

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Bede Church of England Primary Academy, Bolton	
Address	Morris Green Lane, Bolton, BL3 3LJ
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
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
St. Bede is a community where we learn, care and grow together inspired by Jesus the great teacher (Luke 10 v 25-37). Jesus teaches us to care for our neighbour and grow in our love for another. We grow in our values, becoming the people God intended.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theological roots of the inclusive and aspirational Christian vision deeply permeate school life and drive improvement. The vision is not fully captured in written documentation so systems to measure its impact are less developed. • The vision to be 'modern-day Good Samaritans' inspires pupils and adults to look after one another with love and respect. Pupils are active leaders in making a positive difference to the lives of others in their community. • Inspired by Jesus, the great teacher, leaders skilfully shape an innovative curriculum that enables all to flourish. Planned opportunities for spiritual development are not yet established. • With the compassionate message of The Good Samaritan at its heart, collective worship is highly inclusive. Engaging and relevant themes inspire pupils to reflect meaningfully on biblical teaching, enhancing spirituality and character development. • The innovative religious education (RE) curriculum enables all pupils to gain a rich and relevant knowledge and understanding, especially of Christianity. Opportunities to deepen and broaden pupils' insight into world religions and worldviews are less developed.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the school's Christian vision clearly underpins written policies and strategic documentation, enabling leaders to monitor its effectiveness accurately. • Develop a shared understanding of spirituality in school. Use this to deliver a range of rich and relevant experiences that nurture pupils' spiritual development across the curriculum. • Extend and enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of world religions and worldviews. This is to deepen pupils' understanding of the impact of world religions on society and culture.

Inspection findings

St Bede's deeply theological Christian vision actively drives the work of this compassionate and aspirational Church school. The newly formed, visionary leadership team enthusiastically embodies the school's empowering vision. Leaders are a visible presence around school, notably at their school gates at the beginning and end of each day. Their open, welcoming approach ensures pupils start the day with a smile, knowing they are valued and cared for. Thriving partnerships, notably with the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), local church and diocese, enrich and support the tireless work of the school. The school serves a diverse local community that is faced with a variety of challenges. MAT and school leaders work highly collaboratively, ensuring priorities meet the specific needs of the local community. Committed governors have a secure understanding of their strategic role. Leaders and governors accurately describe how their Christian vision shapes the work of the school, enabling all to flourish. However, how the Christian vision drives school priorities is not sufficiently clear in key policies and other documentation. This inhibits leaders' ability to monitor and evaluate fully the impact of the school's vision on its work, informing ongoing development.

Spurred by the Christian vision of supporting and enabling others, leaders inspire adults and pupils to grow. Wellbeing is a school priority. Adults in school are highly valued. Staff describe movingly how the culture of 'Team Bede' nurtures individual talent, empowering them to flourish. A newly established system of staff mentoring, including school and MAT leaders, already contributes significantly to adult wellbeing. As a result, the staff are a positive and confident team, instilling a culture of hope and care in themselves and others.

Inspired by Jesus the teacher, the school's vision shapes a bold and well-crafted curriculum. Regular, inclusive subject reviews empower teachers to contribute innovatively to lesson design. This ensures the curriculum remains relevant and challenging, tailoring learning to meet the needs of all pupils. Staff know their pupils very well, providing structured and inclusive support, notably for more vulnerable pupils. Parents and carers value how well staff support and nurture each child as a unique individual. As a result, pupils are curious, resilient and joyful learners, who help each other and flourish in their learning. In RE and Personal, Social, Health and Relationships Education (PSHRE) planned experiences enable pupils to explore life's big questions. A range of opportunities spring from other curriculum areas, such as, exploring the wonder of new life in science. However, there is no shared whole school understanding of spiritual development and experiences are not explicitly planned across the curriculum.

Character development is a strength of the school. The compassionate message of the Good Samaritan has a tangible impact on pupils' lives. Pupils live harmoniously together, knowing they are valued and safe. They care generously for each other. Trained pupil 'mini mentors' provide valuable support for others in resolving problems. Pupils treasure rewards, such as wearing a 'Good Samaritan' hoodie for upholding the school's vision. 'We care and love each other here,' said one pupil. 'Our values help us aspire to be good neighbours.'

