

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

### SS Simon and Jude Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

We strive to build a community which nurtures positive relationships that permeate through all aspects of life. A community where barriers do not define us, but instead offer opportunity for growth. No matter our background, through our faith, we will find the strength and courage to flourish as citizens of the future.

‘I can do all things through him who strengthens me.’ Philippians 4:13.

SS Simon and Jude Church of England Primary 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 Christian vision has been revised to meet the needs of the school community during a time of change. School leaders inspire and embody the Christian culture so pupils and adults can flourish.
- The school lives out its vision to be ‘a community where barriers do not define us’. Pupils and adults feel safe, cared-for and valued in this loving school family.
- Pupils are well-prepared for the future by seeking and fulfilling a range of responsibilities that promote an equitable environment. They understand fully how their actions make a positive difference to themselves and others.
- Curriculum improvement is driven by strong professional development for staff. This ensures lessons are inclusive to pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Collective worship is an outward expression of the vision and its associated values, enhanced by the enthusiasm of pupil worship leaders. Worship impacts positively on the lives of adults and pupils, enabling them to grow spiritually.

#### Development Points

- Re-establish partnerships with local churches, deepening the opportunities for pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.
- Embed assessment practices to strengthen the new religious education (RE) curriculum. This is to enhance how learning is reviewed and planning is adjusted, extending pupils’ knowledge and understanding.



## Inspection Findings

The deeply cherished Christian vision transforms lives at SS Simon and Jude. Pupils and adults demonstrate courage and resilience to remove barriers. The vision is a uniting force which emphasises the importance of being stronger together. Lived out through the school's values, this vision inspires pupils and adults to believe all things are possible. The school is on a journey of change whilst it is housed on a temporary site, warmly known as 'the learning village'. This difficult period is made easier through supportive and robust partnerships with the Vantage Academies Trust and Manchester Diocese. The trust vision and commitment to excellence across learning environments adds strength to this Church school. Leaders actively engage with the diocesan education team to enhance their knowledge. The governors have a clear and evaluative understanding of how the vision drives action across the school. They challenge school leaders to think creatively so barriers are broken down further.

The Christian vision directly shapes the school's aspirational curriculum. This enables pupils, including those who are considered vulnerable or disadvantaged, to succeed. Skilled adaptation considers the individual needs of pupils so that the curriculum is accessible. The school engages with the diocese through high quality professional development. Subject leaders use this training to provide intentional opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum. As a result, pupils are guided by their own moral values and are willing to make a stand for what they believe in. A comprehensive range of extracurricular activities and clubs extend opportunities for pupils to flourish. Pupils respond well to invitations to discover new skills and talents such as sewing, yoga and multi-sports. Parents are appreciative of the school's efforts to involve them in their child's learning through workshops and events, within the limitations of the temporary site.

Collective worship is a special time of the day where pupils and adults value the invitation to gather together. Staff are confident in leading worship and use it as an expression of the school's vision and values. Leaders ensure worship is deeply Christian yet inclusive to its context. As a candle is lit and the lights are dimmed, a palpable sense of anticipation fills the hall. Singing is a highlight and pupils and adults engage with enthusiasm. Time is used to reflect, discuss and relate biblical contexts to their own lives. As a result, worship is memorable and spiritually enhances the lives of pupils and adults. School and church leaders are rebuilding their former partnership. Currently, local churches do not support with the planning or delivery of worship. However, leaders acknowledge the importance of this relationship in enhancing the spiritual development of pupils and adults.

Relationships within the school community are exceptional. Staff build a firm foundation for trusting relationships by visiting families before their child starts school or nursery. This way, specific needs are identified early and support is put in place swiftly. Staff create an inclusive environment where communication boards, depicting pictures and words, are used to promote language and communication. This particularly supports the large number of pupils who don't speak English as their first language. Curriculum resources reflect the diversity of the school body, which gives pupils a sense of belonging. Pupils treat one another with respect, kindness and compassion. The school acts as a lifeline for families in times of need, providing deeply valued emotional and practical support. Translators are available to support families with the completion of paperwork. Clothing, beyond school uniform, is recycled and reused. Additionally, the breakfast club provides pupils with a gentle start to the day, easing the transition from home to school.



Leaders create a culture of justice and responsibility to serve others. The democratic process to apply and be appointed to key roles is understood by pupils. As a result, they respond to failure with courage and resilience, developing the skills required to do well. Pupil leaders serve their school diligently and take their responsibilities seriously. For instance, the school council is conscious of the impact the recent fire had on displacing local animals. Due to this, pupils' fundraising efforts have targeted the local destitute animal shelter through a bedtime story evening. Furthermore, the eco committee are keen for the school to cut carbon, not just within school but at home too. Pupils ensure others are mindful about wastage by encouraging them to take showers instead of baths and switching off devices. The culture of responsibility is further strengthened by the trust through the Vantage Parliament group. Representatives from different schools within the trust come together to tackle global injustice. Through this, pupils learn from an early age that spreading awareness can be just as powerful as monetary donations.

With the support of the diocesan team, the RE curriculum has been carefully crafted as an expression of the school's vision and associated values. Highly effective leadership of RE, including the impact of governors, enhances teachers' confidence in their subject knowledge. The curriculum facilitates deep thinking about worldviews and religions, including Christianity. This reflects the diversity of the school. As such, RE plays a significant role in developing pupils' comprehensive understanding of multicultural Britain. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to respond to and enquire about the key concepts and questions studied. This enables healthy debates to take place as new ideas challenge their thinking. Pupils particularly enjoy creative approaches to RE, when they can present their learning in the format that they choose.

Teachers communicate accurate religious knowledge clearly and are mindful about language that can cause assumptions. Pupils know how well they are progressing in RE lessons because they understand the feedback in their books through an established marking code. Teachers ensure essential vocabulary and core concepts are revisited at the start of each lesson. This allows pupils to talk confidently and knowledgeably about their current learning. The implementation of assessment systems to review pupil progress over time is at an early stage. Consequently, school leaders are unclear about the impact of RE teaching on pupils' long-term knowledge. Pupils are respectful of the interfaith dynamic of their school. This adds depth to discussions and debates due to the range of lived experiences to draw upon. They understand that beliefs and practices are not insular and diversity within, and across religions, including Christianity, is vast. As a result, pupils appreciate difference in this loving and nurturing school.

## Information

Address	Newport Road, Great Lever, Bolton, BL3 2DT		
Date	05 December 2024	URN	138957
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	608
Diocese/District	Manchester		
MAT/Federation	Vantage Academy Trust		
Principal	Katie Jones		
Chair of Governors	Alex Johnson		
Chair of Trust	Chris Read		
Inspector	Lisa Draper		