

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Battleyford Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	90, Nab Lane, Mirfield, WF14 9QH

School vision

Philippians 2:14-15
 ‘Do everything without grumbling or arguing...then you shine among them like stars in the sky!’

Reach for the stars and beyond. Together with God’s love, we can dream, believe and achieve.

Our vision is founded upon our values.
 We believe children should be:

Responsible
 Empathetic
 Aspirational
 Confident
 Happy

School strengths

- Leaders have ensured that the school’s Christian vision underpins all its work, driving their strategic decision-making, policies and practices.
- A deep commitment to the flourishing of all pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, reflects this Christian vision.
- Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and a safe space where school community members can and do ‘shine like stars’.
- Trusting relationships, kindness and respect characterise this school community, fostering a strong sense of belonging. People matter and the exceptional pastoral support enables pupils and adults to grow and flourish together.
- Established partnerships, especially with the diocese and linked church, are rooted in the Christian vision. They ensure a rich educational experience, and mutually beneficial support for pupils, their families and the wider community.

Areas for development

- Embed a shared understanding and vocabulary of spiritual development. This is to make opportunities for spiritual development explicit in the curriculum, so pupils can more easily articulate their responses to them.
- Establish the new religious education (RE) curriculum. This is to enhance and deepen pupils’ learning of the breadth and diversity of worldviews and beliefs.
- Broaden pupils’ awareness of justice so they are inspired to act as independent change makers.



Inspection findings

Battysford Church of England VC Primary School is a place where people grow and flourish. Leaders, including governors, live out the deeply rooted Christian vision with conviction and humility. At the heart of the school's work is a strong commitment to the service of others. Leaders' bold decisions encourage all who enter the school to 'shine like stars'. The REACH values help both pupils and adults to articulate and live the vision. They are the foundation for a culture of love, joy and hope.

Leaders, including governors, are proud to lead this Church school. They know their community well. Their desire to enhance the lives of families and staff is reflected in their policies and practices. Through the vision and associated REACH values, pupils and adults have opportunities to live life to the full. They aspire to become the best possible version of themselves. Moreover, the commitment to serve extends beyond the school gates. For instance, the school bungalow is a community training resource, supporting others to live well together. Governors evaluate the impact of Battysford Primary as a Church school. They access diocesan training to inform courageous decisions for its future.

Guided by the Christian vision, leaders place the needs of pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, at the heart of the curriculum. Their strategic decisions demonstrate a determination to remove the complex barriers to learning that affect some children and their families. With unwavering dedication, provision is tailored to help pupils make the best possible progress. For example, staff work closely with parents to create, implement and review bespoke learning plans for pupils who need them. They ensure opportunities to develop, nurture and showcase unique skills and talents are offered to all, whatever their academic ability. Consequently, pupils display a sense of self-worth with pride in their own (and others') achievements. The menu of extra-curricular clubs and activities is of rich and lasting benefit. They generate aspiration, opening pupils' minds to new and exciting possibilities. The recently established REACH afternoons encourage cross-phase friendships and the development of wide-ranging life skills. Learning is further enhanced by visitors and visits that broaden pupils' horizons beyond their immediate experience.

Opportunities for spiritual development are woven through the curriculum. In the early years, creative outdoor education evokes wonder about the natural world, ourselves and each other. There are spaces around the school for stillness, reflection and prayer. Spiritual development is considered a priority, for which leaders have accessed and disseminated diocesan training. However, the absence of a shared understanding of and vocabulary for spirituality is limiting the impact of these initiatives.

The daily act of worship is a unifying experience, creating a profound sense of community and belonging. Participants are encouraged to consider their personal responses to life's joys and sorrows in a warm and loving environment. Everyone is included and individual contributions valued. Invitational prayer, reflection, ritual and song contribute to the spiritual expression and nourishment of both pupils and adults. As one staff member commented, 'The joy of singing is wonderful. It uplifts your spirit'. The school prayer, written by pupils and known by all, embodies the Christian vision and REACH values. Diocesan support has a demonstrably positive impact on collective worship at the school. It is further enhanced by a strong partnership with the linked church, Christ the King. The vicar brings dynamic leadership and support.



The collective worship leader uses pupil voice to drive improvement. A team of pupil REACH Ambassadors plans, leads and reviews collective worship every half term. Feedback from them, and governors, helps to shape future worship.

Members of the Battyeford school community thrive in a culture of love, care and compassion. Relationships at all levels are valued and nurtured. This is a genuinely happy place, where frequent laughter reflects the joy of living, sharing and worshipping together. Pupils and parents are unanimous that this is a kind school. Peer mediators and the Battyeford Boosters (pupil play leaders) make playtimes harmonious and inclusive. Bespoke training has equipped them with high level skills to resolve many playground problems without involving staff. This is valuable preparation for adulthood. The nurture room is a safe space to heal. Its open-door policy reassures pupils that they will always receive the care they need.

Mutually supportive, respectful relationships between senior leaders and their staff create a strong culture of wellbeing. Staff value the actions leaders take to reduce their workload and help them fulfil their roles effectively. For example, the Battyeford Way, a behaviour policy based on principles of responsibility and restorative justice, makes teaching easier. Governors, in turn, prioritise the flourishing of their leaders through regular contact, ongoing encouragement and support. Their warm and trusting relationships with parents and carers embody the vision. Sometimes the actions of staff have transformational power in families' lives, especially at difficult times. Parents know the school as a place where their needs and concerns will be sympathetically heard, and where possible addressed. Transitions are carefully managed so pupils and their families can look to the future with confidence and hope.

Pupils and adults care deeply about local and global justice. Pupils express their desire to make a difference to others' lives, linking it to the REACH value of empathy. An enduring relationship with a Tanzanian school provides a focus for social action. The regular exchange of letters and information broadens pupils' cultural perspectives and helps to break down misconceptions. They embrace this and other possibilities for social action, including an initiative that further develops their awareness of global citizenship. Opportunities for pupils to act independently as agents of change are less well embedded.

Religious education has a high profile. The curriculum offers a balance of experiences that builds pupils' understanding of RE and contributes to their personal growth. Detailed progression documents identify the knowledge and skills pupils are expected to develop. Whilst Christianity occupies most curriculum time, they also learn about a variety of beliefs and worldviews. However, opportunities to deepen their understanding of these diverse outlooks are less well established. The RE subject leader has a clear vision for the subject. She prioritises her own training and shares new learning with colleagues to improve practice. Recent changes to the curriculum are having a positive impact. For example, Godly Play and the arts enhance the spiritual development and thinking skills of pupils of all ages.

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



Information			
Inspection date	14 June 2024	URN	107728
VA/VC/Academy	VC	Pupils on roll	441
Diocese	Leeds		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Rachel Batty		
Chair	David Sheard		
Inspector	Joanna Redfern	No.	C.23/24