

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

## Aspull Church Primary School

### Vision

“We shine like stars to achieve and make a difference in the world knowing that, with God, all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26

### Strengths

- The revised Christian vision is a vibrant thread that weaves through the daily life of the school. It is highly effective in enabling both adults and pupils to thrive.
- Positive relationships, rooted in Christian love, promote good mental health and wellbeing for pupils and adults alike. The school’s natural, caring culture is exceptionally supportive, as it is rooted in mutual trust through respect for the individual.
- Collective worship is a much cherished start to the school day. It offers times for reflection and celebration, embracing both Anglican and Methodist traditions. Therefore, it enriches adults and pupils spiritually.
- Leaders are adept in securing and sustaining fruitful partnerships. This is particularly evident in the mutually beneficial collaboration between the school and its two partner churches.
- Religious education (RE) is highly valued within curriculum and wider life of the school. Well sequenced learning and innovative approaches help pupils make good progress in the subject.

### Development Points

Extend pupils’ knowledge and understanding of diversity and difference. This is to broaden their perspective as lifelong citizens, both in and beyond their local community.

- Equip pupils to challenge issues such as injustice. This is to increase their global focus as they endeavour to make a difference in the world.



## Inspection Findings

The recently refreshed Christian vision reflects the needs of the Aspull school community. It is rooted in the Gospel according to Matthew. This thoughtfully chosen verse enables adults and pupils to know that God is with them. The vision recognises the context of the locality it serves, whilst also embracing the joint church heritage. For example, the vision's challenge to make a difference resonates with John Wesley's words in 'doing all the good you can'. Leaders recognise the need for pupils to look outwards and 'shine like stars'. The vision is so much more than words. It provides a framework for adults and pupils as they navigate their daily lives. The practical use of the vision guarantees the school community thrives. It also becomes a reality through the three core Christian values of faith, hope and love. These exemplify the vision in action from key decisions to small acts of kindness.

The Christian vision drives the curriculum. It is aspirational, underpinned by a nurturing approach that gives pupils the confidence and resilience to achieve. Pupils speak of knowing God is there to help them. There is an impressive selection of extra-curricular activities that celebrate pupils' individual gifts. Leaders make every endeavour to ensure that any pupil can attend these activities. Similarly, staff actively encourage pupils to take part where they identify an interest or talent. Local secondary schools comment that Aspull pupils are easy to identify due to their confidence and engagement in school. This demonstrates the vision's lasting impact on pupils' approach to learning. Likewise, this impact is replicated in how pupils develop spiritually. Leaders and staff created an accessible poster to explain the school's shared understanding of spirituality. These simplified approaches assist pupils in navigating their unique spiritual journeys. Staff welcome the focus on spirituality and regularly share their own personal spiritual moments on the staff chat group. This illustrates the commitment to facilitating spiritual development across the school. The vision is clearly visible through leaders' commitment in supporting vulnerable pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Governors make bold decisions, for example, appointing staff with specific skills to coordinate bespoke provision for these pupils. Hence, needs are identified early resulting in the instigation of prompt actions. This ensures that vulnerable pupils and those with SEND also 'shine like stars' and their achievements, however small, are fully celebrated.

Collective worship is treasured by both adults and pupils. Seated in the round, pupils and adults feel closely linked to one another and to God. Thoughtfully planned, it creates a safe space for those present to develop spiritually. Routines such as candle lighting alongside varied topical and biblical themes, ignite pupils and adults' thoughts and questions. It enables them to ponder their own beliefs. The words of the vision are part of every act of worship. Pupils make pertinent connections enabling them to understand its relevance to their own lives. In true Methodist tradition, 'singing the faith' is undertaken with joy. Its beauty is a particularly spiritual experience. Equally, Anglican traditions are valued as an integral part of worship. This also demonstrates the conscious equitable representation of the joint church foundation. Collective worship is varied through the selfless partnership between the different clergy and school leaders. Consequently, it is an enriching experience, which supports spiritual flourishing. Worship leaders use different approaches to ensure that it is accessible for pupils' different ages and needs. Equally, participation is welcomed whilst maintaining respect for an individual's wishes.



The school lives out its vision in making a difference. Christian love exudes across the school. The school brings people together through a positive atmosphere, where the individual is valued. As a result, parents and carers feel confident in sharing their concerns knowing they will be supported rather than judged. The school finds sensitive ways in which to provide practical solutions. Staff also take the initiative in contacting families to offer assistance when they become aware of a need, such as a bereavement. This unobtrusive yet caring approach is greatly valued by parents and carers and exemplifies the vision in action. This also reflects leaders' commitment to good mental health and wellbeing. There are annual wellbeing days for staff and many also participate in the weekly lunchtime wellbeing walk. Pupils access a variety of ways to sustain their own positive mental health. The purposely created wellbeing area is a much loved hub in the heart of the school. This welcoming and innovative space is facilitated by specialist staff and is in constant use. Parents, staff and pupils share many examples of its impact on pupil wellbeing. Good mental health is championed by pupils undertaking a variety of roles. These include buddying the youngest pupils and stepping up to be 'wellbeing warriors'. Staff knowledge of individual needs enables them to be met through personalised approaches. These fully embrace pupils' social and emotional development. Thus, the most vulnerable pupils are thoroughly supported.

Relationships across the school are founded in Christian love. Staff model how to live well together. Pupils understand and apply the phrase, 'treat others as you wish to be treated'. Therefore, pupils have respect for the individual, celebrating their uniqueness. However, their understanding of difference and diversity in the wider world is underdeveloped. The school is discreet in its approach in the rare times of disagreement. As a result, pupils thoughtfully engage in reconciliation and forgiveness. The use of different news resources deepens pupils' knowledge of world events and global challenges. The school community is most generous and does much to aid charitable causes. There are numerous examples of pupils living the vision, actively making a difference. They frequently fundraise, putting others first. However, pupils' understanding and skills are less refined to undertake social action. This limits their ability to challenge injustice, and champion causes about which they may feel strongly. Leaders are proficient in developing partnerships in different contexts. The school is often the 'glue' that sustains these links, which directly results in pupils flourishing.

RE is greatly valued within the curriculum and beyond. The subject is well sequenced and builds up knowledge from previous topics. There is a good balance between Christianity, other worldviews and faiths. Methodist RE units are planned across alternate year groups. Leaders organise the order of individual topics so that non-Christian themes are covered first. This vision driven action secures pupils' rounded achievement in RE. This is through quality provision across the subject, which safeguards time for every topic. Innovative methods enable pupils to explore ideas in depth. Big questions are encouraged, exemplified by one pupil asking, 'who made God?' This enquiry approach facilitates a deeper understanding and the opportunity for pupils to consider how themes relate to their own lives. RE is well-led and the subject leader accesses pertinent training from the local diocese. This ensures that staff are kept abreast of developments in RE. Leaders maintain high expectations for the subject. Routine monitoring and training provide staff with support to sustain the quality of provision. As a result, pupils make good progress in RE.

## Information

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|--------------------------------|--|---------------|--------|
| Address                        | Bolton Road, Aspull, Wigan, Lancashire WN2 1QT |               |        |
| Date                           | 10 September 2024                              | URN           | 106518 |
| Type of school                 | Maintained Voluntary Aided                     | No. of pupils | 202    |
| Diocese and Methodist District | Liverpool Diocese<br>Lancashire District       |               |        |
| Headteacher                    | Howard Smout                                   |               |        |
| Chair of Governors             | Sarah Sutton                                   |               |        |
| Inspector                      | Jo Williams                                    |               |        |