

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Silverdale St John's Church of England Primary School and Nursery

Vision

Inspiring success through learning, community and faith.

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' Philippians 4:13

We believe that by putting Christ at the centre of all that we do, we will have the courage, wisdom and strength to provide a breadth of learning opportunities that are taught through a dynamic, child centred, sequential curriculum.

We empower all children with our Christian values, building in them a desire to make a positive contribution to their local and wider communities. We are fully welcoming of all positions of faith and spirituality and guide children to understand Biblical Christian belief and teaching.

Silverdale, St John's School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Strengths

- The school's Christian vision is deeply embedded. It is expertly modelled by ambitious and nurturing leaders, including governors. The vision guides and directs decisions, supporting the flourishing of adults and pupils.
- Supportive, purposeful and mutually beneficial relationships with the local church and wider community positively impact on wellbeing and community cohesion.
- A sense of love and care for one another permeates throughout the school. This supports an environment where good mental health is prioritised and positive relationships blossom.
- Carefully planned support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are vulnerable ensures an inclusive learning environment. This enables pupils to succeed as unique individuals.
- Pupils and adults value invitations to come together for celebration, reflection and prayer. Consequently, collective worship contributes significantly to spiritual flourishing.

Development Points

- Ensure that leaders and staff share a clear understanding of and approach to spirituality. This is so that planning for spirituality is developed across the whole curriculum.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to bring about meaningful change. This is so that they actively seek to challenge injustice beyond their local community.
- Develop the religious education (RE) curriculum to include visits to places of worship and visitors from a range of religions. This is so that pupils encounter and understand all religions as living faiths.



Inspection Findings

Dedicated and inspirational leadership underpins a deeply rooted Christian vision that permeates the whole school community. The teachings of Christ are central to decision making and the nurturing of relationships. Leaders are relentless in providing meaningful opportunities for pupils and adults to succeed as unique individuals. Governors are regularly involved in wide-ranging events in the daily life of the school. Consequently, they know the school community well. This, alongside regular formal monitoring, ensures that leaders accurately evaluate the effectiveness of St John's as a Church school and drive further positive change. Leaders understand their local context. A strong desire to engage with their local community broadens experiences and relationships and promotes flourishing. A wonderful and mutually beneficial relationship with a local school for those with profound learning difficulties is treasured by pupils and adults. It epitomises leaders' commitment to nurture individuals who contribute to and benefit from being part of a loving community. This promotes an understanding and celebration of difference and diversity.

The aspirational curriculum is shaped by the vision's focus on community. The stunning, rural surroundings in which the school is set enable many learning experiences to take place beyond the confines of school. An engaging maths curriculum, that explores shape through exploring natural materials in a local forest, is indicative of this provision. Music lessons with pupils from Bleasdale School broaden opportunities for pupils to learn from one another. Adults and pupils accurately highlight meaningful moments of spiritual development within some areas of the curriculum. However, the extent to which spirituality is a planned and intrinsic part of the curriculum is underdeveloped. Skilled adaptation of the curriculum ensures that it meets the specific needs of pupils. This is supported by high quality professional development and investment in relevant resources. This enables those who have SEND and those considered vulnerable or disadvantaged to succeed.

RE has been carefully planned to be challenging and to identify links with previous units of work. This ensures that it continually builds on prior learning. The curriculum expertly makes provision for both the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills. The time and value placed on RE, as well as effective training from diocesan advisers, ensure that it has a high status within a Church school. Careful and regular monitoring by leaders secures an RE curriculum that is relevant, well-resourced and effective. Pupils learn about Christianity as a global faith, including how Christmas is celebrated around the world. They have a relevant and deep understanding of the major world faiths and of non-religious worldviews. When learning about pilgrimage, pupils expertly make links between several religions and their own journey through life. This deepens their understanding and appreciation of difference and diversity. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to experience a range of world religions as living faiths through appropriate visits.

Appropriate assessment systems regularly monitor pupils' knowledge and understanding. This ensures that pupils, including those who have SEND or are disadvantaged, make good progress. Pupils enjoy their learning in RE. It is taught creatively. For example, Reception pupils explore the Christmas story by making birthday cakes for Jesus. Activities with older pupils make relevant links between religions and how those of faith live their lives. Whilst learning about Sukkot, they build a sukkah and explore how Jews live during this weeklong celebration. Pupils acknowledge how RE enables them to reflect and discuss their own values and beliefs within an environment of mutual respect.

Daily collective worship is a valued bond that unites this community. It inspires adults and pupils and is centred around spiritual nurturing. Pupils explore the story of Noah to develop the concept of hope, for example. Time to



reflect leads to the realisation that all things are possible with God and all difficulties can be overcome. The rhythm of worship is enriched by its Anglican foundation including greetings and prayers. Regular services in the local church bring the local worshipping community together as one. A Remembrance Day service with another school further strengthens community relationships. Consequently, relationships between school, the local church and wider community are strong and flourishing. Prayer permeates the daily life of the school and further enhances spiritual development. For example, pupils create 'prayer cubes' around a theme, such as 'transforming butterflies'. This provides a space for pupils and adults to reflect on how to embrace and be thankful for change.

Active involvement in the local community motivates pupils and adults to bring about positive change. This includes singing with a local dementia group and raising funds for the food bank. Pupils write to local businesses to thank them for their service to the community. These activities continually strengthen community relations. Pupils are appropriately proud that their work makes a difference to the lives of others. The school has begun to support the work of a charity in Uganda. However, beyond this work, pupils have few opportunities to challenge and engage with issues that are unjust. Thus, their understanding of how they can make a positive difference beyond their community is underdeveloped. Ambitious and proactive leaders rightly seek to address this and enable pupils to tackle issues of injustice in the world.

Staff are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciative of each other, resulting in a strong and effective team. Appropriate training facilitates their professional development. This also enables adults to gain new skills for the benefit of pupils which boosts self-esteem and promotes confidence. They acknowledge the way in which they are nurtured and refer to school as 'a sanctuary'. They are united in their commitment to the pupils in their care. Wellbeing and good mental health are prioritised. Values are central to promoting good relationships. Pupils receive golden tickets for living out the school's values, and they exchange these for rewards. In this way, the vision and values strongly influence how individuals live and work together. They help to repair relationships when things go wrong. The last day of each term is 'feel good Friday'. Pupils and adults engage in activities such as yoga, baking and dog walking. House teams ensure that pupils across the year groups work together and are supportive of each other. Staff make adaptations to enable a child with SEND to access an aspiration to join a running club. Consequently, both adults and pupils flourish in a community of faithful love and care.

Information

Address	Emesgate Lane, Silverdale, Carnforth, LA5 0RF		
Date	27 November 2024	URN	119541
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	67
Diocese	Blackburn		
Headteacher	Sarah Sanderson		
Chair of Governors	Steve Edge		
Inspector	Joanna Brookes		