

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Giles Church of England Academy	
Address	Skinner Lane, Pontefract, WF8 1HG
School vision	
<p>St Giles is not just a place, it's a feeling. A feeling that is part of you and stays there forever. A feeling of respect: a hope for the future. A feeling that fills you with the confidence to achieve anything. A feeling of faith, love; where we grow together.</p> <p>The Golden Rule “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The loving and positive school environment creates a climate for adults and pupils to flourish. As a result of the vision, all feel safe, valued and ready to realise their full potential. • The school's Christian vision creates a culture where all members of the school and local community live well together. This ethos allows for a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. • Leaders have developed a clear understanding of spirituality. All are offered opportunities to develop spiritually through prayer, reflection and awe and wonder. • Pupils are well prepared for the future because there is an ambitious curriculum, effectively meeting pupils' needs. There is a clear focus on building character that prepares them well for the next stage in life. • Religious education (RE) is taught in a creative way, making it real and alive. Opportunities for pupils to engage with all aspects of RE are plentiful. Pupils' joy and love of the subject is evident. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for staff and pupils to be fully involved in the planning, leading and evaluating of worship. This to enhance their own spiritual growth and that of others. • Explore national and global links in order to support pupils understanding of how they can tackle injustice. This will encourage their positive impact on the world outside their local environment. • Embed assessment practice in religious education. This is so staff support pupils' progress effectively. 	
Inspection findings	

St. Giles Church of England school has a deep understanding of its biblically rooted and distinctively Christian vision. The vision underpins every decision and action across the school. Recently reviewed with staff, governors and pupils, the vision was updated to reflect the changing context they serve. Pupils can describe the inclusive nature and their involvement in these changes. They recite, with actions, the school vision with pride and joy.

Leaders are inspirational role models for all. By building trust and encouragement, all adults and pupils within the community can flourish. The passionate positivity and enthusiasm of leaders is a driver for change in the school. This has a profound impact on the lives of staff. It inspires confidence and allows meaningful spiritual development and wellbeing in the wider community.

The partnership with Enhance Trust is mutually beneficial. Its structure provides highly effective support, whilst upholding the school's own distinct Christian character and vision. This is exemplified in bold curriculum decisions that respond to pupil need. For example, streamlining all curriculum areas enables pupils to thrive, with planned moments to allow spiritual exploration. Shared subject expertise across the trust secures effective staff training and allows for personal professional development. Staff are encouraged to develop their own gifts and talents thus impacting on the provision and happiness of the pupils. Leaders ensure that governors and staff access training run by the diocese and other local partnerships. Leaders are driven to facilitate pupils blossoming and growing together.

The vision is lived out through deeply nurturing and caring relationships. This is evidenced in exceptional politeness and exemplary behaviour throughout the school. Behaviour is characterised by the core Christian values of love, hope, faith and confidence. Pupils understand why they behave in this way and readily refer to the 'Golden Rule'. They articulate that you should always treat others how you wish to be treated. This results in a happy and supportive learning environment, where many children can self-regulate their behaviours. Inclusion of all children is a priority at St. Giles. The development of specialist provision for the most vulnerable children encapsulates the vision in action. The influence of the vision means staff seek to be positive, loving role models for each other and pupils.

Parents know the vision and values of the school. They comment it is 'organic and natural', influences everything their children do, impacting positively on behaviour at school and home. Relationships are seen as a priority, they value that staff are approachable, visible and know families well. They talk of 'growing together as a family in line with the vision'. Parents are confident their children are safe and while at school can 'live their best lives'.

Collective worship is planned to explore the school Christian values. Resources are regularly adapted to reflect the changes in the world. Drawing on the values to allow the children to engage at an age appropriate level. The collective worship lead plans worship for class-based worship. A small number of pupil worship ambassadors play a central role in facilitating collective worship. However, staff and pupils are not involved in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship. This will include everyone in developing more opportunities for spiritual growth. Singing is central to worship and is both joyous and uplifting. This creates moments of awe and wonder, supporting the spiritual development of the individual.

Prayer is a regular feature of the school day. All are invited to prayer before lunch and at the close of every school day. The pupils say that this quiet time brings calm to their day. Prayer areas within classrooms offer opportunities for them to reflect during the school day. Beyond the classroom the pupils all have access to various reflection areas, throughout the school building. Planned moments for prayer and reflection impact positively on the mental health and wellbeing of staff and pupils.

Effective relationships enrich the school's work, affirming and refining provision, particularly with diocese, church and trust. Promoted by the vision, these partnerships provide a common purpose and support collaboration. The strong connection between the church and school is reciprocated. The pupils are enthusiastic about visiting the church, as well as showing respect for the sacred space. The clergy are involved in the promoting the spiritual growth of the pupils in many ways. Partnerships with other local community groups and churches has enhanced and broadened the life experiences of the pupils. For example, links with Wakefield Museums and Castles has provided pupils with access to local culture and heritage learning opportunities. All partnerships are fostered to raise the aspiration of the pupils. This gives them a glimpse of the wider world around them.

The vision challenges leaders to ensure pupils gain a respect for diversity. Relevant examples enable pupils to explore challenging subjects such as racism. Pupils have some understanding of justice. They find ways to work together and know doing something small can make a difference. For example, delivering assemblies about Macmillan Cancer Support and raising money for the local hospice allows pupils to engage in social action. However, currently pupils are less aware of how they can independently be agents of change beyond the local community.

The quality of teaching and learning in RE enables pupils to grow richly in their religious understanding. Staff are confident in teaching the subject, with an expectation that they adapt resources to maintain a fully inclusive programme of study. As a result, pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or considered disadvantaged make good progress in RE. Pupils enjoy the refreshed style brought about by the introduction of a new curriculum. Consequently, pupils are fully engaged in activities that require them to think deeply by exploring 'the big story'. Time for discussion and debate has been built into the lessons. This teaches pupils to disagree well. Greater engagement with resources is evident, however the assessment and monitoring of the new materials are not fully embedded.

School leaders are relentless in sourcing meaningful experiences to support pupils' understanding of world religions and worldviews. This illustrates how the vision further develops pupils' curiosity in the subject. The wide range of enriching activities offers opportunities for all at St. Giles to flourish.

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

Information			
Inspection date	30 January 2024	URN	140453
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	309
Diocese	Leeds		
MAT/Federation	Enhance Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Richard Grace		
Chair	Ben Groves		
Inspector	Ashleigh Lees	No.	2239