

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Nelson St Philip's Church of England Primary School

Address Leeds Road, Nelson, Lancashire. BB9 9TQ

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Overall grade **Good**

The impact of collective worship **Good**

The effectiveness of religious education (RE) **Good**

School's vision

'We love to learn. We learn to love. With Christ as our Guide, we love and learn together.'

'God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.' (1 John 4:16)

Guide our children to prepare them for life; Respect themselves and one another; Aspire to achieve their potential; Care for the local and wider community; Every child is special in God's eyes.

Key findings

- The school has very strong relationships, rooted in love and care, between staff, pupils and parents. This results in support and respect across the school community.
- School leaders drive the Christian vision, however its impact is not fully experienced across the school.
- The school is charitably minded and supports several worthwhile causes. Pupils are active in fundraising but have less opportunities to engage beyond this.
- Collective worship is well planned and delivered. This provides good opportunities for prayer, reflection and communal singing, having a positive impact on pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have limited opportunities to lead and plan worship.
- Strong leadership of religious education (RE) ensures that a well-structured curriculum is taught effectively. This results in a rich programme of study which inspires pupils.

Areas for development

- Deepen staff's understanding of the vision in order that its impact is experienced to the full by the school community.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship in order to deepen their spirituality.
- Increase pupils' engagement in social action to support them becoming global citizens.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

The school has a clear Christian vision, focusing on God's love and on the guidance of Christ. Leaders, including governors, are fully committed to the vision. This makes a positive difference to the lives of pupils and staff. However, the vision is not fully embedded across the school. Governors are actively involved in school life, resulting in leadership at all levels supporting the vision. Leaders are committed to school improvement, using the vision to form the school development plan. Hence, bold financial decisions are made which enable pupils to flourish. For example, pupils' needs come first therefore, additional provision is funded beyond initial budget plans. Leaders at all levels demonstrate the vision's five values of guiding, respect, aspiring, caring and every child being special. Consequently, strong inter-staff relationships, built on mutual care, enable colleagues to feel supported and valued. Strategic links with local schools allow staff to benefit from collaborative partnerships. Additionally, the school accesses training and development opportunities provided by Blackburn Diocese. Therefore, leaders have a good understanding of Church school education.

The 'love of learning' is central to the school's vision. Leaders accurately explain the effectiveness of the vision in providing a strong culture of learning. This, alongside a structured curriculum and extra-curricular activities, has a positive impact on learners' spiritual and academic development. The vision's affirmation that, 'every child is special', drives the school in implementing strong policies of inclusion, which enable all to flourish. As a result, pupils with specific needs benefit from targeted provision and are supported in accessing the full curriculum.

Pupils are inspired by the vision to make a positive difference in the world. The school is charitably minded, supporting local community causes and link projects abroad. Hence, pupils are enthusiastic about collecting and contributing to others' needs. Care for the local community is expressed in different ways, one example is contributing to the local foodbank. Consequently, this charity is enthusiastically supported by pupils and families, and referrals are carried out in a dignified manner. The school council discusses which charities to assist. However, pupils lack opportunity to reflect on the causes of disadvantage. Leaders use a news resource and big questions to explore national and global events. Subsequently, pupils recognise unfairness and injustice in the world. Nevertheless, pupils have limited engagement with social action beyond fundraising.

The vision's focus on love and respect creates strong relationships across the school which impacts positively on wellbeing. Staff feel valued as a result of the caring culture, describing the school as an 'amazing place' and experience the school community 'as family'. Additionally, pupils reflect, 'teachers care about us' and parents speak of staff being 'loving and caring'. This impacts positively on relationships between parents, staff and pupils. Behaviour is exceptional and restorative justice is effectively employed. Therefore, pupils confidently articulate how to be a good friend and successfully use forgiveness and reconciliation. Staff speak of valuable support in professional and career development as well as during challenging personal circumstances. One parent recalled staff being 'very caring' when their child experienced loss. Mental health provision is well-led and resourced, resulting in effective support for pupil wellbeing.

Pupils speak clearly of how the vision helps them 'respect themselves and one another'. Strong policies, sensitively implemented, ensure the care and safety of all members of the school community. A pupil expressed the school's vision by commenting, 'we're all part of God's family'. Hence, pupils and staff treat each other with respect, welcoming all regardless of background or need. Staff, through the curriculum and in worship, encourage pupils to respect and value differences and diversity. Therefore, pupils have a good understanding of different religions and cultures.

Collective worship embodies the school's vision of looking to 'Christ as guide'. Worship is engaging and meaningful, using the teachings of Jesus and stories from across the Bible. As a result, pupils are inspired and grow in their understanding of faith in today's world. Beliefs and faith are expressed through a variety of activities, including spoken prayers, Bible stories, singing, listening and talking together. Subsequently, parents speak of pupils singing songs from worship in the home and asking questions about the Bible stories they hear. Considering similarities between Christianity and other faiths inspires pupils to be outward looking, therefore increasing pupils' ability to exercise their own beliefs. The impact of worship is visible across the school in 'catch me' actions. Therefore, pupils are encouraged to put into practice the week's Christian value. Worship Ambassadors plan, lead and evaluate worship. However, involvement of the wider body of pupils in planning and leading worship is lacking. A member of local clergy leads worship on a weekly basis and supports the school in planning special celebrations. Therefore, pupils and staff benefit

from a rich connection to the cycle of the Christian year. Diocesan worship via video, introduced during the COVID pandemic, is enjoyed by pupils. This results in growing connections with other Church schools across the Diocese.

RE fosters the ‘love of learning’ and effectively implements the vision. Hence, lessons provide a safe place to ask big questions and reflect on faith. Pupils access RE areas in each classroom and RE is supplemented by themed events and spirituality days. Therefore, pupils engage enthusiastically with content and enjoy discovering similarities and differences between faiths. RE helps pupils explore how Christians live in other parts of the world and pupils benefit from studying religious artefacts. Curriculum focus on understanding Christianity and Islam drives strong partnerships with the local church and mosque. Connections between RE and worship are mutually beneficial, and consequently pupils understand the relationship between religious beliefs and faith practices.

Nelson St Philip’s Church of England Primary School is correctly described by one governor as having ‘love that’s evident and runs through the school like lettered rock’.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The quality of teaching and learning of RE expresses the school’s vision. A clear action plan is built effectively on the local diocesan syllabus. Standards are high and RE is academically challenging. Hence, pupils make good progress and flourish in their learning. Staff benefit from high quality diocesan training and resources and are well-supported by a passionate subject leader. Assessments are appropriately used, ensuring pupils know how to make progress in RE.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	2 February 2023	URN	119437
Date of previous inspection	3 December 2015		
School status	Voluntary Aided	NOR	138
Diocese	Blackburn Diocese		
Headteacher	Rebecca Moulden		
Inspector’s name	Steve Birkinshaw	No.	C.21/22