ideas. An effective curriculum, underpinned by the school's Christian vision, ensures that pupils have a well-developed sense of responsibility and justice. They are mindful of those whose experiences may be different to theirs and are angered by issues such as pollution, racism and homophobia. They advocate for the needs of others within their school and are not afraid to challenge views respectfully. Pupils are beginning to believe that they can make a difference to these issues in their wider communities. However, the curriculum does not have systematically planned opportunities for pupils to be agents of change beyond their school environment.

Through the outpouring of the school's Christian vision, lives are changed at Boltons Church of England Primary School. It is a welcoming school where all are loved as individuals with unique gifts to offer.

The inspection findings indicate that Boltons Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	22 September 2023	URN	112245
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary Controlled	Pupils on roll	78
Diocese	Carlisle		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Amanda Pitcher		
Chair	Mark Dawson		
Inspector	Vikki Wilson	No.	2249