

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Blackrod Church Primary School	
Address	Vicarage Road West, Blackrod, BL6 5DE
School vision	
<p>'Stronger together with God to be the best we're meant to be. Our Christian values are Grace, Love and Fellowship.' This is rooted in 1 Peter 4:8, 'Above all, love each other deeply' and Jeremiah 17:7-8, 'Being together helps us achieve more and overcome barriers.'</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and experienced leadership relentlessly drives forward the school's biblically rooted Christian vision. The underlying values of grace, love and fellowship ensure all who enter the school are welcomed, nurtured and able to flourish. • Through the highly inclusive nature of the school, effective provision for pupils with additional needs and pastoral support systems are impressive. Alongside bespoke coaching and mentoring, they enable all pupils and adults to reflect the aspirations of the Christian vision and succeed. • The mutually beneficial partnership between the school and church community enhances and develops collective worship. This results in pupils' spiritual growth as they gain the skills and confidence to lead worship in school and church. • The curriculum is expertly crafted around the Christian vision and unique context of the school. Underlying themes make learning relevant and purposeful. Consequently, pupils and adults take ownership of their own learning and aspire to learn and succeed. • Religious education (RE) has high priority in the curriculum and the school improvement plan. Planning and assessments evidence pupils acquiring a growing depth of knowledge and progression of skills. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To further develop the role of pupils in planning and evaluating collective worship. This is so opportunities to lead and reflect on worship enable continual deepening of their personal spirituality. • To align RE curriculum plans more closely to the school's key curriculum themes. This is to ensure learning in RE continues to be challenging, relevant and effective. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Those who visit Blackrod Church Primary are in no doubt that this is a school whose Christian vision is at the heart of all it does. The school is proud of its joint Anglican/Methodist foundation. The biblical underpinning of the Christian vision is robust and rooted in the context of the school. The chosen biblical references are pertinent to the life of the school and reflected in every aspect of the school's work. The vision and associated values are prominently displayed throughout the school environment. The way they are lived out ensures members of the school function together in fellowship to achieve and succeed. Christianity in action is the order of the day and leaders act as inspirational role models. They have an acute awareness of the needs of the school. Opportunities to learn from Bible stories inspire this close-knit school family to love each other</p>	

deeply and overcome barriers with determination and resilience. Leaders see the impact of the vision in pupils' academic progress and spiritual development.

Leaders are passionate about inclusion and curriculum development. They provide a curriculum offer which is motivating, accessible to all and develops pupils as lifelong learners. Key themes, personalised to the school, skilfully underpin long-term plans. They link closely to the local context and lived experience of pupils. As a result, there is an enthusiasm for learning and a strong desire to achieve success. The Christian vision ensures the needs of learners are met exceptionally well. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are warmly accepted and valued. They flourish and are prepared well for their next stage of learning. Pupils in the 'Dreams' classroom access adapted provision to support their complex needs. Here, they happily learn and thrive. Innovative approaches to learning, for example, 'the golden triangle,' give pupils learning strategies and control over the breadth of knowledge they acquire. Learners have a thirst for knowledge and a curiosity about the world around them. The 'wonder club' enables pupils to experience a sense of awe as they explore the natural world. Educational visits and enrichment activities, contribute to a gradually deepening spirituality as pupils move through school.

The vision promotes productive partnerships. Leaders engage selflessly with the Anglican diocese and Methodist district. They deliver training and support other Church schools with leadership. The established partnership with the church community has a significant impact on the quality of collective worship. Members of the clergy prepare pupils to lead acts of worship. Church members lead 'wobble worship' in school with younger pupils. The school visits the local church to celebrate Christian festivals and groups contribute to 'all age' worship. This draws families into the church community. The congregation say they benefit from the vibrancy and joy the school brings. Pupils choose to worship alongside the church community as a result. Worship is valued as a time of stillness and fellowship. It is a daily exploration and expression of the vision. Pupils enter worship with a sense of anticipation and eagerly contribute. All are included and radiate happiness as they sing. Class worship is an opportunity for deeper reflection. Pupils say, 'a moment of silence is a moment for God.' They access reflection spaces across school and offer personal prayers on the prayer tree. This benefits their emotional wellbeing and provides opportunities to flourish spiritually.

The strength of relationships in this school embody the Christian vision and values. Staff describe it as a family who nurture and watch over each other. Parents say the school is filled with warmth and love and that staff are a source of support. This gives them help and comfort during difficult times. Staff say leaders live out the Christian values and champion them professionally. They feel valued and encouraged to develop and succeed. Staff yoga and coaching promotes health and wellbeing. Robust pastoral support systems ensure emotional wellbeing is a priority. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their emotions and use coping strategies, for example, a sensory walk. The school dog is an important member of the pastoral team. Pupils take comfort and solace from her reassuring presence around school. The school accesses additional support where needed, for example, bereavement charities. This has a positive effect on the mental health of pupils.

Worship, and John Wesley's prayer to 'do all we can', are a catalyst for social action. They seamlessly flow into 'Mission in Action', where pupils work in groups focusing on social change, for example, the 'Peace Patrol' and 'Eco Warriors'. Pupils use their voice to condemn discrimination saying everyone deserves love and respect. They speak with maturity about different kinds of families. They stand up to injustice, articulately relating this to forgiveness and reconciliation. Pupils apply the core concept of creation to their concerns about climate change, deforestation and ocean pollution. They relate this to the story of Noah's Ark saying, 'God created the world. We need to look after it.' The school takes its responsibilities to serve the local community seriously. Pupils sit on the town's youth council and sing at the inauguration of the mayor. The school joins the annual walk of remembrance and sings carols around the parish at Christmas. Pupils improve the lives of people in the community by delivering food at Harvest, supporting a homeless shelter and organising uniform swaps. They raise money for the wider community at MacMillan coffee mornings and by selling bracelets to help people in the Ukraine.

This active culture of responsibility towards others means the school impacts compassionately on lives beyond the school gates.

The school has an effective RE curriculum in place. It is characterised by enquiry based learning, regular conversations around 'big questions' and response to a range of texts. As a result, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and a range of world faiths. Very young pupils talk about their fingerprints 'coming from God' and ask probing questions, such as, 'Can God fly?' Others act out the story of the Prodigal Son and depict their interpretation of God's love through beautiful images. Pupils eloquently discuss the Christian concept of the Holy Spirit. Passionate leadership of RE and a commitment to professional development mean staff are well equipped to deliver a high quality curriculum. They share good practice with other schools, some of whom adopt elements of their RE teaching and learning strategies.

This is a happy, united school community, where the Christian vision results in pupils and adults knowing they are precious and treasured. Stronger together, they strive to be the very best version of themselves, flourishing in grace, love and fellowship.

The inspection findings indicate that Blackrod Church Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Information			
Inspection date	27 September 2023	URN	105211
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary Controlled	Pupils on roll	244
Diocese/District	Manchester / Bolton and Rochdale District		
MAT/Federation			
Executive Headteacher	James Royal		
Chair	Jean Gittins		
Inspector	Anne Barker	No.	959