

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Wakefield Methodist Voluntary Controlled Junior, Infant and Nursery School with Communication Resource

Address	Field Lane, Thornes, Wakefield, WF2 7RU		
Date of inspection	19 September 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Methodist District	Leeds	URN	108252

Overall Judgement	Grade	Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgement		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Wakefield Methodist school is a primary school with 244 pupils on roll. Whilst still not high, levels of religious and cultural diversity have increased since the previous inspection. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is significantly above national averages. This is due to a Communication Resource on site for pupils with autism, speech, language and communication disorders. The headteacher has been in post since 2016.

The school's Christian vision

Wakefield Methodist School vision for 'every person's potential fulfilled' flows naturally from and is clearly attributed to the words of Jesus in John 10:10. 'I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly.' Pupils are inspired and challenged to become 'all that they can be', by following John Wesley's rule to do 'all I can' to support and value others.

Key findings

- Wakefield Methodist School and communication resource is a highly inclusive and caring school community where every pupil is respected, valued and nurtured as the unique person God created them to be.
- Governors and school staff are passionate about the Christian vision and foundation of the school, although the Christian vision is not articulated explicitly through the school website and documentation.
- The pupils' needs are met effectively, including through the promotion of mental health. Pupils live out the vision and values through care for each other, social action and opportunities to challenge injustices.
- Enquiry based religious education (RE) develops curiosity through questioning and encourages pupils to think deeply, although key skills in RE are not yet developed consistently across the whole school.
- Collective Worship and prayer are a valued part of life at Wakefield Methodist, giving all members of the school community opportunity to grow spiritually and reflect on their behaviour and values.

Areas for development

- Articulate the school's Christian vision more explicitly through the website and documentation, so that the daily operation, and strategic direction, are seen to flow clearly from this.
- Embed skills of enquiry, critical thinking and analysis so that pupils are empowered to explore their own and others' convictions critically in a challenging, but safe space.
- Extend the spiritual development offered in worship across the school day, so that pupils are empowered to reflect and explore spiritual and ethical dimensions across the whole curriculum.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Wakefield Methodist School vision flows naturally from and is clearly attributed to the words of Jesus in John 10:10. 'I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly.' Pupils are inspired and challenged to become 'all that they can be', by following John Wesley's rule to do 'all I can' to support and value others. This vision impacts strongly because it is inclusive and aspirational and deeply rooted in the school's local context. As an example, children from the Communication Resource are integrated well into the school and nurtured to fulfil their potential. Provision is highly inclusive, with a sustained focus on individual nurture and support. As noted by a governor, 'pupils and families who had no hope now have hope because our values give the foundations to build on.' Pupils are well supported and know that staff in school want them to do well and be the best they can. The headteacher and her senior leadership team are approachable and supportive, prioritising effective staff development within a culture of challenge and nurture. This has included specialist external training for RE. Senior leaders have an increasingly clear picture of the school's strengths and the focus needed for future development. Governors' monitoring of the impact of the school's vision, however, is not yet planned strategically. Whilst the vision and associated values are passionately lived out and articulated by school leaders, they are not clearly expressed through the school website and documentation. All areas for development from the previous inspection have been met.

The whole school focus on 'every person's potential fulfilled' has raised expectations across school. Through the Christian vision, pupils are supported to do 'all I can', and, have the assurance that this is reciprocal through high quality support. As put by a parent, 'everyone struggles sometimes but school never gives up on those who are struggling.' All pupils, regardless of gender, race or background are nurtured and challenged to be the best they can be. As an example of this, appropriate provision for disadvantaged pupils is narrowing the gaps in academic progress. Social, emotional and academic needs are met effectively through a broad and balanced curriculum. This is impacting positively on behaviour and attitudes to learning, as pupils are engaged and hungry to learn. Whilst there are opportunities within school that support pupils' spiritual development, the school lacks clarity on what spiritual development really means for them. As a consequence, full advantage is not yet taken of opportunities that arise across the curriculum for pupils to question and explore spirituality.

The Christian vision of striving for 'life in all its abundance' is lived out through the tangible care that pervades the whole school community, driven through a culture of mutual support amongst staff. Pupils are respectful of each other and adults. They are empowered to be the individuals they are created to be without fear of prejudice. Pupils' involvement in supporting the homeless through the Community Awareness Programme, and their support for adults with learning needs has given them a passion for tackling inequality. They are proud to be ambassadors for the Methodist international development charity 'All We Can', supporting other schools in developing this valuable partnership. As put by one pupil, 'John Wesley helped everyone by doing good and so do we.' As a consequence, pupils are motivated to do all they can to make a positive difference to the lives of others both locally and globally.

Mental health and wellbeing of pupils and adults is given high priority as an outworking of the Christian vision to do 'all I can' to support and value others. The pupils understand what factors affect mental health and are proactive in supporting each other. Staff know pupils exceptionally well and work alongside parents to meet pupils' needs. Pupils value the school's fair and consistent behaviour system, acknowledging the difference that the vision and values make to their attitudes and behaviour. Pupils care for and support each other with kindness and respect. As noted by a pupil, 'our Christian values help us respect all views and support each other with love.' However, the school behaviour policy lacks a clear focus on forgiveness and reconciliation.

Wakefield Methodist School inclusively welcomes all with dignity and respect, as precious children of God. The whole school community acknowledges the benefits brought to the school by pupils with a range of needs, including those supported through the Communication Resource. Pupils of all backgrounds value their involvement in local events, such as a recent multi faith tree planting initiative. This contributes to a culture where the whole school community shows tolerance, respect and understanding towards each other. As a consequence, pupils are keenly aware of the importance of respect for difference and diversity of religious affiliation, as well as special educational needs.

Collective worship, from a broad Methodist tradition, is valued as central to school life. This gives pupils and staff opportunity to grow spiritually and reflect on the school's Christian vision and the values that flow from this. All

staff participate in worship and feel cared for and valued as part of the school community. Pupils see their opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship as an outworking of John Wesley's rule. They do 'all they can' to help others be 'all they can'. Collective worship positively influences pupil's attitudes and behaviours because it is planned alongside classroom work on Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). Prayer and reflection are given high status, with provision including a well-used prayer room and high quality areas for quiet and reflection, including outside. As observed by a pupil, 'we pray because we can share our worries with God. When we pray, God listens and shows His love to us.'

RE takes the school's Christian vision and associated values as a starting point for each topic. Consequently, collective worship, RE and the wider curriculum support pupils in living out the Christian vision of the school. Pupils are developing curiosity through questioning and engage well in discussing 'big questions' about life. However, the use of key skills of enquiry, critical thinking and interpretation is currently underdeveloped. Pupils have a secure understanding of Christian festivals throughout the church year and the significance of these to Christians. This was an area for development from the previous inspection and has been addressed. Pupils are knowledgeable and respectful of a range of religions and world views. As put by one pupil, 'I am a Muslim and I want to know what others believe because we need to respect other people's religions like we respect our own.' Assessment of attainment in RE gives teachers the necessary insight to be able to plan to meet pupils' next steps effectively.

Wakefield Methodist's distinctive Christian vision informs and drives forward the daily life and future direction of the school. This is enabling pupils and adults to flourish in this inclusive and caring school community.

Head teacher	Donna Clark
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