

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

<b>St Matthew's Church of England VA Primary School</b>	
Address	Wood Lane, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, LS7 3QF
School vision	
<p>At St Matthew's C of E (VA) Primary School, we celebrate being part of God's diverse family. Through the upholding of Christian values, we nurture, guide and foster confidence in all of our pupils to succeed, by empowering them to flourish in an ever-changing world. We strive to develop inquisitive lifelong learners with resilience, creativity and kindness towards each other.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Let your light shine before others” Matthew 5:16</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Christian vision is well-embedded and underpins relationships throughout this diverse school community. It enables staff and pupils to celebrate the God-given uniqueness of each person and to support each other. Therefore adults and pupils, including those who are vulnerable, flourish.</li> <li>• Deep, thought-provoking questions built into a daily reflection time provide challenge and enable pupils to become inquisitive and creative learners.</li> <li>• Worship is a deeply valued part of each day, enhancing the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults through meaningful moments of reflection. A highly effective partnership with the local church, entwined with active pupil engagement, enriches this flourishing.</li> <li>• The school's commitment to wellbeing comes directly from the vision that 'we celebrate being part of God's diverse family'. Strong provision for emotional, physical and mental health enables pupils and adults to feel valued and nurtured. Pupils and adults across the school naturally live out the values of resilience and kindness.</li> <li>• Pupils enjoy religious education (RE). They are knowledgeable about Christianity and world faiths and readily articulate their learning and understanding. Effective partnerships enhance the curriculum, through well-planned visits and visitors.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop planned opportunities across the whole school to support pupils in their understanding of justice. This is to enable them to make ethical choices and be agents of change.</li> <li>• Build a deeper collaboration with other Church schools, in order to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in RE.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>Kindness is at the heart of St. Matthew's. Enriched by pertinent Christian values, the vision enables pupils and adults within this school to flourish. There is a deep sense of nurture radiating throughout, encouraging members of the community to let their light shine. Families are embraced</p>	



as part of God's diverse family as they join the school community. Parents value the love and support they have experienced during times of trauma. Leaders are a present presence. They are attentive and proactive in meeting the needs of their community. Personifying the vision, they embed a palpable sense of pride and belonging. The God-given uniqueness of everyone is celebrated, fostering confidence in both pupils and adults. Governors have a clear, evaluative, understanding of how the Christian vision is driving action within the school. They are committed to the flourishing of all within an 'ever-changing world'.

Big questions are infused throughout a carefully crafted curriculum. This vision-driven approach to learning provides meaningful opportunities for pupils and adults to ponder, discuss and debate. It encourages pupils to be inquisitive and creative learners. Planned weekly reflection time further enhances the spiritual development of pupils. They are enthusiastic about their thinking and reflection. Pupils and adults appreciate this regular time for quiet contemplation. Staff also value time to share spontaneous moments of awe and wonder with their pupils. Staff training about approaches to developing spirituality ensures a tangible and consistent understanding amongst adults in school.

Pupils are taught to see mistakes as a vital part of learning. This enables them to build resilience and grow in confidence. Carefully tailored support to meet individual needs is prioritised by leaders. Therefore the school has enabled a teacher to develop as a speech and language specialist. A dedicated nurture space has been created. The outdoor environment has been improved to provide areas for exploration and creative play. As a result of such actions, leaders empower members of this school community to flourish, including the most vulnerable. The annual Somerton Award ceremony is one of many planned opportunities for pupils to shine by writing and reading poetry. The affirmation, courage and love for one another emanating from this deeply valued event reflects the care for God's family in this place.

Situated side by side, St. Matthew's church and the school work seamlessly together. Strong partnership links, including the MindMate support team, provide enriching opportunities for spiritual flourishing. The whole school community enjoys celebrating key annual school events in the church. As a result, staff, pupils and parents feel a strong sense of being part of a deeply nurturing environment. Alongside leaders and other teaching staff in school, the local reverend regularly leads collective worship. He works closely with school leaders to plan worship, ensuring relevance and engagement. This instils an understanding that worship is for everyone, whether they have a religious faith or not. As a result, pupils listen and respond with reverence and respect to the prayers and biblical readings. One young pupil explained that although not a Christian, she likes to join in with the prayers. It helps her to know she can pray when she needs to. Pupils, parents and staff value the sense of peace, joy and belonging that being together in worship brings. There is a perceptible sense of the spiritual as pupils and adults join in enthusiastically with the words of the school hymn. Staff are passionate about their own spiritual flourishing at this school. A staff prayer group meets every other week, providing a calm oasis, where staff feel grounded and reinvigorated.

School leaders prioritise wellbeing. All are encouraged to 'let their light shine before others'. Opportunities for service radiate from many directions. This is instilled from the very beginning, with staff reaching out to welcome the families of new pupils. Effective support is quickly arranged for the vulnerable. Year 6 buddies support their Reception partners, helping them to settle and feel safe. Parents articulate clearly the care that leaders show for both them and their children. Golden rules link directly to the school's Christian vision and are understood by everyone. This leads to calm and friendly playtimes, where fall outs are rare. When there are disagreements, restorative conversations take place, supported by the school's pastoral lead. Forgiveness is understood by pupils as a positive way in which to move forwards. Staff feel valued, nurtured and well-supported by school leaders. This ensures a discernible team spirit and stability, empowering all to flourish in an ever-changing

world.

Pupils demonstrate an understanding of justice and responsibility. Links to the local foodbank and food pantry raise awareness of inequality, providing valuable opportunities to make a difference. Year 5 children follow a climate curriculum and have a good understanding about the impact of climate change. Through the Global Gang and the Eco-warriors, pupils encourage others to make ethical choices. They have actively participated in the past three COP climate change summits. However, there are not consistent opportunities across the school to empower all pupils to engage in social action and become agents of change.

The RE curriculum is engaging and is enquiry focused. Big questions encourage a deeper understanding about religion and belief. Pupils enjoy RE and are enthusiastic about their lessons. Pupils appreciate how their learning in RE enables them to understand people from a variety of backgrounds and beliefs better. The school's curriculum is well-balanced and effective. Staff receive ongoing support and training from the RE lead and feel confident to teach RE. Retrieval tasks have recently been planned into RE lessons, enabling pupils to make links to previously taught knowledge. Well taught lessons, along with ongoing assessment and feedback ensure that pupils are learning and progressing well. However, leaders do not collaborate with other Church schools to ensure standards in RE are comparable to those in other schools. This means that there are some missed opportunities to further develop teaching and learning.

The inspection findings indicate that St. Matthew's Church of England (VA) Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	21 March 2024	URN	108047
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	398
Diocese	Leeds		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Gemma Crawford		
Chair	Nick Burrows		
Inspector	Helen Tait	No.	2247