Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Windmill Church of England VC Primary School, Batley	
Address	Upper Batley Lane, Batley, WF17 0NP

School vision

'Do everything in love.'
1 Corinthians 16:14
Guided by God's love, our belief, courage, compassion and advocacy cultivate a love of ourselves, a love of others and a love of learning. As one community and one family, we flourish academically, socially, morally and spiritually achieving our dreams and showing the world just who we are.

School strengths

- The school's vision, which is deeply rooted in the Bible, is central to its life and purpose. It enables pupils and staff to flourish.
- Driven by the school's Christian vision, leaders and staff have created an inclusive culture. Their work with pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families is transformational.
- Motivated by the school's vision, leaders do all that they can to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff. Exceptional relationships ensure that their work is life-changing.
- Pupils are confident to both ask and answer the 'big questions' of life. This is as a result of leaders' relentless focus on creating an inclusive, dignifying and equitable culture within the school community.
- Pupils thrive as a result of the carefully considered religious education (RE) curriculum. They show a thirst for knowledge about religion and worldviews.

Areas for development

- Develop governor monitoring and evaluation of collective worship. This is to ensure a clear understanding of how collective worship supports pupils and staff to flourish spiritually.
- Extend opportunities within the curriculum that support pupils' understanding of the place of justice in our world. This is to empower pupils to make their own decisions and to support them in becoming agents of change.
- Embed the use of a shared language for spiritual development. This is to enable pupils and staff to more readily explore spontaneous opportunities to enrich spiritual flourishing.

Inspection findings

In 'doing everything in love', Windmill Church of England Primary School is transforming lives. Through the living out of their vision, leaders have nurtured a school-wide and deeply held belief in the power of inclusion. This in turn drives the actions of staff, leading to flourishing for all. The vision has informed successful leadership decisions such as the opening of the school's 'Additional Resourced Provision' (ARP) for pupils with SEND. It also guides the school's work with key partners,

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the most significant of which is the diocesan education team. Pupils are passionate about the importance of the school's vision. They articulate their belief in a love which will 'spread further and further and then return to you like a boomerang'.

The school's vision is a reality for all pupils, but especially those with SEND. Provision for these pupils is exceptionally well led by the school's special needs co-ordinator (SENDCo). With the support of governors and leaders, she has taken bold decisions to enable pupils with SEND to flourish. The development of the 'Bungalow Provision' for pupils in the mainstream school is a key example. As a result of this innovative provision, pupils are able to access high quality support which is tailored to their individual needs. Leaders have also recognised the need to support pupils' emotional literacy. As a result, they employ an emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) to work with pupils and staff. The school invests heavily in 'Thrive', a successful whole school approach to improve the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. This work is enabling all pupils in this school to flourish, but especially those who are vulnerable.

Leaders have a clear understanding of what spiritual development looks like within their school community. Staff and pupils engage in a range of deliberately planned spiritual experiences. This work has been enhanced through diocesan training, which supports staff in considering different approaches to spirituality. As a result of planned spiritual opportunities, pupils are demonstrating a growing ability to reflect upon the wonder of the world around them. This in turn is beginning to impact their attitudes, behaviour and thinking. Staff are not as confident in supporting pupils in engaging with spontaneous opportunities for spiritual development.

Collective worship is central to school life. Pupils and staff flourish spiritually as a result of worship which is inclusive, invitational and inspirational. Pupils believe that 'everyone can take inspiration from our worship'. Leaders respond proactively to findings from monitoring activities, particularly those linked to pupil feedback about worship. Pupils believe their views are heard and valued. Governor monitoring of worship is not embedded. Collective worship is inspirational and is driving the actions of pupils in school. It is causing them to reflect deeply and purposefully on what motivates them. A key example is the recent focus on the value of compassion. Through worship, pupils were challenged to carry out acts of compassion within their community. This led to a surge in compassionate acts across the school. Pupils were then asked to consider what motivated them to carry out their acts of compassion. The headteacher skilfully guided pupils to reflect upon the difference between selfless and selfish acts of compassion. 'Reflection Journals' have been introduced for each pupil. Within these journals, pupils are given the freedom to reflect upon the ways in which worship changes their thoughts and actions. This approach is proving successful in some classes, but is not fully embedded across the school.

All are valued in this school. The headteacher is committed to supporting his team in understanding the unique context of their community. Parents experience the vision in action through staff engagement in training on areas such as the impact of fasting during Ramadan. Throughout the curriculum, pupils are encouraged and supported to develop their ability to express views and opinions clearly and considerately. This impacts positively on their ability to ask and answer the 'big questions' of life with respect and sensitivity. Pupils are supported in treating one another well through the school's successful implementation of a behaviour curriculum based upon restorative practice. In living out the vision, they understand that it is not always easy to do everything in love. Pupils are able to clearly articulate the times when doing everything in love can be challenging, such as when accepting an apology.

The headteacher demonstrates a passionate commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff. The staff team live out the vision in the way they support one another when facing times of personal challenge. This support is transformational. Staff flourish as a result of the

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significant investment in their professional development. This includes support offered to a parent who began her work in the school as a volunteer and is now the school's early years leader.

Leaders are determined in their efforts to give pupils a voice. In doing so, they are supporting pupils in becoming agents of change. Recent additions to the curriculum have included a focus on understanding the place of justice in our world. Year 6 pupils benefit enormously from their learning about refugees in English and their cross-curricular work with the local Youth Justice Team. Evidence of planned opportunities for pupils to make their own ethical choices is limited.

The RE leader is highly effective in her role. The subject has a prominent profile within school, with significant investment in professional development. The subject leader has worked closely with diocesan colleagues to review the school's planning for RE. The curriculum is inclusive and relevant to the school's context. It enables pupils to explore a range of religions and worldviews and supports them in understanding their place within the local community. Changes have been made to long term planning to ensure sufficient challenge, particularly in terms of pupils' acquisition of subject specific vocabulary. Pupils are able to make specific links between the school's vision and their RE lessons as a result of carefully considered planning. One child described how a Bible passage about the conversion of Paul linked directly to God's love. Leaders monitor the impact of the RE curriculum through a range of strategies. Most recently this led to a review of the way in which the school uses a specific resource. Additional training was arranged and curriculum planning was updated. As a result, the curriculum now focuses on pupils developing a deeper understanding of core concepts. Governor monitoring and evaluation is less well developed.

The inspection findings indicate that Windmill Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	18 January 2024	URN	139912
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	423
Diocese	Leeds		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Darren Foulke		
Chair	Anne Midgley		
Inspector	Katie Savage	No.	2140

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