

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

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| Christ Church, Church of England Academy, Shipley | |
| Address | Wrose Brow Road, Windhill, Shipley, BD18 2NT |

School vision

We know the extraordinary worth of all our children. Our vision is to provide the nurture and challenge to grow children believing in their own value, their academic successes and their place in the wider family of school and community. We are all created in the image of God. Living life in all its fullness every day.

School strengths

- Leaders of Christ Church Academy are aspirational and steadfast advocates for their community. They have established a Christian vision which gives clear direction to support improvements. A highly valued staff team live out the vision in all that they do.
- Care for more vulnerable pupils and their families is exemplary. The school is a haven for those who face challenges in their lives and learning.
- Leaders empower and equip pupils to make a difference within their school and community. As a result, pupils confidently engage with, and initiate, positive change within their local area.
- Highly effective leadership in religious education (RE) strengthens pupils’ understanding of religions and worldviews. Accurate monitoring through Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT) and within school, develops ongoing successful and ambitious curriculum plans.
- Through the development of learning experiences tailored to the needs of its community, pupils have robust opportunities to develop emotionally and academically.

Areas for development

- Governors to monitor the impact of the Christian vision across the breadth of the school. This is so that it explicitly supports the ongoing development of Christ Church Academy as a Church school.
- Build a shared language around spiritual experiences offered across the curriculum. This is to strengthen leaders' planning and evaluation of the impact of spiritual development.

Inspection findings

Leaders of Christ Church Academy are aspirational and steadfast in their passion to be advocates for their diverse community. They have established a Christian vision which gives clear direction to support improvements. Their broad and deep knowledge of the local context and how to support it, has created a dynamic, life-transforming culture. Their decisions mean pupils have extensive opportunities to overcome barriers to learning and fulfil their potential. The school is well supported through the additional capacity provided by BDAT. In partnership, school leaders and BDAT ensure the vision is lived out strategically and operationally, thus shaping pupils’ rich experiences. A highly valued staff team adhere to the vision and values through their actions. Their efforts create an environment that elevates pupils’ experience of learning and living well together. Furthermore, there is a positive culture of ongoing professional development. Staff benefit from successful professional learning

communities provided by BDAT. As a result, they often move into more senior posts within the Christ Church Academy and in other schools. There is a close association with the diocese. Diocesan training, delivered collectively to BDAT schools, supports improvement to aspects of Church school education such as collective worship and RE.

The school relies on its vision during times of adversity. For example, the discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) meant that not all pupils could be educated on site. Nonetheless, staff and leaders' practical application of the vision allowed them to stay motivated to nurture and challenge their pupils. Quick, practical support from BDAT ensured that education was continuous and disruption minimal.

Governors understand the needs of their community. They are well-informed and ensure that spending decisions link closely with the vision. They recognise that funding resources such as the accessible playground develops opportunities to 'live life in all its fullness'. However, they do not always evaluate the impact of the vision across the breadth of the school. Therefore, they cannot ensure that it explicitly, and continually, supports the ongoing development of the school as a Church school.

The vision inspires leaders to develop rich learning experiences tailored to the needs of pupils. Teaching encompasses the school's 'CCA Way: Compassion, Community, Achievement'. This creates a purposeful learning environment where pupils make personal and academic growth, 'believing in their own value'. Their access to learning is of paramount importance to teachers and staff who diligently promote the 'extraordinary worth of all'. To this end, a designated learning hub is a welcoming environment for those who need additional educational support. Likewise, the nurture hub is a refuge for those experiencing social and emotional challenges that might inhibit learning. This exceptional provision transforms lives for the better. As a result, pupils are developing emotionally and academically. The school day is enhanced by extra-curricular experiences such as music, sport, and access to the school's edible garden. Quiet areas are set aside throughout the school where pupils can be calm, still, and reflective. Pupils articulate how these areas are used to promote a sense of emotional wellbeing before they return to class. However, they cannot express as clearly how these could be used for prayer or spiritual reflection. Additionally, while aspects of the curriculum deepen spiritual awareness there is no shared language to express this. This limits the ability for staff to capture moments of spiritual growth and to plan for next steps.

Collective worship successfully promotes 'nurture, challenge and community' which are at the heart of the vision. Pupils encounter Bible stories that help them understand their uniqueness and that of others. This enriches their sense of community and their understanding of being 'created in God's image.' Leaders are maintaining supportive and helpful relationships with local clergy. When possible, church leaders visit to conduct worship. However, worshipping together at church is curtailed by limited provisions such as heating. Nonetheless, during the disruption caused by RAAC, a concerted effort meant it was made available. This elevated pupils' and the local community's sense of self-worth and togetherness during a time of trial. The school participates in opportunities to worship alongside other schools in the BDAT family. These activities include carol concerts and leavers' services held in Bradford Cathedral. Thus pupils are learning that they are part of a picture that extends beyond their school and local community. Governors recognise that worship promotes pupils' spiritual growth. However, their evaluation of the impact of this on spiritual development is not well established.

Care of more vulnerable pupils and their families is exemplary. Practical support includes provision of whole-school breakfast, school uniforms, food banks, furniture and, where appropriate, home visits. In addition, positive mental health and wellbeing are prioritised in this inclusive community. Training is given to adults working with pupils who have suffered childhood trauma and other adverse experiences. Leaders' investment in resources for

these groups exemplifies their strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. It has created a haven for those who face challenges in their lives and learning.

Leaders empower and equip pupils to make a difference within their school and local community. An innovative aspect of the curriculum, particularly evident within RE, is its practical application. At the end of each programme of learning pupils use their new knowledge to benefit others through social action projects. They are keen to help those in need and eagerly identify ways to do this. As a result, they confidently engage with, and initiate, opportunities to influence change within their local area. Examples include litter picking, fund-raising discos, and support of a local homeless charity. Pupils understand how their actions can make a positive difference. This aspect of the wider curriculum is a powerful expression of the school's vision. It effectively contributes to pupils' social growth and sense of justice.

Highly effective leadership in RE strengthens pupils' understanding of the subject. It provides opportunities to learn about, and reflect on, a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils talk about the subject with enthusiasm. Those of differing abilities confidently discuss their own views and feel empowered to ask big questions in a safe environment. Trips to Bradford Cathedral reinforces pupils' understanding of Christianity's impact on Britain's cultural heritage. Additionally, pupils visit places of worship linked to other religions. This promotes the school's quest for inclusivity and helps pupils understand the impact personal beliefs have on people of faith. Accurate monitoring through BDAT, and within school, develops ongoing successful and ambitious curriculum plans. It means adults understand what pupils learn in RE and how well they progress. The school is supported by the diocese to ensure that current developments in RE are reflected in pupils' learning. Consequently pupils, including the most vulnerable and those who need additional help with their learning, flourish in RE.

The inspection findings indicate that Christ Church Academy is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

| Information | | | |
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| Inspection date | 15/07/2024 | URN | 139201 |
| VA/VC/Academy | Academy | Pupils on roll | 203 |
| Diocese | Leeds | | |
| MAT/Federation | Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust | | |
| Headteacher | Philippa Foster | | |
| Chair | John Watts | | |
| Inspector | Delia Sheppard | No. | 942 |