

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Wellfield Methodist and Anglican VA Church Primary School

Address Wellfield Drive, Burnley, Lancashire, BB12 0JD

Christian vision

‘Learning and Growing Together through Faith, Hope & Love’

As a loving school family, we seek to serve one another and the wider community, offer hope and enable all to flourish. We encounter the Christian faith through our Methodist and Anglican traditions, so that all understand what it means to live a life of faith.

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

Hope ‘For I have plans for you declares the Lord. Plans to prosper and not harm you. To give you hope and a future.’ Jeremiah 29:11

Love ‘...watching over one another in love.’ John Wesley

School strengths

- Dedicated leaders and governors clearly express how the biblically rooted vision inspires their leadership and decision making. As a result, truly reciprocal church school partnerships form a flourishing community as they ‘watch over one another in love’.
- Leaders demonstrate a deeply held ambition for the vision to become a reality for every person in the school community. This results in exceptional support for wellbeing that transforms lives.
- Impressive opportunities for the spiritual flourishing of all spring from inspiring and dynamic collective worship. Leaders expertly evaluate the effectiveness of collective worship and make pertinent changes to practice that deepen its impact.
- Adaptive and tailored learning opportunities enable all pupils to access an enriching wider curriculum which supports pupils’ character development. Pupils develop a strong sense of self-belief, a compassion for others and a hopeful aspiration for the future.
- Engaging and creative religious education (RE) expresses the Christian vision. Pupils access a balanced curriculum which enables them to reflect meaningfully on their own ideas about faith.

Areas for development

- Further refine systems of monitoring in order to hone governors’ evaluations of the vision’s impact.
- Develop pupils’ use of religious vocabulary in RE. This is so pupils are enabled to express their understanding of a range of world religions and worldviews more fully.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to live out the vision on a global scale. This is so they are equipped to be advocates for change beyond their locality.

Inspection findings

At the heart of this deeply loving community is a carefully crafted Christian vision which nourishes and shapes the school. Leaders, including governors, clearly articulate the vision’s biblical and Methodist roots which uphold the school’s joint Methodist and Anglican foundation. The Christian vision is well known by pupils and

adults. A pictorial representation in the school hall enables all to see and express their place within the vision. Thus, many articulate how the vision is a living reality, enabling them to flourish.

Highly committed governors, motivated by love, serve the school and community with diligence. Their decisions bring the vision to fruition and support the formation of thriving individuals. For example, governors increased nurture provision as a result of identifying changing needs within the community. Governors frequently visit school, and this helps them to know that the vision is enabling all to flourish. However, formal systems of monitoring mainly consider the implementation of the vision, rather than evaluating its impact. The governing body reflects the joint Methodist and Anglican nature of the school. This is mirrored in highly treasured and mutually beneficial partnerships with local churches which enrich worship, learning and wellbeing. Leaders highly value partnerships with Blackburn Diocese and Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST). They access support from these partners, including training that enhances and develops the school as a Church school. Consequently, the school is a loving community where all can encounter what it means to live a life of faith.

The vision to 'enable all to flourish' emanates from the headteacher, is established by staff and lived out by pupils. This results in an exceptionally inclusive community where all are embraced and treated well. Trained pupils lead peer to peer support at their innovative wellbeing club. 'Gardeners' (Year 5 pupils) and 'seeds' (Reception pupils) build meaningful friendships which realise a sense of responsibility and belonging. The school quickly identifies the needs of vulnerable pupils and provides therapeutic activities which nurture wellbeing and support mental health. This results in increased attendance, improved behaviour, and transformed mindsets. The school works with a host of outside agencies to ensure that adults receive the help they need. As a result, every possible action is taken to ensure that barriers to flourishing are overcome for all. This culture of love extends to staff who are supported professionally with opportunities to continue to 'learn and grow'. Comprehensive systems to support staff wellbeing result in high levels of staff morale. Consequently, the vision to enable all to flourish is life-enhancing for many and nourishes the whole community.

