

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Kirkby Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Hall Lane, Kirkby, Liverpool L32 1TZ

School vision
<p>We value every child and aim to nurture each one in a respectful Christian environment. We encourage all their qualities and celebrate individuality.</p> <p>By working with partners alongside families, we aim to maximise each child's spiritual, academic and social potential, through building solid foundations for a fulfilling future.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Building on a tradition of achievement and values in a caring environment."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too." (Philippians 2:4)</p>
School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's Christian vision and supporting values shape a culture of inclusion, ensuring pupils and adults 'maximise their potential'. • A flourishing partnership with the local churches enables pupils and adults to thrive spiritually. An engaging variety of joint experiences enrich the worshipping life of the whole school community. • Leaders and staff focus on the uniqueness of individuals. This creates a tangible culture of social justice within the school. Pupils and adults advocate on behalf of each other and are empowered to act for justice. • There is a real sense of taking care of each other. The school's biblical verse is a lived reality, resulting in the whole school community ensuring that adults and pupils are treated well. • Staff and pupils have a shared understanding and language of spirituality. As a result, the curriculum provides rich and varied opportunities that deepen pupils' spiritual growth.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify how the different elements of the vision fit together cohesively so that staff and pupils understand more clearly how it drives the work of the school. • Provide more regular opportunities within religious education (RE) lessons for pupils to explore and reflect more deeply. • Find ways for pupils and staff to become more active partners within the worship life of school. This is to deepen their spiritual growth, in both planned and spontaneous ways.

Inspection findings

Kirkby Church of England VA Primary School is a thriving and nurturing Church school. Staff and parents feel proud of its long-standing traditions and caring environment. The vision-led values shine out in this supportive and caring community. Pupils and adults are able to talk about the school's values through the character 'CofE The Caterpillar.' They live out the values of respect, love, caring, friendship and forgiveness in their daily lives. The school's biblical verse is a source of encouragement to think of others. The vision motivates leaders, including governors, to make bold decisions in the interests of the school community, particularly the most vulnerable. The vision shapes priorities, development planning and the use of resources. Leaders clearly understand and explain how the vision leads to people flourishing within the school. However, the wider staff team and pupils are not entirely clear about how parts of the vision and supporting values fit together. This hinders the power of its impact.

Inspired by the vision of building foundations for a solid future, leaders have designed a curriculum that enables pupils to achieve well. Leaders carefully consider the sequence of learning to support pupils in mixed age classes. They thoughtfully design enrichment activities that increase pupils' aspirations. For example, fruitful links with local sports people from diverse backgrounds increase pupils' hopes for the future. Ambition for all learners results in a supportive and inclusive environment. This includes pupils considered vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Vulnerable pupils are quickly identified, then adaptive teaching and environments are established. This supports all pupils to access learning, engage in reflection and build relationships. Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of the curriculum. Whole staff training has supported the development of a common approach to talking about spirituality across the school. Planned opportunities that focus on the dimensions of self, others, beauty and God are built thoughtfully into the curriculum. As a result, the curriculum nurtures pupils' deeper understanding of the spiritual dimension to their lives.

Collective worship enables pupils to flourish spiritually. The daily programme of collective worship is carefully planned and focuses on vision-led values and the Church year. Pupils appreciate time to reflect on their actions in collective worship and how they can live out their school values. Clear and established routines, including lighting a candle at the start of each gathering, illustrate the priority of worship. Prayer and reflection spaces around school are valued and give pupils opportunities to be still, quiet and calm. Dedicated times for prayer punctuate the day. The worship life of the school is enhanced through the flourishing partnerships with those governors who are clergy in local churches. These partnerships enable pupils and adults to thrive spiritually. For example, local clergy lead varied spiritual opportunities, which include 'Jesus and Me' and 'Muddy Church' outdoor sessions. A sense of community is created through whole school attendance at the local church for services that mark the Church year. In addition, First Holy Communion preparation sessions and Eucharist services with memorised responses make church worship familiar and more accessible for families. Staff value the times the whole school comes together to worship and reflect. However, the wider staff team do not get a regular chance to participate actively in collective worship. This limits the impact that worship has on them spiritually.

Motivated by the vision to encourage the qualities and uniqueness of all, leaders support pupils well. Parents speak warmly about all the school has to offer and that pupils are loved. There are numerous examples about how each child is known and seen as an individual. The verse, 'Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others', is a lived reality. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the verse being a source of inspiration to do things for others. Staff model this to pupils. Consequently, adults and pupils live well together and potential is 'maximised' through the culture of inclusion. Staff are determined to support every child and encourage them to do their best. Many staff choose to stay at the school long-term because they appreciate how leaders genuinely support and care for them. Leaders are mindful and responsive to staff workload and encourage strong relationships. As a result, staff feel valued, cared for and support each other in this school community. The positive behaviour of pupils is nurtured and shaped

through secure and trusting relationships, underpinned by vision-led values. Hence pupils and adults treat each other well.

The school's Bible verse and values encourage pupils to look beyond themselves. Pupils actively work to effect change in school and support their peers with additional needs. For example, pupils raised money to develop a sensory room. The room enables pupils who require extra support to become calm and ready to access learning. Worship and the wider curriculum inspire pupils to explore global issues. Pupils make ethical choices, motivated by what they learn. For example, pupils limit the amount of litter around school and recycle waste to look after the planet. Leaders hold equality, exploring race, and appreciation of cultural diversity as a high priority. As a result, pupils feel empowered to judge what is right. Adults and pupils advocate on behalf of each other and people beyond school. For example, the school raised money to buy essential furniture for local families in need.

RE is held in high regard and this is reflected in the priority the subject takes within the curriculum. Recent changes in RE leadership have led to positive developments in the RE curriculum. This has resulted in a meaningful balance in the teaching of Christianity and a range of world religions and worldviews. Pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories. They have a growing understanding of different faiths and religious texts. Effective staff training leads to teachers who are knowledgeable about the topics they cover. Their confidence is enhanced through support from local clergy. Teachers at the beginning of their career access diocesan training that effectively supports their development. Pupils think more deeply when discovering learning for themselves. For example, pupils are encouraged to make thoughtful observations when examining images of Mother Theresa. They create meaningful questions for themselves, prompting deeper investigation. However, regular opportunities, like this, for pupils to explore and reflect more deeply within lessons are underdeveloped.

The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of RE teaching is accurate. The RE subject leader uses observations, book scrutiny and pupil voice to measure the impact of teaching effectively. As a result, areas for improvement in RE teaching and the associated training required, are precisely identified. Staff plan lessons together, which enables them to share expertise and support each other. As a result of a well-balanced curriculum, sound teaching and accurate assessment, pupils across the school make good progress in RE.

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

Information			
Inspection date	06/02/2024	URN	104448
VA/VC/Academy	VA	Pupils on roll	305
Diocese	Liverpool		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Ms Mair Hindmarsh		
Chair	Rev. Jeremy Fagan		
Inspector	Deborah Metcalfe	No.	C.23/24