

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

### St Andrew's Church of England VA Junior School, Brighouse

#### Vision

Promoting excellence within a caring, Christian community.

'Love each other as I have loved you.' (John 15: 12)

St Andrew's Church of England VA Junior School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Strengths

- The well-established Christian vision anchors this caring school community to ensure continued flourishing, especially at difficult times.
- Strong, supportive leaders, including governors, are guided by the vision to carry out rigorous, ongoing evaluation. This ensures that the vision is lived out in provision across the school, enabling pupils and adults to thrive.
- The school is highly inclusive. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are celebrated for their uniqueness. This promotes personal, emotional and academic growth within an equitable, dignifying culture.
- Daily collective worship nourishes pupils and adults as they engage enthusiastically with enriching opportunities for reflection.
- Pupils make very good progress in religious education (RE) due to effective leadership, ongoing professional development and a challenging, well-balanced curriculum. This equips pupils with the knowledge and understanding necessary, at an age-appropriate level, for living in a diverse world.

#### Development Points

- Embed spirituality within the curriculum and develop a shared language. This is to promote pupils' spiritual growth by creating opportunities for deeper reflection.



## Inspection Findings

St Andrew's Junior School is a warm, welcoming Church school serving the community close to the town centre. The carefully considered, deeply Christian vision is well established and underpins provision. The school recently experienced a bereavement. At this very difficult time, the vision's focus on caring provided strength to adults, pupils and the wider community. This caring approach to actions and decisions ensures that people flourish. 'Caring' also stands for giving pupils confidence to aspire, respect others, to be inclusive, nurturing and generous. Leaders and governors are guided by their rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of the vision, which drives further improvement. Decisions are underpinned by a determination and commitment to 'promote excellence' for pupils. Governors recognise that staff have the greatest impact on enabling pupils to thrive and actively invest in their development. Therefore, staff are empowered to give generously of themselves, going above and beyond expectations. Parents are grateful that the staff are caring and express admiration that they know their children so well. Families appreciate that practical support, such as foodbank access and help with wellbeing, is also available. Hence, the supportive ethos of the school spills out into the community as a lived reality of the Christian vision.

The curriculum engages pupils. They love to learn and are proud of what they achieve. They know that making 'marvellous mistakes' is what helps them to learn. The curriculum has been shaped by the vision to incorporate what leaders have identified as important to develop pupils' confidence and aspirations. Big questions have recently been included in each curriculum area, which are increasing opportunities for spiritual reflection. Alongside this, leaders have introduced a shared language for spirituality to support pupils to recognise how they are developing. As this work is not embedded, its impact on pupils' spiritual growth is limited. An annual 'world of work day' encourages pupils to consider their future, and a display about past pupils develops aspiration. When pupils make poor decisions regarding behaviour, staff engage them in a discussion using this display to encourage better choices. Pupils, regardless of their starting points, are thoughtfully integrated within the classroom, receiving the support they need to thrive. An array of visitors and visits, including to a range of places of worship, enhances learning. Extra-curricular clubs and activities, including sports, breakfast and 'lighthouse' clubs, provide further valuable opportunities to 'promote excellence'. In line with the Christian vision, pupils are actively encouraged to engage in school life and, as a result, they flourish.

Collective worship provides a joyful space to reflect and to hear stories in an atmosphere that balances enthusiasm with reverence. Pupils and adults are inspired by a range of worship leaders, including staff, clergy and pupils. Singing engages and draws together those present in worship. Such opportunities are spiritually uplifting. Pupils regularly and independently plan and lead worship, including at the federated Infant School. This experience enables pupils to grow spiritually in service to others, as they motivate and inspire their peers. During worship, pupils engage enthusiastically with the enriching opportunities for prayer and reflection, which encourage spiritual development. They take reflection beyond worship by recording thoughts and feelings in their class books. Many pupils lead spontaneous prayers at the end of worship, reflecting on and reinforcing key messages to further enhance spirituality. The school and local clergy form a close, caring partnership, which broadens support for pupils. Clergy visit regularly, leading worship and supporting pupils and staff, especially at challenging times. Pupils enjoy visiting the church for services, which further enhances worship opportunities and develops an understanding of Christian traditions. A group of pupils talk about taking a moment to notice the light through the stained-glass windows. Moments of awe and wonder such as this support their deepening spirituality.



The caring ethos, promoted by the Christian vision, shines throughout the school. Pupils recognise that they have a responsibility to each other in the way that they behave and treat their peers. This creates a harmonious, caring environment. Year 6 buddies relish their time supporting Year 3 pupils to settle into school, enabling both to flourish. A whole school approach to teaching pupils how to regulate their emotions encourages positive behaviour throughout school. Pupils see how well their peers are helped to access learning and gladly support each other. Adults take a restorative approach to sorting out any disagreements and pupils emulate this in their interactions. They trust that staff are there for them and that any unacceptable behaviours are dealt with. This creates an atmosphere of respect and dignity, where differences are accepted and celebrated, and pupils grow in confidence.

Pupils thrive on the responsibilities they hold in school. They value fairness and have been taught to recognise injustice caused by, for example, poverty, racism and climate change. They know how people from the past and present create change by being a voice for others. Pupils are inspired by these individuals to take positive action. They help their local community by designing posters encouraging dog owners to clean up after their pets. A group of Year 5 pupils recently requested litter pickers and bin bags to tackle a problem they identified. Naming themselves 'the climate crew', they regularly litter pick as their commitment to protecting wildlife within the school grounds. Adults and pupils came together to demonstrate how they care, supporting a pupil with her fundraising efforts for the hospice. The eco-warriors and school councillors take their work very seriously. They finalised pupils' designs for a new garden, to enhance opportunities for spiritual development by appreciating the natural world. Leaders encourage pupils to think for themselves, empowering them to live out the vision and become active world citizens.

RE is a challenging, engaging subject with a high profile in the school. This is due to effective subject leadership and an ambitious, well-planned curriculum. It has a careful balance of religious and world views, enabling pupils to encounter diverse beliefs and promoting acceptance of varied views. High-quality training from the subject leader and diocese enables teachers to develop pupils' philosophical and religious understanding. As a result, they are knowledgeable and considered in their responses to questions about faith. They relish discussion and find religions and worldviews fascinating, including Christianity and its impact on people worldwide.

In RE, teachers skilfully construct learning activities to enable pupils to express and reflect on their growing knowledge of religions. The high-quality work that pupils produce enables teachers to effectively assess their understanding and plan future lessons accordingly. The vision shapes RE so that it is inclusive, enabling SEND pupils to learn as well as their peers. Monitoring and evaluation, including by governors, is regular and robust, reflecting the priority of RE in the school. By striving for continual improvement, leaders enable pupils to make very strong progress in RE and thrive in their learning.

## Information

|                    |                                   |               |        |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------|
| Address            | Waterloo Road, Brighouse, HD6 2AN |               |        |
| Date               | 29 April 2025                     | URN           | 107547 |
| Type of school     | Voluntary Aided                   | No. of pupils | 233    |
| Diocese            | Leeds                             |               |        |
| Headteacher        | Amanda Jocelyn                    |               |        |
| Chair of Governors | Jill Flavell                      |               |        |
| Inspector          | Melanie Barratt                   |               |        |