

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Netherhall St James CofE VC Infant School and Nursery, Huddersfield	
Address	Rawthorpe Lane, Rawthorpe, Huddersfield, HD5 9NT
School vision	
<p>'Learning together in God's love.' Based on 1 Corinthians Chapter 13.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Netherhall St James is a welcoming and nurturing community. Positive relationships, built on trust, respect, love and compassion, enable pupils and adults to flourish. • The vision for all to develop their full potential shines through the systems in place to enable all to achieve. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who are deemed vulnerable are well supported in their learning. • Supportive relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are shaped by the vision and the underlying values. They show respect for all. • Invitational collective worship, reflecting the vision and values, is valued by staff and pupils. Pupils respond by applying these to their own lives. • Religious education (RE) provides pupils with a challenging and exciting curriculum. They are knowledgeable about a range of religions, including Christianity. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors to thoroughly monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian vision in all areas of school life. This is to provide effective support and challenge in order to shape ongoing developments as a Church school. • Develop a shared understanding of spirituality across school. This is to enable staff to plan for pupil progress and development in an age-appropriate way. • Extend the range of opportunities for pupils to become agents of change. This is so they realise how they can make a difference in the world. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Adults and pupils are proud to belong to this welcoming school. The vision for all to flourish in God's love is based on 1 Corinthians Chapter 13. This is expressed as people being the best that they can be. The aspiration for all to achieve drives policy and actions. Partnerships based on trust and love inspire pupils and adults to work well together, showing respect for all. The Christian values of love, respect, compassion and trust drive delivery of the vision. Staff are mutually supportive of each other, working collaboratively for the benefit of all. They feel supported by leaders, appreciating the actions taken to support their wellbeing and workload. These include additional time for leadership and centralised staff taking over some responsibilities. As a federated school within the Netherhall Learning Campus, staff benefit from access to a range of professional development opportunities. These enhance leadership skills, ensure staff are equipped to adapt to changing needs of pupils</p>	

whilst also supporting adult flourishing.

The appointment of two foundation governors has strengthened governance. In addition, effective training from the Leeds Diocese has provided specific guidance to assist governors in their role. As a result, they are increasingly knowledgeable of how to support the only Church school within the federation. Systems and procedures are now in place which monitor and evaluate Christian distinctiveness and flourishing. As a consequence, the effectiveness of governors is improving.

Inclusion is at the heart of this very diverse school community where all are welcomed in 'God's love.' Leaders have placed considerable investment, including smaller classes and additional staffing, in ensuring that all pupils achieve. Carefully developed strategies effectively engage parents and carers to the benefit of pupils. Systems and procedures for supporting pupils who are vulnerable and those with SEND are exceptional. The Additional Resource Provision (ARP), set up at the request of the authority, evidences this expertise. Leaders explain this as a vision-led decision. Pupils with complex needs from across the authority have specialist support. Staff within school are upskilled with up-to-date knowledge and teaching strategies to support the more vulnerable. All pupils benefit from new approaches aiding them to achieve.

Leaders are aspirational for all to succeed. To support the large number with English as an additional language (EAL), language acquisition is crucial. Confident, articulate pupils attest to the success of vocabulary development initiatives. Interpreters support home-school communication, involving families in learning. Leaders are determined that a rich learning experience is enjoyed by everyone. The curriculum is enhanced by inspiration days, visitors and school trips, all of which are financed by school. These experiences allow knowledge and learning to come to life, have real meaning and strengthen pupils' learning. Additional activities, such as Christian Art Club and football support flourishing.

Leaders are committed to the spiritual development of pupils and adults. 'Spiritual and Personal Journey Books' evidence examples of this throughout school. Activities in RE, such as making Sukkahs in Judaism, and a national art competition further contribute to this. However, there is a lack of agreement amongst staff as to what exactly spiritual development looks like. This limits the planning of rich opportunities across the curriculum.

Collective worship is an outward manifestation of the school blossoming together in 'God's love.' A wonderful celebration of a community coming together, it is valued by adults and pupils. Aware of the diversity within school, worship is both open and invitational. Carefully planned around the core values which underpin the school vision, it provides real opportunities to pause and reflect. Moments of stillness are incorporated into worship allowing all to consider their own values and links to their own lives. A range of age-appropriate approaches, including the use of props, rhymes and actions engage pupils. Thoughtful responses from pupils show the positive impact of worship. They confidently explain how messages from the Bible guide them on how they lead their lives. For example, being kind to others as Jesus was and showing respect. The well-established partnership with the diocese has supported evaluation and developments in worship. The developing partnership with local churches is enhancing provision.

Love and respect underpin relationships in this nurturing school where the words of the vision are lived out daily. Leaders have established a community based on trust where rightly everyone is valued. Pupils accept, understand and respect difference. They feel safe in school and know that they will be listened to. Behaviour is good. Pupils strive to be the best they can so they can achieve the rewards at the 'Dojo Shop'. A community hub, based at the high school in the federation, provides opportunities for adults 'to learn together.' In addition to providing baking and sewing workshops, it also houses a foodbank and uniform store. This provides much needed help to

families. Thrive, a national initiative, drives a whole school approach to improving mental health. Pupils develop coping strategies and techniques through this. A team within the community hub, as well as the authority counselling service, provide guidance for adults.

Pupils have a developing understanding of justice which is fostered through the curriculum and collective worship. They are aware of how human actions are destroying the environment and the impact this is having on animals. The study of Africa highlights how some communities live with dirty water. Fundraising activities contribute to their view of how they can help others who are less fortunate, thus showing love. The successful 'Save our frogs campaign' exemplifies pupils acting as courageous advocates. With support from adults, they successfully raised money to refurbish their pond. Pupils on the school council are proud to support others in their role as play leaders. The Young Leaders Award is used as a vehicle to further develop leadership skills.

RE is recognised as a core subject and taught by class teachers. The RE leader is well informed through attendance at the local RE hub and Church school network. Changes to planning and Diocesan led professional development has supported the increased emphasis on teaching specific language in each topic. As a result, pupils are confident sharing their knowledge. Teachers provide a safe place for all pupils to explore and share their opinions to questions posed. The teaching of world religions is supplemented by 'Faith Days' alongside staff and pupils sharing their own lived experiences. This learning together results in pupils demonstrating a good understanding of similarities and differences between a range of religions.

The inspection findings indicate that Netherhall St James Church of England VC Infant and Nursery School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	15 January 2024	URN	107700
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	216
Diocese	Leeds		
MAT/Federation	Netherhall Learning Campus Federation		
Head of School	Kirsty McGrath		
Chair	Peter Rock		
Inspector	Mary Connor	No.	2132