



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Whitchurch Church of England Junior Academy	
Address	Salisbury Road, Whitchurch, SY13 1RX

School vision

Learning to love God and our neighbour as ourselves.
At Whitchurch Church of England Junior Academy, our view is that education is for life and worship is at the very heart of nurturing this growth and supporting our vision for the federation. Our children are immersed in our vision and values, for living successful lives.
'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind,' and 'love your neighbour as yourself.' Luke (10: 25 -27).

School strengths

- The Christian vision effectively meets the needs of pupils and the wider school community. Leaders ensure that this vision drives decision making and promotes flourishing.
- The school curriculum is crafted around its vision and values. A nurturing approach towards vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), means that they thrive.
- Collective worship is enriched by partnerships with local churches and leaders. This promotes spiritual growth for pupils and adults.
- Pupil voice is strong and respected. There are multiple roles that encourage responsibility and leadership. This motivates them to be agents of change in the global community.
- Promoted by well guided leadership, the religious education (RE) curriculum is broad and balanced. Imaginative teaching inspires deep thinking and personal responses that show compassion and respect.

Areas for development

- Embed a whole school understanding of spirituality. This is so that pupils have increasingly deeper opportunities to grow from times of reflection across the curriculum.
- Ensure continuing professional development for RE staff assists understanding of curriculum effectiveness in deepening pupils' experience.

Inspection findings

The Christian vision of Whitchurch Church of England Junior School provides motivation for success. Through the promotion of love for each other and building strong relationships, pupils are confident in their learning. The school strives to serve its local community following the biblical teaching to 'Love your neighbour' (Luke 10: 27). This helps pupils to flourish as they are surrounded by love and care. As members of St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust, the school benefits from valuable support and collaboration. Its values are interwoven, ensuring that the unique school vision is sustained. Leaders have worked tirelessly to establish a culture of respect and perseverance. Carefully crafted policies



and decision making are driven by the vision that education is for life. Providing high quality collective worship each day enriches the lives of pupils and adults. Partnership with the Diocese of Lichfield ensure these moments are spiritual and promote key Christian values. Through the nurture and compassion shown by staff, pupils are enabled to thrive.

A commitment to provide inspiring teaching and learning is upheld by leaders. The school curriculum has been crafted around its vision and values. Extensive use of technology provides a platform for growth. It supports pupils in expressing their learning in a variety of ways. Pupils benefit from the strong communication technology provides to parents. It also enables the most able to be challenged in their learning. Barriers to learning are also removed, allowing pupils to record and express their knowledge. Leaders use funding to support those who are vulnerable or with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A cherished space called the 'Learning Lab' provides a nurturing atmosphere in which to work. Reading programmes are used to boost learning. This ensures that the curriculum is fully accessible and inclusive. This enables pupils to flourish across the curriculum, using effective reading strategies. Love is demonstrated in the school's approach to extra-curricular activities. A breakfast club provides care and additional learning support. There are also a wide range of opportunities for sport and music. Teachers are empowered by professional development provided by the trust. A well-planned programme of monitoring by governors ensures that knowledge is embedded, and the curriculum meets the needs of pupils. Teachers plan moments for reflection and spiritual growth in lessons. However, a shared understanding of spiritual development is not firmly embedded. This means that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning.

Collective worship is at the heart of the school vision. Care is taken to welcome all to whole school gatherings. Leaders work closely with the diocese to provide stimulating spiritual experiences. Responsibility is given to pupils as chaplains. They are involved in the planning of worship and promote it with their peers. This strengthens the value of worship for pupils and increases confidence. Close links with the local church community enriches worship. Visits to church provide opportunities for rich spiritual growth, through reflection and stillness. Prayer is encouraged and valued during the day. Each class regularly writes a book of prayers that are shared together. 'Talk with God' areas also encourage calmness to support mindfulness. Adults benefit from worship and share how they grow spiritually during these times. There are frequent moments after worship that spark discussion. This allows pupils to deepen their understanding of the impact of faith on their thinking. Worship motivates them into acts of compassion. It encourages an awareness of global issues that they respond to.

Leaders foster a culture where everyone is treated well. They strive to meet the needs of the wider community. The school hosts a foodbank and links with supermarkets to meet basic needs locally. This means pupils are cared for and ready to learn at the start of the day. Promoting good mental health is a priority. Teachers make strong links with families so that they clearly understand needs. Adults also feel valued by leaders and appreciate care given by governors and trust leaders. Every pupil is important, regardless of the challenges they face. Mutually respectful relationships are a clear expression of the Christian vision. Behaviour policies are based on values of love and forgiveness. This encourages them to live well together, and parents confirm how effective this is. Pupils are presented with value cards to reward their attitude and actions. These are celebrated during times of worship to which families are invited. Pupils also present them to adults. This demonstrates the vision of love and respect where flourishing is strong.

To promote an understanding of justice and diversity, the school uses famous role models as inspiration. Examples include Emmeline Pankhurst and Helen Keller. They inspire pupils by promoting perseverance during challenges. Pupils learn about the importance of bravery and perseverance. This encourages them to become agents of change in their own society. Action

includes fund raising for a charity supporting cancer research. Through the curriculum, they learn about the impact of war and the lives of refugees. This enables them to understand those who have settled in their community. The school council raises awareness of issues such as pollution and ways to reduce this. Projects looking at animals are enriched with visitors from a zoo. This widens awareness of the dangers of extinction. Prompted by the school vision, pupils articulate views about the difference love can make to the global community.

The importance of RE is clearly demonstrated. The syllabus is frequently updated to provide contemporary topics and skills. This ensures that learning deepens pupils' understanding of faith and belief in the community around them. Leaders work with the diocese to effectively train staff. A planned period of monitoring by governors ensures that the curriculum provides challenge. However, the impact and effectiveness of the RE curriculum is not wholly clear to staff. As a result, the depth of pupils understanding is limited. Pupils show enthusiasm in lessons and thrive on exploring different faiths and worldviews. This means that they appreciate a diverse understanding of religion. Well sequenced planning secures knowledge of Christian festivals and Bible teaching builds year on year. A strong network in the trust enables leaders and staff to share good practice. This supports exciting lessons that are relevant to the school community. Challenging philosophical questions are used in each unit to encourage deep thinking. For example, learning about life after death helps them to understand more about their own experiences. Practical lessons motivate discussions and self-expression. Pupils learn how to debate well in a culture of respect. By exploring RE in this way, they grow in their own spiritual journey.

The inspection findings indicate that Whitchurch Church of England Junior School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	9 May 2024	URN	146432
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	312
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT/Federation	St Bart's Multi Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Sarah Camacho		
Chair	Rob Knight		
Inspector	Keith Farquhar	No.	2143