

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

## Wath Church of England VA Primary School

### Vision

In Matthew 5:16, as he sets out a vision of life for his friends, Jesus calls them to ‘Let your light shine.’

In that spirit, we place before our children the motto: ‘Aim Higher, Shine Brighter.’

As a Church school we aim to develop all Christian values especially those of love, hope, peace, forgiveness and joy – values that run through our culture as a community. Education at Wath is anchored in a vision of children being and becoming brave, positive, inclusive and resilient.

### Strengths

- Leaders understand their community well and have embedded a Christian vision that helps pupils and adults flourish.
- Relationships within the school are characterised by mutual respect and support. Dedicated and caring staff value both pupils and each other, creating an environment where all can thrive.
- Collective worship is well-planned and organised, incorporating the school’s vision and values. The worship club plays a significant role, making a notable contribution to spiritual flourishing.
- Inspired by the Christian vision, leaders have created a highly inclusive culture. Adults use their detailed understanding of pupils, including those with additional needs, to provide proactive and tailored support.
- Strong partnerships with the James Montgomery Academy Trust and the Diocese of Sheffield enrich the school’s Christian foundation. These collaborations also support its ongoing improvement.

### Development Points

- Embed a shared understanding of the school’s approach to spirituality. This is so that pupils and adults can confidently discuss and articulate their own spiritual growth.
- Create more opportunities for pupils to independently advocate for change on issues they are passionate about. This is so they broaden their understanding of justice, responsibility, and active citizenship.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of global faiths, enhancing their awareness and appreciation of diversity.



## Inspection Findings

During a religious education (RE) lesson, pupils reflected on an idea. That, ‘when you belong, you feel like you are in the right place – a special place in your heart.’ This perfectly captures the atmosphere of this school, where a deep sense of belonging is felt throughout the community. Compassion and kindness weave through daily life. They create a culture where both pupils and adults have the opportunity to truly ‘let their light shine’ (Matthew 5:16). This school is not just a place of learning, but a community where all can thrive and are valued.

Leaders understand their community well and have embedded an aspirational Christian vision. This prepares individuals to flourish as brave, resilient, and positive in an inclusive environment. Leaders and governors respond humbly and courageously to community needs. The Christian vision is evident throughout school life. It is deeply rooted in the school’s history, with former community members serving as enduring models of the school’s values. Their legacy significantly shapes the school’s ethos, reflected in the pupils’ respectful interactions and supportive attitudes.

Leaders and governors advocate for and promote their vision of ‘aiming higher and shining brighter.’ Their commitment guides the school’s direction and policies. This is evident in the strengthened support roles within the inclusion team. Leaders care deeply for pupils, families, and staff. They successfully meet needs. Initiatives such as the Christian vision cards sent home, promote a broader understanding of the vision.

A rich range of opportunities for spiritual development are planned across the curriculum. Collective worship and reflection are integrated throughout the school day. For example, pupils engage in awe and wonder moments. One such activity included exploring Canterbury Cathedral through a virtual tour during RE. Sessions in personal, social, and health education (PSHE) also encourage reflection on beliefs and feelings. Leaders have considered how they integrate spiritual development within the curriculum, promoting this through various activities. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to explore their place in the world and different beliefs and values. The school’s commitment to enrichment is evident. Pupils access extensive music provision, with frequent occasions to perform in concerts. After-school clubs offer a broad range of activities, allowing pupils to try new things and express their talents. The sensory garden, created through fundraising, reflects the school’s values and provides a space for spiritual engagement and reflection. Pupils use the garden to relax, reflect, and appreciate their lives. These approaches ensure that pupils are supported in their spiritual growth and personal development. However, further development of the school’s understanding of spiritual development with both pupils and staff is needed. This is to enable everyone to articulate more clearly how they flourish spiritually.

Collective worship is well-planned and inclusive, seamlessly integrating the school’s vision and values. Thoughtful design ensures that worship enhances the spiritual flourishing of both pupils and staff. Termly themes, such as ‘be strong and courageous’ and ‘living life to the full,’ deepen understanding of Christian values and biblical teachings. The worship club plays a vital role, significantly contributing to spiritual growth. It integrates with whole-school worship and includes contributions to Holy Communion services. Pupils and staff appreciate worship for its sense of unity and belonging. It fosters resilience, bravery, and respect among children. Worship sessions are supported by reflection spaces in classrooms, encouraging personal and communal spiritual experiences. Engagement with families and the wider community further enriches these experiences, creating a shared sense of spiritual belonging.

The school’s vision has cultivated a caring and inclusive community, supported by strong relationships with the trust and diocese. Leaders are committed to Christian distinctiveness and prioritise staff wellbeing and professional development. This commitment has fostered a positive culture where staff are valued and supported. Staff are encouraged to step outside their comfort zones, which has led to career development. A positive culture is evident, with staff quoting, ‘an environment where we believe in each other which builds confidence.’ The school engages parents as partners, valuing their input and fostering strong relationships. Parents appreciate the regular workshops and events, which enhance their understanding of their child’s education and the school’s approaches.



The school embraces diversity, creating an inclusive environment where all pupils are valued. This is supported by excellent pastoral care and proactive support for pupils with additional needs. Nurture rooms and robust support systems ensure that pupils receive the care they require. The walking bus initiative and other parent support strategies also contribute to improved attendance and family engagement. Staff are approachable and supportive, reinforcing the school's commitment to creating a place where everyone can thrive.

Pupils are encouraged to explore questions of justice and take on leadership roles within the school. They make decisions on which causes and charities to support, such as the annual run for the food bank and Cancer Research. These activities instil a strong sense of social responsibility and encourage pupils to reflect on issues of justice. The curriculum and worship provide planned opportunities to discuss justice and fairness. For example, powerful texts on endangered animals led to fundraising for the World-Wide Fund for Nature and adopting an animal. Pupil leaders, such as the PSHE Ambassadors, contribute to collective worship, addressing themes like diversity and reducing plastic waste. These initiatives are primarily adult led.

The RE curriculum is well-planned and structured, building pupils' knowledge of various religions and worldviews. Lessons focus on core knowledge but are delivered creatively, making learning engaging. Pupils enjoy both practical and discussion-based activities that reinforce their understanding. As a result, they articulate their knowledge well. Assessment supports learning in RE, and the effectiveness of the subject is monitored through a variety of activities. This approach helps leaders identify and address areas for improvement. Pupils achieve well, and staff are equipped with the knowledge for effective teaching. Pupils also engage in discussions with peers from different faiths, fostering respect for diverse perspectives. To further enhance cultural awareness, the curriculum might incorporate enriching first-hand experiences for world faiths beyond Christianity. These experiences are designed to support pupils' understanding of various religious practices and traditions, viewing them as diverse, living faiths.

## Information

Address	Barnsley Road Wath upon Dearne Rotherham S63 6PY		
Date	Monday 16th September 2024	URN	143480
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	428
Diocese	Sheffield		
MAT/Federation	James Montgomery Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Paul Beevor		
Chair of Governors	Chris Skelton		
Inspector	Michael Walker		