

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Silas Church of England Primary Academy

Loving God and each other we work together to be the best we can be.

Mark 12:28-34. When asked what the most important commandment was, Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind' and the second to 'love your neighbour as yourself'.

St Silas Church of England Primary Academy is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Notable Strengths

- The highly inclusive curriculum results in pupils, including those who may be vulnerable or disadvantaged, flourishing. As such they celebrate and experience success.
- There is a culture where all are welcomed and develop a deep sense of belonging. This results in pupils and adults knowing they are part of the St Silas family. As a result, the school provides well for their health and wellbeing.
- Religious education (RE) is well led with staff effectively supported to plan and deliver innovative lessons. Pupils' work demonstrates the use of a wide range of approaches to teaching and learning.
- Collective worship is a valued part of the school day for everyone, pupils and adults, providing rich opportunities for spiritual flourishing.

Development Points

- Create a system to track and record pupils' attainment in RE, celebrating achievements as well as highlight next steps in learning. This is so that the teaching can support further learning as well as address any misunderstandings or gaps that pupils might have.
- Develop pupils' understanding of justice. This is so that they are able to learn to be aware of the ways in which they can actively understand and support the rights of others.
- Revisit the long-established vision so that it can both capture the school's current context while reflecting innovative aspirations for everyone.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The long-established Christian vision is well known and referred to by pupils and staff alike. It is lived out through four key values which in turn, influence behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. Staff and pupils enjoy and benefit from being part of value families, 'living and breathing them'. As such pupils know they belong to 'a happy school' where 'everyone is always willing to help.' Links to Bible stories and verses reflect the Christian foundation of the school whilst remaining appropriate for the local context. Governors' decisions promote and reflect the vision that all should be able to 'be the best they can be'. For example, they financially support the 'Children's University' initiative through which pupils experience a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Such experiences enhance their learning and development, increasing pupils' confidence. The school and trust visions both contribute to the school ethos. They work together to ensure all are welcomed in and encouraged to be part of the St Silas family. Despite this, the vision falls short of embodying the ambitions held by school leaders. It represents the present conditions rather than encouraging innovative thinking and future planning.

Vision and Curriculum

The curriculum has been developed with the aim of ensuring it meets pupils' individual needs. Pupils, including those who may be vulnerable or disadvantaged, are exceptionally well catered for through learning planned just for them. Strong progress is seen through pupils' attitudes to learning as well as their effective oracy skills. Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of the curriculum. Pupils recognise and find joy through planned and spontaneous moments of awe and wonder. For example, a 'wow moment' when using a light box in art or marvelling at creation in the local park. Reflecting on life's big questions also promotes spiritual development. Pupils value extra-curricular opportunities such as cookery, dance and poetry workshops. As a result, they are confident in their ability to speak to other pupils and adults, sharing views and opinions. Leaders and governors review pupils' books, speak to them and take part in school events such as Shakespeare day. Through this they have a good understanding of ways the curriculum is supporting pupils to thrive. Curriculum networks provided by the trust offer space for staff to effectively work alongside peers, moderate work and share ideas. Such opportunities result in continued development of the curriculum to enable flourishing.

Worship and Spirituality

Daily collective worship for everyone is valued as being 'such fun'. Diocesan training supported its development so that it remains distinctly Christian whilst being respectful to faiths other than Christianity. Therefore, it is invitational and inclusive, providing 'exploration of matters of faith'. Pupils enjoy meeting together as a whole school as well as in their class groups. Outdoor worship provides an alternative experience with pupils understanding that worship can happen anywhere. Prayer, lighting candles, Bible stories, song, silent moments and time to respond personally, enhance worship. As such many have a deep understanding and experience of spiritual flourishing. Valuing opportunities to take part in worship they reflect deeply, commenting, 'it was an honour to read in my own language.' Prayer takes place throughout the day with class reflection spaces being available to all. Pupils develop awareness of themselves, others, God and the world around them. Such opportunities enhance pupils' spiritual lives collectively and individually. Consequently, they are confident and comfortable in expressing themselves. Visits to the local church for special events further enrich pupils' understanding and experience of worship.

