



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Stephen's Church of England VA Primary School, Audenshaw	
Address	Audenshaw Road, Audenshaw, M34 5HD
School vision	
<p>At St Stephen's CE Primary School, our Christian values run through our school like a golden thread and enable our children to flourish and ASPIRE in life. 'For with God, nothing is impossible' (Luke 1:37)</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivated by the vision, leaders are passionate in driving the school forward to ensure positive outcomes for pupils and adults. • The Christian vision is reflected in strong and supportive relationships. Through the associated values, pupils learn to treat each other with respect and to reconcile differences through discussion and forgiveness. • The strong partnerships with the church, diocese and local authority enhance the life of the school. They strengthen worship, enhance learning opportunities and ensure challenge and support for leaders. • The new religious education (RE) curriculum brings opportunities for pupils to explore thought provoking questions relating to a range of world faiths. As a result, they talk about their own beliefs and those of others with confidence and knowledge. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a shared definition and vocabulary of spirituality to enable all to explain and understand its impact on their own lives. • Ensure all teachers are given training in the RE curriculum. This will ensure every teacher who teaches RE can do so confidently. • Develop creative and diverse opportunities for collective worship and reflection . This is so that all pupils and staff have chance to worship in a way that inspires and challenges. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>School leaders at St Stephen's passionately believe everyone deserves the best start in life. The recently refreshed Christian vision reflects this aspiration and is at the heart of all the school does. The associated values, through which the vision is delivered, help pupils to understand how to live positive and productive lives. The biblical underpinning is aspirational and challenging. The school believes it is a reminder of God's hope and reassurance, stating that by trusting in him, great things</p>	

can be achieved. Consequently, there is now a growing culture of hope, resilience and ambition.

The headteacher and senior team steered by the vision, seek a wide range of opportunities for pupils and adults. These are aimed at enhancing the lives of the community. Staff training has increased confidence in helping pupils, especially the most vulnerable, to overcome barriers to learning. Leaders constantly monitor and evaluate the impact of their decisions. They take advice from, and work closely with Manchester Diocese and Tameside Local Education Authority. As a result of these positive partnerships, leaders are challenged and supported in their actions to drive the school forward.

The newly developed curriculum has been written with the Christian vision at its centre. It is beginning to fulfil the needs and aspirations of the community. For example, a sense of pride is instilled in pupils when they learn about the history of their city. They learn how local people have influenced the wider world. This inspires them to believe they can also be agents for change. There are a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities in music, art and sport as well as environmental and worship clubs. These help pupils to become more aware of themselves and their talents and encourage them to aspire. At present, there is no agreed vocabulary or path to explore spirituality. There are times of inward-looking reflection and ad hoc moments of 'awe and wonder' but these are not planned. Therefore, some pupils and staff have a limited understanding of spirituality and are unaware of how to develop this.

Collective worship, driven by the vision, is valued as a time for discovering faith and to come together. The strong relationship with the church strongly enhances it. The clergy-led 'wobble worship' sessions for younger pupils enable them to worship in an interactive, fun filled manner. Worship is also regularly held in church and is led by each class in turn with parents invited to attend. This means that the school community feels at home there. Many families attend sessions such as messy church and toddler group where parents report they feel welcomed and loved. Worship in school explores the Christian values. This deepens pupils' understanding of how these can be lived in their everyday lives and the positive impact this can have. Reflection, learning and prayer are an integral part of worship. As a result, pupils appreciate that this is a time where they can give their worries to God. They state 'God is our friend who we can talk to, he gives us hope.' Opportunities for spiritual moments in collective worship are limited, which reduces the richness of the spiritual life of the school. Space for reflection and prayer outside of worship is being developed. Prayer boxes in classrooms are used to pray for people and events in their lives.

The vision and values inspire positive relationships within the school community. Leaders' determination that pupils are treated with compassion and understanding, teaches pupils how to treat each other. Discussions rather than sanctions mean that relationships are respectful and honest. When pupils disagree, they learn that forgiveness and reconciliation are the best way to solve arguments. This restorative practice helps pupils understand and manage their feelings. Staff have received training in coaching and helping pupils overcome trauma and so aid the most vulnerable. Consequently, pupils are learning to create and maintain positive relationships. Staff are encouraged to look after themselves and each other. Many staff feel well supported when experiencing difficult times. The newly formed wellbeing committee is helping them to access help when needed. As a result, staff are empowered to be proactive in looking after their health and wellbeing.

Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility such as being 'worship warriors'. They explore questions about the environment, poverty and injustice. Teachers encourage them to 'be the change' and to look for ways to make the world a better place. This inspires pupils to take action in both school and at home. They lead litter picking in the local area and help with school charity events. Pupils are aware that they have a responsibility to improve their world, they know that local

people have made a difference in their area and are keen to do the same. Because of this, they are beginning to see themselves as agents for change.

The school recently adopted a new RE syllabus. This new curriculum has been thoughtfully designed in partnership with Manchester Diocese and reflects the school's Christian vision. Staff have received training in its content and so, their confidence has risen. However, there are others who do not yet feel fully assured in delivering it. Pupils learn the key aspects of Christianity and other faiths and worldviews. Within each unit of study, pupils explore a thought provoking question. This deepens their understanding of faith and how it impacts the lives of followers. Learning activities are carefully sequenced to ensure that prior knowledge and understanding is built upon. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding of faith and worldviews increases as they move up the school.

Assessment of pupils' progress has been adapted following the introduction of the new syllabus and is being revised regularly by leaders. This means that teachers are becoming increasingly aware of pupils' achievements and needs in RE. Pupils are able to talk with knowledge and confidence about the key aspects of many faiths such as Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They know many Bible stories and can discuss their meaning with thoughtfulness. Consequently, pupils make expected progress in RE.

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

Information			
Inspection date	21 May 2024	URN	106246
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	206
Diocese	Manchester		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Guy Lovgreen		
Chair			
Inspector	Lesley Montgomery	No.	2243