

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barwell Church of England Academy

Vision

‘Love thy neighbour in a flourishing school community’

A community with Jesus’ protective love at heart, embracing inclusivity and having the highest expectations for all, both academically and behaviourally. A community that nurtures individuals as a whole, their mind, body and spirit. A loving, knowledgeable community building a rich, challenging curriculum for all.

Barwell Academy 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 vision of ‘love thy neighbour’ is deeply embedded and lived out daily by pupils and adults. Leaders, including governors, ensure it is at the forefront of strategic decision making to enable flourishing for all.
- Every pupil is known and valued as part of the Barwell family. High expectations for all ensure that pupils with special needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged achieve well alongside their peers.
- Inclusive collective worship is central to the life of the school. Taking many forms, it enables pupils and adults time and space to develop spiritually.
- Strong leadership of religious education (RE) ensures that the impact of the well-planned curriculum is monitored and evaluated. As a result, pupils are knowledgeable about a range of religions and world views.
- There is a strong sense of justice within the school. Pupils have the confidence to speak about issues that concern them and the belief they can bring about change.

Development Points

- Grow collective ownership of spiritual development across the school. This will enable pupils and adults to further develop individual and innovative opportunities for spiritual growth.



Inspection Findings

Barwell is a loving school with a strong sense of a caring and supportive community. The Christian vision of 'love thy neighbour in a flourishing school community' is deeply embedded into every element of school life. The two bible stories that underpin the vision are central to the school's work and as a result pupils and adults flourish here. Leaders are fiercely inclusive and have high expectations for everyone to be successful. Love is evident in the strong relationships with families and the wider community. It is core to the way the school sees its role in ensuring flourishing. Parents value this 'practical love' highly and are confident to approach the school and work together in partnership. Leaders including governors have a clear understanding of the impact of the school vision and values. These underpin strategic decisions and are the foundation for school improvement. An example of this is the approach taken to lunchtimes at Barwell to ensure that pupils can enjoy a wide range of opportunities. This means they return to lessons refreshed and ready for the next part of their school day.

Adults in the school are ambitious for their pupils. Reading is prioritised to support pupils to gain the skills to access their learning. Pupils are known well, and they talk with enthusiasm about school. Adults are committed to ensuring that lessons are adapted when needed so pupils can make progress. This personal approach ensures that pupils with SEND and those deemed vulnerable can access their learning and be successful. Leaders have thought deeply about providing rich opportunities for spiritual growth. Pupils and adults have access to spiritual spaces where they can pause, reflect and respond to carefully planned prompts and questions. There is a shared language that enables discussions about spiritual moments, these are also recognised and explored in the school's curriculum. As a result of this, spiritual growth is at the forefront of continual development. Much of this work is driven by senior leaders in school. This means that the responsibility for further development of spirituality is not shared widely with adults and pupils. Therefore, opportunities for spontaneous and creative spiritual moments are not always recognised.

RE is well planned and led by a passionate and committed leader. The curriculum is engaging and well resourced. Artefacts and visits to places of worship are used to bring learning to life. As a result, pupils talk confidently about a range of religions and world views. They can recount key facts and understand that Christianity is a world faith. They feel RE is important to enable them to be knowledgeable and respectful to others. Pupils remark how it links to their vision of loving thy neighbour. The curriculum is regularly evaluated to ensure it is relevant and ambitious. A close partnership with the local diocese ensures access to relevant training. Adults are secure in their subject knowledge and encourage pupils to discuss and reflect on their learning in RE.

The ethos of the Barwell family and loving thy neighbour is seen in the relationships across the school. Staff value each other, they know their wellbeing is a high priority for leaders. Workload is carefully considered and as a result they are positive about working at the school. The vision and values underpin daily life. Pupils are kind and respectful, they behave well, and any disputes are quickly settled. The work of the family support worker is highly valued and impactful. Pupils state they feel safe in the school as they know they have adults who care about them. Older pupils relish the opportunity to support younger ones. They willingly help at lunchtimes clearing plates and leading games. Everyone is welcome at Barwell, pupils and adults strongly celebrate difference and diversity. This is seen in the way families are greeted, in displays and through the curriculum. This means there is a strong sense of everyone belonging as one of God's children.



Worship is a key part of life at Barwell Academy. Leaders have been innovative in creating different ways for the school to gather including worship over lunchtime. The regular and familiar structure means that it is an inclusive experience. Pupils and adults enjoy the time together. The strong partnership with the local church enriches worship in the school through the work of the 'Open the Book' team who visit regularly. Staff value the 'powerful feeling' of singing together as a school community. The shared language around spirituality is a central thread during worship. The school uses mirror moments to link the stories from worship to their lives and experiences. One example of this is reflecting on whether hope is wishful thinking or a firm assurance that God will be a constant in your life. The regular use of spiritual spaces means pupils influence worship themes. The school invites the local community to join them in church for key Christian festivals. As a result, pupils describe the special feeling at Christmas when 'everyone' came to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

The school is committed to engaging with research and maintaining impactful partnerships with the diocese and other local Church schools. As a result, there are opportunities for staff to develop further. Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and leadership responsibilities. They have a strong sense of justice and responsibility and link this to the vision of the school to love thy neighbour. They care deeply about local, national and global challenges. The curriculum ensures they are well informed about life outside of their village. The school continually collects food for their 'food table'. This is then shared with families in need in the local community. Pupils are passionate about how small actions such as litter picking can have an impact on climate change. As a result, they have a clear understanding of social action; they talk with confidence about how the schools' values encourage them to make change and to be good neighbours.

Information

Address	High St, Barwell, Leicester LE9 8DS		
Date	20 March 2025	URN	138965
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	222
Diocese/District	Leicester		
MAT/Federation	Stand-Alone Academy		
Headteacher	Victoria Newman		
Chair of Governors	Maggie Spence		
Inspector	Jo Westaby		