

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

SIAMS Report Bilsdale Midcable Chop Gate Church of England (VC) Primary School

Vision

Kind and accepting, **I**ndependent learners, **N**ever giving up, **D**etermined to be our personal best

Under God's guidance, we teach children the importance of kindness towards others, tolerance and mutual respect. This empowers children to have the courage to achieve their personal best.

Psalm 145:17

'The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works'

Luke 2:40

'And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom...'

Strengths

- The Christian vision, lived out through daily actions, is understood by pupils, parents and staff. Rooted in relevant Bible verses, its emphasis on kindness and understanding others builds strong and respectful relationships.
- Worship represents a special moment in the day to be still and reflect. Members of the school community come together to sing, pause and reflect on Bible stories. This is shaped by the vision and provides moments for adults and pupils to grow spiritually.
- An enriching partnership with the local parish church strengthens the school's relationship within the community. Links with the diocese are strong and provide timely guidance and support. The valued relationship with their federation partner school prepares pupils for life in a larger school context.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum and wider enrichment opportunities provide supportive occasions to explore diversity. This positively impacts on pupils' sense of acceptance of others and belonging.

Development Points

- Develop the school's shared understanding of spirituality. This is to enhance the way pupils and adults can express aspects of their own spiritual development.
- Embed staff understanding of the breadth of content in the new RE curriculum through sourcing appropriate training and development. This is to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, including Christianity.
- Strengthen governor monitoring of the impact of the Christian vision. This is to ensure clarity around the way the vision drives actions and decisions made as a Church school.



Inspection Findings

Bilsdale Midcable Chop Gate Church of England Primary is a small school that offers a welcoming and nurturing environment. Here, adults and pupils come together to build respectful relationships, learn and thrive. The recently revised vision resonates with the care and commitment that staff demonstrate within their roles. Ensuring everyone feels safe matters greatly to staff. Kindness is valued and pupils speak of feeling joyful when at school. The size of the school is seen as a key strength by parents, providing a close, nurturing learning environment. Staff carefully tailor learning and support to ensure pupils grow in wisdom at a pace that suits them. Consequently, parents notice how quickly their children's confidence and independence grows. Families actively choose this school because of the nurturing care it offers pupils. Strong links with their federated school ensures pupils are gently prepared for integrating with larger groups of children. Leaders welcome guidance and support from the diocese and the local authority. There exists a strong focus on improving the school which includes accurate self-evaluation, moderated by external partners. Governors are committed to upholding the Christian foundation of the school. They know the Christian vision and provide valued support to leaders. However, the extent to which there is a structured approach to the monitoring of the vision is less developed.

Collective worship is planned carefully across the year to reflect the Christian vision. It is viewed as an important part of the school day. Clergy actively support leaders, ensuring a consistent and meaningful pattern of worship is in place. Staff and pupils are included in the daily transformation of the classroom from a learning space to one of reflection. Leaders plan opportunities to consider and discuss how stories from the Bible are relevant to life today. Shared messages linked to Christian values inspire pupils' thoughts and actions. Moments of deeper prayer and reflection are invitational, creating a sense of calmness. Staff and pupils appreciate these gentle times of stillness. However, their shared understanding of spirituality is less developed, limiting the way they can express the impact of worship. Parents enjoy attending services at church at special times of the year. Through this, they feel included in the worship life of the school.

Leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils and staff in school. A rich and relevant curriculum, firmly rooted in the Christian vision, is in place. Tailored learning meets individual pupil needs. This builds upon the unique advantages of having all age groups together for some shared lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic about their time at school and enjoy helping each other with reading. Care for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is exceptional. Personalised baskets of resources help pupils to regulate and focus in lessons. Learning is adapted to meet different ages and needs. Staff have high expectations grounded in a deep understanding of each child. Aware of the need to widen pupils' horizons, adults work hard to prepare pupils for life beyond the school. Opportunities to discuss diversity enhance and influence pupils' understanding of how we are each unique. Moments for spontaneous spirituality are evident across the curriculum. The 'Federation Fab Fifteen' enhances learning and builds aspects of spirituality into the wider curriculum offer. However, the structured way spiritual understanding is planned within the curriculum is limited.

Partnerships beyond school matter and are nurtured by leaders. Beneficial links with the parish church are reciprocal, creating valued moments of togetherness. They lead to many occasions of joint celebration in church, school and at the village hall. Opportunities for parents, parishioners, staff and pupils to attend services such as Harvest foster a deep sense of belonging. These are important events for the local community and the school is seen a crucial cog at the heart of village life. Pupil voice is a regular part of monitoring and an active school council connects pupils across both schools. Pupils are keen to lead and have many ideas for improving their play area. They are proud of the work they do to support members of the wider community, including donating coats and food at Harvest. However, opportunities for pupils to act as decision makers, capable of enacting change, are still developing.

Through careful monitoring, leaders ensure the RE curriculum is relevant and effective. Planning covers a balance of religions and worldviews, including Christianity. The school's context and need to teach across age groups influences the shape of the curriculum. Leaders have planned this with care to allow all pupils to learn in sequence and retain knowledge. Deep philosophical questions form the basis of each theme to encourage curiosity and discussion. Leaders



invest time in quality professional development for staff, including bespoke support from the diocese. Carefully chosen resources supplement staff expertise, providing pupils with artefacts and experiences to bring learning to life. Lessons led by clergy deepen pupils' understanding of Holy Communion and the way some Christians live out their faith. Leaders place a high priority on RE and are ambitious for its development. However, the breadth of the new curriculum is not fully embedded or refined to deepen pupils' understanding of religions and worldviews.

The Christian vision promotes kindness, tolerance and mutual respect. Relationships within the school, and beyond, extending into the wider community, reflect this. Staff appreciate that leaders intuitively know their needs. Consequently, they feel valued and appreciated. This love and care flows naturally from the adults to the pupils. Lunchtime is an important part of the day to eat and share together. Living out the kindness of the vision, the cook lovingly caters for each individual taste and preference. Parents are happy to contact school about issues or concerns and say school is supportive of their children. Pupils acknowledge how well they get along and understand the school rules of 'ready, respectful, safe' identifying 'respectful' as the most important, for them. They actively show this respect through their words and actions. Shaped by the vision, a culture of care and kindness creates a sense of the whole school being one loving family.

Information

Address	Bilsdale Midcable Chop Gate Church of England (VC) School, Chop Gate, Middlesbrough, Cleveland. TS9 7JL.		
Date	13 November 2024	URN	121480
Type of school	Maintained Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	8
Diocese	York		
MAT/Federation	Carlton & Faceby and Bilsdale Church of England Federation		
Headteacher	Matthew Scott		
Chair of Governors	John Ford		
Inspector	Trudi Garratt-Ward		