

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Cuerden Church School	
Address	Station Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire. PR5 6ED
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Excellent

School's vision
<p>'On a journey with Jesus, growing, learning and loving God together.' We grow to be caring and respectful towards one another and God's creation; learn to be courageous when faced with challenges; feel valued and inspired to be the best we can be, knowing we are loved by God. 'Everything is possible with God.' Matthew 19:26</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is the embodiment of its Christian vision. Passionate and dedicated leaders drive the vision, resulting in it having a transformational and tangible impact. • Exceptional relationships, rooted in Christian love and trust, make a substantial difference to the everyday lives of the whole school community. The school collaborates with the Methodist and Anglican churches ensuring a highly effective partnership which is mutually beneficial. Pupils are active in supporting their local community but have less opportunities to embrace global issues. • The dignity and respect that both adults and pupils display is considerable. It is deeply engrained in the Christian ethos, resulting in everyone knowing they are truly valued and supported on their individual 'journeys'. • Innovative approaches to religious education (RE) enable pupils to make significant progress. The subject is highly inclusive and a highlight of the pupils' week. • Collective worship is inspiring, with the ambience particularly reverent and reflective. This coupled with active leadership roles for older pupils, makes a sizable contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on current social action activities to include a more global perspective. This is in order to develop pupils further in becoming agents for change as global citizens. • Deepen pupils' spiritual development through increasing opportunities for older pupils to support younger pupils in leading collective worship.

Inspection findings

Cuerden's Christian vision is deeply embedded in all aspects of school life. As a result, it makes a significant difference to the daily lives of all those across the wider community. There is a deep understanding that all are on a journey with Jesus which engenders hope. Seven thoughtfully selected Christian values are an embedded feature of the school, for example hope, love and trust. These are visibly emulated by staff and pupils alike. Everyone has a clear understanding of the values' Christian roots, with one pupil rightly explaining that they lead to 'good things happening'. For example, following a worship focus on hope, pupils are actively seeking out opportunities in bringing aspiration to others.

The vision is seamless in embracing both Methodist and Anglican traditions. This reflects the highly conducive and mutually beneficial partnership between the school and the two churches.

The strong personal faith of school leaders, coupled with the vision, inspires courageous decisions that empower staff and pupils alike. The vision's biblical roots were carefully chosen to reflect the school's aspirations for its community. Leaders correctly explained that the verse, 'Everything is possible with God', expresses 'unlimited possibilities and opportunities'. Consequently, this permeates all aspects of school life with pupils confident in affirming their knowledge that Jesus is there to help them. Leaders actively seek out frequent opportunities to work with both the Blackburn Diocese and the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust (MAST). Therefore, staff and governors have a sound understanding of Church school education and are well briefed of developments.

The vision is ambitious for the pupils to reach their full potential. Hence, a well-established robust system for self-evaluation ensures continued improvement. Governors and senior leaders know their school extremely well and make bold decisions that enable all to flourish. Leaders show great Christian love and compassion towards everyone in the school family, frequently going the 'extra mile'. This often includes agreeing to funding additional provision where there is a specific need, nurturing everyone and cherishing every family. This highly inclusive and holistic approach guarantees that pupils have all they need to access their learning whatever their circumstances.


The vision utilises the idea of a journey that is outward looking, understanding life's triumphs and challenges. As a result, it instils hope and propels pupils into action. They actively seek to find solutions to the problems they encounter. For example, pupils have ingenious ideas for fundraising, such a 'Penny for Ukraine'. Likewise, they have taken the initiative to collect and clean crisp packets so that they can be made into blankets for the homeless. Pupils demonstrate considerable perseverance and resilience in tackling such issues. The use of a news resource ensures that they are exceptionally well informed as to events nationally and globally. However, most activities undertaken focus on the local community. Nevertheless, there are some rich global themes developing, for instance, the links with a school in India.

Pupils rightly speak of how the vision helps them 'make good choices'. Similarly, parents give many examples that highlight how the school is a 'family' and 'underpinned by love'. There is a powerful sense that no-one is judged. Parents feel that they could approach staff about anything. Many personal stories showcase how the school makes a transformational difference, always putting others first. As a result, rare behavioural issues are managed effectively. Forgiveness and reconciliation are approached by asking 'how would you feel if ..?' Positive relationships are secured because pupils actively use the phrase 'treat others as you want to be treated'. The school's vision is exceptional in ensuring that all are treated with dignity and respect. Therefore, pupils are clearly attuned in celebrating diversity and difference. One pupil gave an example of a new pupil joining the school and how he 'respected his culture'. The phrase, 'everyone's equal' is a recurring theme. One mum accurately described the Christian ethos as enabling the 'children to be free to be themselves'.

Collective worship encompasses the Christian vision's theme of loving God together, on a journey with Jesus. It sets the tone of the day, rooted in biblical teaching and putting Christ at the heart. Worship is carefully planned and sensitive in its approach. As a result, it is highly inclusive and invitational with a far reaching impact. A member of staff shared how attending the school's worship had reignited her waning faith. Pupils look forward to gathering together and value the times of reflection it provides. There are established routines for all to give feedback on worship and they have a strong voice. For example, pupils instigated quiet music on entry to the hall, resulting in them now enjoying a reverent calm to start the day. Worship is exceptionally engaging and includes relevant and varied themes. Subsequently, it deepens pupils' spirituality, aids their understanding of Christian values. Furthermore, it provides profound examples of people living out their faith. Reflection is part of the natural rhythm of the day. Pupils are open and comfortable in their use of prayer. Staff gave numerous examples of when these quiet moments are valued, for instance, when reflecting on those in need. They are remarkably familiar with the concept of the Holy Trinity and the Holy Spirit. One pupil giving the example of the dove coming down at Jesus' baptism. Pupils frequently plan and lead worship. However, only the oldest currently only undertake this. Pupils look forward to collective worship, especially when being led by the clergy from either St Saviour's Church or Bamber Bridge Methodist Church.

RE reflects the vision by taking pupils on an exciting journey of discovery. Memorable rich learning opportunities motivate pupils. For example, a 'Pass the Parcel' game to discover God's Christmas gift and a lesson beginning in the dark. These are examples of the numerous inventive approaches that staff employ resulting in high levels of engagement. Likewise, the subject provides many opportunities that enrich pupils' understanding, such as meeting a bible smuggler and learning about John Wesley. They are secure in the knowledge that RE provides a safe place to explore big questions. The idea of 'no wrong answers' enables pupils to delve deeply into complex themes producing high quality debate and thoughtfully considered responses. Important links are made across the curriculum. For example, the Science and RE subjects leaders are working together cross referencing pertinent Christian themes.

A governor accurately described Cuerden Church School as a place 'where everyone matters and everyone lives together in God's love'.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Excellent	
	<p>RE is a priority and uses quality resources. The consistency of the carefully planned syllabus ensures breadth and balance. Pupils relish RE lessons and innovative approaches enable them to make significant progress. Pupils recall prior learning and demonstrate deep understanding. Staff access regular, high quality training and have caring support from an experienced subject leader. A robust system of monitoring ensures that RE both supports and challenges pupils, enabling them to flourish in their learning.</p>			
Information				
School	Cuerden Church School	Inspection date	8 December 2022	
URN	133645	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary Aided	
Diocese	Blackburn	Pupils on roll	196	
Headteacher	Nicola Sherry			
Chair of Governors	David Evans			
Inspector	Jo Williams	No.	863	