



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

## Shankhill Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Address Hethersgill, Carlisle. Cumbria CA6 6JA

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** **Good**

**The impact of collective worship** **Good**

### School’s vision

Creative learning, personal achievement and happiness.  
Enabling everyone to flourish and ‘to live life in all its fullness’. (John 10:10)

Our school community, based on Christ’s teaching, seeks to develop, in each child, a vision of human flourishing, built on wonder, kindness, gentleness, excellence and academic rigour, explored through moral and creative learning experiences.

### Key findings

- The school’s Christian vision is lived out daily. This approach makes a significant difference to the lives of those in its community.
- Christian values ensure positive relationships across the wider community and effective collaborative partnerships are built on mutual trust.
- Pupils embrace Christian compassion through charitable giving and demonstrate a growing understanding of the broader aspects of social action.
- The re-establishment of pupil led worship, and time for reflection supports pupils’ spiritual development.
- Religious Education (RE) has a prominent place in the school’s curriculum and is effective in developing pupils’ subject knowledge and understanding through ‘big questions’.

### Areas for development

- Sustain and develop the collaborative links between church and school in order to share more widely the effective work being undertaken in this field.
- Expand pupils’ engagement in social action so that they can respond to global issues such as poverty and injustice.
- Deepen pupils’ spiritual development through increasing their engagement in the planning and leading of worship.

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

The school's Christian vision is well-established and embedded in the life of the school. Leaders' ambitious vision for their community has biblical roots that aspire for Jesus' wish for everyone 'to live life in all its fullness' John 10:10. The vision is lived out through Christian values and virtues such as hope and thankfulness. These are represented in doughnut form and as a result, the vision is a daily reality for the pupils. Pupils understand its purpose, in that it aspires for them to 'be the best me I can be'. The governors ensure that the vision informs leadership decisions. Therefore, policies and development plans reflect the school's Christian foundation. The vision and values drive effective partnerships. There are examples of collaborative practice with other church schools and mutually beneficial initiatives undertaken with the local diocese. These partnerships support staff development and enrich the pupils' lives with experiences beyond the school. Staff spoke of training opportunities that developed their understanding of church schools. Skilled governors know their school well. They recognise the difficulties of analysing performance data with small pupil numbers. Therefore, governors provide considerable rigour and challenge, ensuring continued school improvement.

The vision and values are at the heart of the school curriculum. It celebrates the uniqueness of every child. Pupils flourish through learning activities tailored to their specific needs. In addition, the school actively seeks to develop pupils' individual gifts and talents such as music and sport. The school is highly inclusive and effective in the strategies it employs. This was apparent in the school's immediate and successful response to the pandemic lockdowns, ensuring that every pupil could access all lessons from the start. As a result, pupils have fewer gaps in their learning.

Pupils are very compassionate within school and beyond. They take a lead in fundraising activities that are pertinent to their lives, for example supporting a local fell pony charity. Weekly news items in collective worship inform pupils of global issues. Pupils empathise with the plight of others and can talk about these concerns.

The school's vision underpins its strong commitment to its community. This is a pocket of excellent practice. A governor described the school as 'a shining light of the church in action, the gospel at work'. This was most evident during pandemic lockdowns. Staff frequently and consistently went the extra mile to ensure that the wider needs of their community were met. Christian values reinforce high levels of positive, pupil behaviour. Likewise, a restorative justice approach enables pupils to practise forgiveness and reconciliation. Effective relationships across the school community support staff and pupils' mental health and well-being. Parents spoke of their children feeling safe and staff being 'like a mam or dad in school'.

The vision is rooted in a shared sense of family. A pupil explained, 'school's equal, no-one's tret (treated) differently'. Consequently, pupils celebrate and respect difference and diversity. Pupils provide a warm and courteous welcome. They explained how they 'didn't want new people to be left out' and understood everyone is the same. The cherishing approach to relationships and sex education is inclusive and entrenched in the school's vision for pupils to flourish.

Collective worship is a highlight in the school day. Pupils enjoy coming together to share and reflect. This was particularly pertinent during the pandemic lockdowns, when virtual worships provided much needed connectivity and solace for the whole school community. Collective worship is rooted in biblical teaching and is delivered in a way that is relevant to the modern world. Staff spoke of how it had enhanced their biblical knowledge. Worship reflects the school's vision through facilitating rich, spiritual experiences that enable pupils to embrace the 'fullness of life'. There is an invitational and inclusive approach that is highly supportive of the varying needs and beliefs of individual pupils. Staff facilitate engagement from their pupils' own starting point, ensuring they know that their personal responses are welcomed and accepted. Stillness and quiet have become a key element in worship. Reflection time supports pupils' spiritual development as they have space to respond to the topic, applying ideas to their own lives. Simple, yet effective acts of meditation are one way in which pupils reflect on ideas shared in worship. For example, following a Bible reading, the emotions felt by Mary, Joseph and the innkeeper. Prayer and reflection extend beyond worship. This time also affords pupils the opportunity to provide feedback on worship. Pupils commented on how they sought peace in the school's gazebo at playtimes. Another child spoke of how experiences at school have assisted him in praying in his bedroom at home. Worship is effective in introducing pupils to church traditions and language. Worship is well-planned and follows the church year. This supports pupils in their understanding of key Christian events. Pupils are familiar with the Lord's prayer. The daily greeting used in worship, reinforces their knowledge of the Christian belief of God as Father,

Son and Holy Spirit. In previous terms, pupils have enjoyed planning and leading worship. However, to support staff and pupil wellbeing, this has been suspended temporarily. The school is re-establishing pupils taking a lead in some aspects of worship.

RE has a prominent place in the school curriculum. Pupils relish the subject, so much so, that some choose it as an option for their high school transition days. RE is highly valued by the school and consequently the school has recently received a national award for RE. Subject content draws from local and national resources, resulting in a rich curriculum experience. Christian values support pupils' understanding of key ideas. For example, pupils spoke of how they made connections between the values and inspirational figures such as Martin Luther King. This enabled them to understand how vision becomes a reality. They have well-developed enquiry skills and use 'big questions' to explore key theological concepts. Topics covered enable pupils to explore both Christianity as a worldwide faith and other major global religions. Therefore, the focused content gives pupils a deeper insight into the lives of others and a greater understanding of diversity. The school meets the statutory requirements and expectations for Church of England schools in both RE and collective worship. Assessment materials, developed by the subject leader, are an effective tool used by both pupils and teachers in evaluating standards and progress in RE.

The vision has a lasting effect in enabling pupils to flourish. When reflecting on the school's Christian values, a pupil commented that they were a better person when they used them. They concluded, 'they will help us in the future when we go out in life'.

### Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	9 December 2021	URN	112259
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2015		
School status	Voluntary Controlled Primary	NOR	42
Name of MAT/Federation	N/A		
Diocese	Carlisle		
Headteacher	Lynnsey Batey		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above the national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities is above national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	N/A		
Inspector's name	Jo Williams	No.	863