

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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>St James Daisy Hill Church of England VC Primary School</b> |   |
| <b>Address</b>   | Hindley Road, Daisy Hill, Bolton, BL5 2JU |

### School vision

‘And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.’ Corinthians 13:13

We are proud to serve the whole community and our mission statement: “Working together to achieve excellence within a caring Christian community of faith, hope and love”, along with our school values, underpin everything that we do at St James Daisy Hill CE Primary School.

### School strengths

- The school’s vision, lived out through Christian values, is a genuine reality that enables the whole school community to flourish. The strength of the vision supports the school in overcoming challenges, such as the limited physical space for the school community to come together.
- Rooted in the Bible, the Christian vision fosters loving relationships, where all are welcomed and are treated with dignity and respect. This is particularly evident in the nurture of those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Those who join the school, especially those for whom English is as additional language, are well-supported. All pupils feel affirmed and, as a result, they succeed.
- Strong partnerships with the local church and clergy shape and enhance collective worship. Staff and pupils appreciate the regular services in church that spiritually nurture the whole school community.
- Governors fully understand their role and their actions are driven by the school’s vision. They are actively involved in all levels of school life. They support the direction of the school as a Church school, providing challenge where appropriate.

### Areas for development

- Review the curriculum for religious education (RE) so that leaders ensure that it reflects up-to-date Church school guidance and that it has a consistently high profile across the school.
- Agree a whole-school, shared understanding of spirituality. Use this to plan experiences, through collective worship and the curriculum, that nourish individual, spiritual growth.
- Provide planned opportunities for pupils to engage in discussions about ethical choice and social injustice. Use these to develop awareness of global inequality, encouraging pupils to speak up for important causes and take action.

## Inspection findings

There is a real sense of faith, hope and, especially, love underpinning every aspect of life at St James'. As such, the school vision is lived out so that everyone can 'achieve excellence' and flourish. Leaders are clear in their ambition that achieving excellence goes beyond the academic. Through rich experiences, pupils are empowered to become compassionate citizens who have a strong moral code. Leaders and governors are easily able to explain the school's vision. It is well-embedded and is lived out through twelve values that are well-known by everybody. All are encouraged to uphold these values in their everyday lives. Leaders prioritise wellbeing and there is an open culture of support, where all feel valued. Staff and parents describe St James' as being warm and caring. Parental queries and concerns are dealt with compassionately and parents feel that 'no one is behind a closed door'. The Christian vision has sustained the school through recent challenging times, including changes in leadership and temporary buildings for a number of classrooms. The school is in a transitional period. Governors exemplify faith, hope and love as they make decisions that support and challenge the newly formed leadership team. Together, they have recently revised the vision. This ensures that it is entirely appropriate in meeting the needs of the changing community.

Leaders are developing and adapting the curriculum so that it closely reflects the newly revised vision. Curriculum development focuses thoughtfully on the development of well-rounded individuals. Pupils enjoy learning together. They are enthusiastic, engaged and purposeful in the classroom. Teachers and support staff embody hope and love, ensuring that all pupils succeed. The tailored, nurturing support for those with SEND ensures that the best provision is in place and the curriculum is adapted accordingly. As one governor stated, 'Sensible decisions are made so that every child can achieve in their own way.' Pupils with English as an additional language are actively welcomed and nurtured within this caring community. As a result, all pupils, including those who are more vulnerable, learn well.

Through reflective questions and discussions, as well as dedicated time for developing good mental health, pupils have a deeper connection with themselves. These are two of the ways in which spirituality is developed at St James'. A range of activities, designed to enhance learning, fosters pupils' sense of awe and wonder. For example, a recent visit to the Lowry Art Gallery provided older pupils with an opportunity for appreciation and empathy. Regular forest school sessions and outdoor learning opportunities enable pupils to explore the natural world. However, as there is not a shared understanding of spirituality, it is not a planned part of the school curriculum. As such, opportunities that promote pupils' spiritual growth are overlooked.

Collective worship is inclusive and plays a central role in deepening pupils' understanding of the school's vision and values. Leaders accurately describe the key values of faith, hope and love being interwoven like a ribbon throughout. Worship areas are a feature of all classrooms. However, there are limited opportunities for personal and spontaneous reflections. A number of pupils, who form the school's worship group, are spiritually encouraged as they actively plan and lead worship. Pupils respond compassionately to worship themes when they inspire positive action, for example litter-picking. Strong partnerships with St James the Great Church enrich the worship life of the school. The school community values times of worship in church where all are able to come together as a whole school. One pupil commented that, 'Church is my favourite. I feel closer to God there.' This close partnership enhances the spiritual development of both pupils and adults. In addition, this relationship enriches the sense of a thriving community.

Through living out the vision, relationships are exceptionally strong. Behaviour is often exemplary, with pupils speaking politely and conducting themselves well. This is another example of encouraging all to live out the school's vision. Those who demonstrate the school's values are celebrated in the weekly celebration worship and through the weekly newsletter. A strong culture of positive mental health and wellbeing permeates the school. Staff provide emotional support and encouragement to both pupils and each other. Similarly, pupils care for each other. This is visible, both in classroom environments and through reassuring interactions. Wellbeing days sustain both pupils and adults. As there is limited physical space to gather, these events are particularly important. They bring the whole school together and foster a sense of belonging.

Pupils have a growing understanding of justice. They are encouraged to show the value of service in the community and, as such, often take on charitable work themselves. The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to appreciate diversity, such as Black History Month. Through this work the pupils learn about racism and social injustice. They are beginning to consider the actions of those in the past who fought for change; however, this is in its infancy. Currently, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to learn about ethical choice and social injustice. Consequently, pupils do not have enough knowledge to equip them to support and speak up for important causes.

Within the RE curriculum, a variety of activities are used to stimulate pupils' thoughts and imagination. Class big books record examples where pupils have been challenged to think deeply. Responses to the International Day of Peace, recorded in these, are thoughtful and empathetic. Through independent work, questions are posed that require individual, insightful responses. For example, younger pupils are asked to describe how symbols support the view that Easter is the most important festival in the Christian calendar. Leaders have ensured that, in planning the curriculum, pupils encounter a balance of religious beliefs, thoughts and ways of living. Pupils are knowledgeable about Christianity and, in particular, have good recall of stories from the Bible. However, there are inconsistencies in the amount of curriculum time dedicated to the teaching of RE across the school. Furthermore, currently, the RE curriculum does not fully reflect up-to-date Church school guidance. This has impacted on pupils' knowledge and understanding. In particular, pupils' knowledge of faiths and worldviews, other than Christianity, is not as well-developed. Leaders have rightly identified this as a school development priority.

The inspection findings indicate that St James Daisy Hill Church of England VC Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

| Information     |                    |                |        |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|--------|
| Inspection date | 19 March 2024      | URN            | 105209 |
| VA/VC/Academy   | VC                 | Pupils on roll | 409    |
| Diocese         | Manchester         |                |        |
| MAT/Federation  |                    |                |        |
| Headteacher     | Joanne Robinson    |                |        |
| Chair           | Graham Burrows     |                |        |
| Inspector       | Caroline Mackenzie | No.            | C23/24 |