

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Andrew's Church of England VA Infant School, Brighouse	
Address	Lightcliffe Road, Brighouse, HD6 2HH
School vision	
<p>Promoting excellence within a caring Christian community.            CARING: Confident, Aspire, Respectful, Inclusive, Nurturing, Generous            'Love each other as I have loved you' John 15:12</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspired by their vision, this school provides an exceptional culture of care and compassion to pupils and their families. As a result barriers to learning are overcome. This enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or who are vulnerable and /or disadvantaged to succeed.</li> <li>• The school's Christian vision with its strong biblical links is understood and articulated by those in the school community. The 'CARING' acronym ensures it is relevant to even the youngest learners. As a result it is the bedrock of school life.</li> <li>• Collective worship is a strength of the school. It enables pupils to understand what the vision looks like in daily life and its significance for them.</li> <li>• The mental health and wellbeing of staff is a priority for school leaders. This means that adults in school flourish and grow. As a result, they are excellent role models to pupils.</li> <li>• As a result of the vision, pupils show the utmost respect both to each other and the adults in school. Consequently behaviour to one another is good.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure governors monitor and evaluate the impact of the vision. This is to assure the vision remains central to the continued long term success of this school as a church school</li> <li>• Embed the school's shared language and understanding of spirituality. This is to ensure pupils can more deeply reflect their place in the world and express it in an age appropriate way.</li> <li>• Deepen pupils' thinking in religious education (RE) so that they are more confident in responding to the questions that are posed.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>The Christian vision of 'promoting excellence within a caring Christian community' is intrinsic at St Andrew's Infant School. It is succinctly underpinned by the 'CARING' acronym which ensures it is tangible for even the youngest learners. A deep sense of caring enables pupils and adults to flourish. Pupils explain how the vision and values influence their own lives. This is a school where all are welcomed and supported to succeed. Leaders are rightly proud of the impact their school has on the community it serves. Staff are transforming lives as they encourage pupils to be confident and aspiring learners. Partnerships are important to the success of St Andrews, these include federation</p>	

with the local junior school and the diocese. Leaders know the school well and ensure that the vision is paramount when planning and making decisions. However, evaluation by governors, is not always centred around the vision. As a result, continuous evaluation of some aspects of the Christian character of the school are sometimes overlooked. Therefore it does not always contribute fully to improvement planning.

When designing the curriculum, careful consideration has been given to ensure the Christian vision is appropriate to the learning needs of the pupils. Because they are naturally woven through daily life, these very young pupils naturally use the core values in the classroom without prompting. There is a palpable belief in learning from their mistakes and challenging themselves when work is tricky. Pupils talk of being confident and aspiring to be the best they can be. Staff have recently developed a shared language of, and approach to spirituality. Opportunities have been woven through the curriculum to offer starting questions, known in school as 'big questions'. Times to reflect are built into daily life as well as through specific projects, for example the 'tree of dreams' in the playground. Time is taken to pause and enjoy 'wow' moments both indoors and outdoors. However, staff have rightly identified that this work is in its infancy and needs time to be embedded so that pupils can more confidently reflect on their place in the world. Bespoke provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensures everyone has the targeted interventions necessary for their learning. There is a strong recognition that each pupil is accepted and loved unconditionally as a unique child of God. As a result those who have been turned down by other settings are warmly welcomed and flourish in this all accepting and nurturing environment.

The love which is epitomised in the Christian vision is at the core of relationships at St Andrew's. The school's inclusive approach, ensures the care and nurture for each unique individual is exceptional. This extends to the families, for whom there is a much-appreciated open door and listening ear at all times. Regular coffee mornings, enable parents to come into school and meet with school staff and other health professionals. As a result they feel very well supported. Both parents and pupils agree, it is 'like one big family'. This means that concerns are addressed with love and sensitivity.

Relationships at all levels are remarkable. Behaviour is good. When there are issues, they are dealt with sensitively and positively. Pupils are encouraged to speak up with honesty as they explore any incidents with staff. As a result they are supported to challenge injustice and see how their own behaviour might affect others. The mental health and wellbeing of all is given high priority by leaders as a way of living out the vision. Staff value the opportunities they have for high quality professional development to equip them for their roles. Consequently they feel valued and fully supported.

Pupils talk proudly of the opportunities they have to make a difference to the lives of others. They naturally refer to being generous and nurturing in the way they support others. Eco warriors are determined in their bid to 'save the planet'. A poster campaign is encouraging the school community to switch off lights, recycle and save water. Such is pupils' passion, they encourage their families to do the same at home. Having seen the impact of earthquakes on television, pupils were keen to raise money to contribute to the Christian Aid appeal. Members of school council decide which charities the school will support. As a result pupils are fully involved in making a difference to the lives of others, in an age appropriate way. Working on the school allotment has inspired pupils to champion the honey bee and its importance in the ecosystem. This has led to planting 'bee friendly' plants and the school being awarded a 'Friends of the honeybee' award.

Daily collective worship is a strength of the school and is important to adults and pupils. It is carefully planned to reflect the vision and school values. The school and church celebrate key Christian festivals as well as the Eucharist together. Links with the parish are strong with local clergy regularly leading worship in school. Pupil 'worship welcomers' help set a calm and stilling environment as pupils enter. Pupils bring their class stone, which they place in a cairn at the front of the hall. This is to mark the hall as a 'place where God is'. There is a well-established rhythm of worship which pupils find comforting. Inclusion is key, and pupils, even the youngest, have the confidence to share their thoughts with others. Prayer is integral to worship. Pupils confidently lead spontaneous prayer. Family worship enables all pupils, including those in early years, to plan and

lead worship on a regular basis. Because these focus on the school values, they strengthen the impact they have on the lives of pupils and their families. Pupils fully understand the impact worship has on their lives. For example they explained that the Bible story of David, helped them realise they have to show courage and be confident when they find things tricky. Worship is very effective in providing spiritual nourishment.

RE commands high priority in the curriculum. It is well led, and is assessed and monitored for impact, in the same way as reading, writing and maths. Pupils' progress is tracked in line with these subjects and their attainment compares well. It is carefully planned to ensure pupils develop a good understanding of Christianity. This is then used to help them make comparisons when studying different religions. For example when Year 2 pupils explore the rites of passage for babies in Islam, then make comparisons with baptism in Christianity. As a result of good teaching, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of Bible stories and the key concepts of Christianity. There are examples of their thinking being deepened as they progress through school. Such as, their explorations of the importance of the Christmas story and the concept of incarnation. Although 'big questions' are being used throughout the RE curriculum, pupils are not always given enough time to consider their responses. As a result their thinking is not as deep as it could be. Pupils are confident in their knowledge of artefacts from a range of religions. They have an age appropriate understanding of some of the beliefs of Islam and Judaism. Work in RE is varied and includes drama, discussion and art, consequently pupils enjoy the subject. Careful choices of pieces of art for a nativity trail around school, have contributed to pupils understanding of the diversity of Christianity as a global faith.

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

Information			
Inspection date	31 January 2024	URN	107548
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	166
Diocese	Leeds		
MAT/Federation			
Head of School and Executive Headteacher	Joanne Swallow Karen Smith		
Chair	Jill Flavell		
Inspector	Susan Thackray	No.	979