Collective Worship is the well from which the school's culture of faith, hope and love springs. Highly effective and thoughtful leadership of this area of school life ensures that people access varied and dynamic worship. Gospel values weave through worship that is centred around a weekly question exploring the Bible's big story of hope. Stories of Christians who courageously live out their faith encourage pupils to do the same. This is exemplified by one young pupil who reenacted the story of Brother Andrew. She did this by pretending to deliver Bibles, to the persecuted Church, in her imaginary car. Highly motivated pupil leaders of worship, known as worship warriors, independently plan, deliver and evaluate worship. This increases their self-confidence and develops their own understanding of biblical themes. Worship warriors see themselves as the vision's 'watering cans'. They enjoy helping others to grow spiritually through the work they do. A broad range of styles within worship enables pupils to see diversity within Christianity. Many appreciate opportunities to sing worshipful music. Class worship develops people's understanding of self, others, the world around and God as they respond creatively to worship questions. Reflection within worship is expertly guided so that people regularly enjoy moments of stillness that encourage them to think deeply. Consequently, collective worship makes a remarkable contribution to people's spiritual flourishing. It is cherished by many who appreciate worship as a special time. As one pupil expressed, collective worship 'helps me not just to learn about God but to worship him.'

The vision to 'serve one another and the wider community' stems out of collective worship and the wider curriculum. The Key Stage 1 'Archbishops' Young Leaders Award' develops the skills pupils need to become role models who help others. Key Stage 2 'Picture News', personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE) and other curriculum areas broaden pupils' understanding of injustice. Pupils learn about climate change, food poverty, homelessness and refugees. Knowledge of these issues and pupils' desire to live out gospel values lead them to take action. This is exemplified through letters to supermarkets about food waste, collections for the foodbank, litter picking and providing Christmas dinners. Partnership with schools working and achieving together (SWAT) enhances pupils' experience of the richly diverse community in which they live.

Consequently, the vision enables pupils to develop as responsible citizens by becoming agents of change in their local community. However, pupils are less equipped to act as courageous advocates beyond their locality.

Central to the enquiry based wider curriculum is the vision for all to ‘learn and grow together’. The vision shapes the implementation of the curriculum through mixed ability teaching. This ensures that pupils of all abilities access an enriching curriculum that offers all the opportunity to flourish academically. Opportunities to cultivate curiosity, creativity and reflection support pupils’ spiritual growth. The vision shapes the curriculum through the values of faith, hope and love. Staff and pupils express how they demonstrate faith in one another, share aspirations and express joy and curiosity in learning. As a result, pupils gain a strong sense of self-belief and grow in the hope they have for the future. Pupils are inspired to develop a love of learning, and through their learning, develop their characters as people who love.

Relevant and engaging RE is highly regarded in school by all stakeholders. RE is prioritised within the timetable and is taught by skilled and knowledgeable teachers. Leaders and staff regularly access high quality RE training that enriches their practice. Pupils learn about a range of world religions and worldviews in lessons and through interactions with visitors. They ask ‘big questions’, learn about religious beliefs and consider what life is like for people of faith. The sequential and balanced RE curriculum is based on an Anglican syllabus which is supplemented with Methodist units. Pupils gain a sound understanding of Christianity and are able to talk about some theological concepts. However, pupils do not consistently use age-appropriate religious vocabulary. This limits their ability to express the depth of their understanding. Lessons provide a wealth of opportunities for pupils to creatively reflect on their own ideas about meaning, purpose and belief. Teachers make pertinent observations about pupils’ understanding and use these to inform their teaching. Systems to assess pupil progress are robust and judgements are regularly moderated both internally and externally. As a result of consistent and effective teaching in RE, the vast majority of pupils make good, or better, progress.

The inspection findings indicate that the school is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling people to flourish.

Information					
School	Wellfield Methodist and Anglican Church School				
URN	119492	Pupils on roll	201	VA/VC/Academy	VA
Diocese/Circuit	Blackburn Diocese & North Lancashire Methodist District				
Multi academy trust	N/A				
Federation	N/A				
Headteacher	Maria Ellel				
Chair of governors	Chloe Moretta				
Inspector	Ali Rice			No.	2103
Date of Inspection	19 September 2023				