

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Rishton Methodist Primary School	
Address	George Street, Rishton, Blackburn, BB1 4JF
School vision	
<p>As a Methodist school, our values lie at the heart of all we are and do. Within our caring Christian community, where all are welcome, everyone is encouraged to be the best that they can possibly be. We promote respect, compassion and resilience to prepare our children for the challenges of an ever-changing world and encourage our whole school community to ‘Rise up ... take courage and do it’ (Ezra 10:4)</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school’s Christian vision is aspirational for the community it serves. The associated Bible verse is understood well by both adults and pupils and lived out on a daily basis. • Positive relationships and partnerships, rooted in Christian love, permeate the life of the school. Members of the school community experience genuine care, being respected and receiving practical support. Likewise, wider links with other Methodist schools and organisations enhance the daily life of the school, deepening its church roots. • Collective worship is highly valued, bringing the school community together as one. It offers a time of spiritual growth for both adults and pupils. • Supporting good mental health is a priority to leaders. They demonstrate a proactive commitment to ensuring trained staff are available and creative initiatives are in place. This makes a significant difference to the wellbeing of pupils and adults across the school. • A well-crafted curriculum challenges pupils to be the best they can be. Staff adapt their teaching effectively. This meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disability and those who are vulnerable. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend opportunities for pupils to challenge injustice. This is in order that they gain a deeper understanding of issues facing the wider world. • Embed the revised religious education (RE) curriculum. This is to ensure that pupils’ learning in the subject is enriched through a carefully chosen balance of topics and experiences. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Rishton Methodist Primary School’s Christian vision provides challenge from its biblical roots. ‘Rise up ... take courage and do it’ (Ezra 10:4) encapsulates the school’s aspirations for both pupils and adults. This cherished verse is used frequently in tandem with the associated Christian values, such as perseverance. The vision reflects the school’s Methodist foundation, aspiring to ‘transform lives’. This drives leaders, including governors, to make bold decisions to meet specific needs. Hence, the vision lives through actions that have a significant impact and secures flourishing for both pupils and adults. It is a thread that weaves through different aspects of school life as well as being taken</p>	



beyond the school gate by those who experience its benefits. Parents, staff and pupils share meaningful examples of the vision being put into action within, and out of, the school. For some it is finding strength in difficult times, for others, celebrating an interest or achievement.

The thoughtfully designed curriculum enables pupils to flourish as the vision challenges them to be bold in their learning. It is also crafted to meet the specific needs of the school community. This is secured through detailed monitoring of the curriculum by leaders at all levels. A focus on future careers, including visitors with different jobs, characterise the school's aspirational approach to learning. This is also evident in the breadth of additional enrichment activities available, including 'Rishton's Got Talent' and outdoor days. Leaders demonstrate courage in driving the vision through the curriculum. Thus, moving away from the traditional classroom format, the newly refurbished Year 6 suite of rooms has a significant impact. Likewise, leaders' commitment to celebrating difference ensures this is carefully represented in literature across the school. This deepens pupils' understanding of diversity and garners mutual respect. Staff are skilful in adapting the curriculum to meet individual needs. The vision ensures the individual is cherished with key staff providing effective targeted support. Opportunities for spiritual growth are planned throughout the curriculum, using the shared language of 'wow moments'. These times for spiritual development are valued by pupils. The impact is felt beyond school as they describe, for instance, their favourite trees on a walk.

Collective worship is a treasured part of the school day, coming together as one community. This is evident in Year 6 sitting with their Year R buddies to guide them through this special time. Likewise, thoughtful strategies provide an inclusive approach for those needing individualised support to access worship. Christian values strengthen the vision as they are used as the basis for worship themes. Time for quiet reflection as well as 'wow moments' provide daily opportunities for spiritual growth. Moving music and joyous singing also evoke spiritual experiences. Worship embraces its Church traditions, for example, sharing in the Methodist song, 'All You Can' and referring to Bible stories as 'hearing God's word'. The school benefits from worship in the adjacent Methodist church on a weekly basis and regular visits from local clergy. Therefore, the variety of leaders and themes deepen adults and pupils' spiritual growth through engaging and lively worship. This is also demonstrated in pupils' enthusiasm to plan and lead worship, welcoming support from the school's church worker.

The school prides itself in living out the vision through providing Christian love and welcome. Relationships are built on trust, with a genuine desire to make a difference. Parents speak of the respect they receive, absent of judgement. Consequently, they feel able to approach anyone in the school with worries that they may have. Leaders are committed to promoting good mental health and wellbeing. The appointment of a support worker has a significant impact on families' daily lives. Likewise, the open door policy embraced by staff, demonstrates the care and practical help offered without question. Pupils are equally supported, accessing key staff and Dottie, the welfare dog, for comfort and space in times of need. The individual is highly valued at Rishton School. Staff recognise that their wellbeing is important to leaders, including governors. This results in leaders encouraging staff to develop professionally whilst being mindful of their workload.

Pupils embody the vision by being courageous in wanting to make a difference to their community. John Wesley's challenge to 'do all the good you can', resonates across the school. The 'All You Can' pupil leadership team share small acts of kindness and champion ways in which to improve the school environment. Pupils have some knowledge of global issues through collective worship and in lessons. However, the extent to which they are active agents of change is limited.

The school enjoys a variety of exceptionally fruitful partnerships. The local Methodist circuit describes the school as its 'third worshipping community'. As such, it receives valued assistance,

including the circuit funding a church worker, who actively supports pupils and adults within the school. Leaders are adept at seeking out other partnerships locally, which enhance opportunities for both staff and pupils. The new approach to instilling positive pupil behaviour removes judgement and shame. It is highly effective in encouraging pupils to make good choices. In times of conflict they are listened to, take responsibility for their actions and feel supported in resolving the situation. Staff focus on valuing the individual and responding to their needs. Similarly, 'The Rishton Way's' mantra of 'respect, ready, safe', helps pupils to develop the vision's themes of compassion and resilience.

RE has a high profile within the curriculum. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject. Topics are based on big questions and pupils consider these in every lesson, recording their thoughts in reflective journals. There is a balance of themes enabling pupils to explore different faiths and worldviews. Topics reflecting the school's Methodist tradition are ably woven through the subject, across all year groups. Leaders are effective in their monitoring of the subject. Hence, the curriculum is currently being revised. This is so it more accurately reflects the school's vision, with a greater emphasis on Christianity. RE provides both challenge and is sequential, building on previous learning. The subject is well-resourced, deepening pupils' engagement. RE is well-led and the subject leader accesses pertinent training from the local diocese and the Methodist Academies and Schools Trust. This ensures that staff are kept abreast of the latest developments in RE. This enriches their confidence in the subject and the balance and relevance of the curriculum.

The inspection findings indicate that Rishton Methodist Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	1 July 2024	URN	119396
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	162
Diocese	Methodist Lancashire District		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Donna Higgens		
Chair	Liam Noon		
Inspector	Jo Williams	No.	863