Vision and School Culture

Reflecting the vision the school community work together to ensure that all are welcomed. New arrivals are given a tour of the school by classmates with value ambassadors ensuring that they feel at home. Hence, pupils whose life has involved trauma, starting afresh in a new country, or learning a new language, are able to settle quickly. Wellbeing is enhanced by staff who know their pupils and their families well. Pupils are confident that if they are worried or sad staff will be available for them to talk to. Quality pastoral wellbeing sessions result in



helping pupils flourish with positive attitudes to their mental health and learning. Relationships are strong throughout school and this extends into the local community. Visits to a care home and events such as an Iftar meal in school, enriches pupils' lives. Consequently, pupils and staff get along well together within an inclusive, equitable and dignifying culture. School and trust leaders make time to support them pastorally resulting in staff and pupils knowing they are valued. In turn, they too demonstrate care and concern for each other. Practical help and support is provided for families experiencing tough times. Families, trust leaders and staff, strive for the best for their children.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

In welcoming all to the school, community leaders ensure equity and fairness of opportunity. The school vision of loving each other is reflected through all being part of the welcome team. The vision is the driver for a supportive, positive behaviour policy. Pupils reflect on their actions, understand consequences and are encouraged to make good choices. They are therefore aware that school is a place where they are treated fairly. School and trust leaders recognise and demonstrate how to become good citizens. They have a compassionate approach to looking after staff who in turn reflect compassion to pupils. Pupils develop responsibility through leadership roles. They model to younger pupils how to treat one another, show kindness and how to give second chances. Younger pupils are provided with space to reflect on what is fair and not fair through role modelling and talking. Events such as anti-bullying day encourage pupils to speak up and do the right thing. Class charitable causes are chosen each year by pupils who then work together to fundraise. Despite this, pupils lack confidence in articulating ideas about the nature of justice. Consequently, they are unable to appreciate how to address injustice both in and beyond the school.

Religious Education

Leaders demonstrate passion for and expertise in RE. As such it is well led, prioritised in each year group, and reflects its place in a Church school. Interfaith weeks enhance pupils' understanding through enabling visits from the local Iman, a Jewish rabbi and a Buddhist monk. The curriculum introduces pupils to the major world religions as well as some non-religious worldviews, such as humanism. RE is well-sequenced, builds on previous learning, challenges and is well-balanced. Staff value networks provided by the trust and the diocese. Staff appreciate networking and training recognising that it challenges, motivates and leads them to further improve their practice. Leaders scrutinise RE books and class 'floor books' that evidence pupils' progress, as well as what they have learnt and understand. By observing lessons and planning, staff receive targeted support to develop their skills and knowledge where necessary.

RE lessons are innovative, exciting and promote meaningful learning. As such, pupils' work demonstrates achievement and good progress. A questioning approach is taken, such as, 'are all journeys pilgrimages regardless of whether they involve a sacred place or not?' Other examples include 'what motivates people to care for others and donate to foodbanks'. In lessons, pupils compose imaginary text messages to Mary the mother of Jesus. These focus on how Jesus went missing as a child, or after he turned water into wine. Others experience sensory stories to imagine how the shepherds felt when visiting the baby. Pupils know how well they are doing in RE and what extra work is required of them. However, gaps in understanding are not always dealt with as effectively as they might be. This is because the recording of achievement does not systematically take place.

Information

Address	St Silas Road Blackburn BB2 6JP		
Date	12 December 2025	URN	146541
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	308
Diocese	Blackburn		
MAT	Cidari Multi Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Paul Robinson		
Headteacher	Kathryn Haczycki		
Chair of Governors (acting)	Peter Ashworth		
Inspector	Deborah Smith		