Jesus' teaching to follow and 'go and do likewise' spurs pupils to make a difference in their local and wider community. Pupils play an active role in choosing charities to support. They organise a wealth of fund-raising activities, bringing the whole school community together in supporting those in need. St Bede Academy is recognised locally as a pioneer in offering tailored outreach support. Together with local organisations, the school runs 'warm hub' events, hosting women's health clinics, providing hot meals and signposting local services. This innovative initiative actively improves family wellbeing. 'It feels like the community has really come together,' said one parent. 'I now know how to seek help for my family.' Pupil




voice is a strength of the school. Popular pupil groups, such as the ethos committee and school council, spearhead many initiatives addressing issues of poverty and injustice. Pupils regularly lead social action projects, including engaging with local politicians to bring about change. For example, recent campaigning resulted in marked improvements to local road safety and accessibility to green spaces.

Shaped by the teachings of the school's chosen parable, collective worship is engaging and highly inclusive. Church traditions, including singing, lighting candles, reflection and prayer create a daily space for an invitational encounter with God. Pupils plan, lead and evaluate worship effectively as part of a school team that includes staff, local clergy and governors. Their active involvement nourishes and invigorates worship. Fruitful partnerships with local clergy enrich spiritual experiences within and beyond worship. The school community values regular collective worship in church, alongside services that mark the Church year. Collective worship is very well co-ordinated. Carefully chosen themes, based on the school vision and scripture, lead pupils to reflect and act on biblical teaching. For example, a Bible passage about building each other up, inspired pupils to support those in the school who were fasting during Ramadan. Pupils value reflection areas around the school, prompting sensitive thoughts and prayers about local and world events. Shaped by the vision of valuing everyone as a neighbour, pupil reflection often sparks a compassionate reaction to global crises. Spontaneous responses, such as fundraising for Ukraine and the Turkish / Syrian earthquake, contribute significantly to deepening pupils' spirituality.

Inspired by the vision of growing and learning together, the RE curriculum is well sequenced and creative. Leaders see RE as equal in status to other core subjects but unique in its teaching. Thus, they make courageous decisions, tailoring lessons to enhance discussion, debate and investigation. Through insightful questioning, pupils develop a deep and relevant understanding of theological concepts, especially within Christianity. Lessons provide fruitful opportunities for pupils to compare biblical events to today's world. For example, when studying the book of Exodus, pupils link the experiences of God's people in Egypt with modern-day slavery. Timely reflections, such as this, enable pupils to have a heightened insight into inequality and global injustice. Regular study of a range of world religions and worldviews develops good pupil understanding across the school. Reflecting the range of world religions in school, pupils enjoy sharing aspects of their own faith. This active pupil involvement enriches the curriculum and embeds mutual respect for diversity. However, pupils' knowledge of world religions and worldviews is not yet as broad and deep as their understanding of Christianity.

St Bede is a thriving Church school, steeped in the teachings of its Christian vision. Aspirational leadership and thriving local partnerships enable adults and pupils to grow and learn well together, nourished by love and faith.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good	
	<p>Teaching and learning in RE are good. Skilled subject leaders monitor RE effectively, providing targeted professional development. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, particularly within Christianity. The aspirational curriculum creatively deepens pupils' understanding and they engage enthusiastically. Vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties, are very well supported. Teachers use assessment effectively to reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge. As a result, all pupils make good progress and flourish in their learning.</p>			
Information				
School	St Bede Church of England Primary Academy, Bolton	Inspection date	21 March 2023	
URN	136889	VC/VA/Academy	Academy	
Diocese/District	Manchester	Pupils on roll	646	
MAT/Federation	St Bede CE Multi Academy Trust			
Headteacher	Anna Black			
Chair of Governors	Tony Whitehead			
Inspector	Sue Mawdsley	No.	930	