

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Highfield St. Matthew's Church of England Primary School	
Address	Billinge Road, Wigan, WN3 6BL

School vision

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:13)

School strengths

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's Christian vision is the foundation for everyday life at Highfield St. Matthew's. It is a living reality, enabling adults and pupils to flourish as they 'shine their light'. • Relationships are pivotal to the school. They are ignited by the school's vision and enhanced through an inclusive approach. Adults and pupils know each other well. Consequently, their lives are enriched as they share Christian love and acceptance. • Wellbeing and mental health are a priority at the school. Grown from the school's vision, there is a clear focus for everyone to achieve in their own unique way. • The vision is clearly lived out in the partnerships with the local church, trust and diocese. These are strong, resulting in the continued drive for adults and pupils to flourish and achieve. • Inspiring collective worship reflects the Christian vision. Its inclusive approach offers welcoming opportunities for worship and spiritual development for both adults and pupils. • Religious education (RE) is given a high priority within the curriculum. It is well-balanced and progressive. The RE curriculum is well-led, offering challenge and high expectations for all. |
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Areas for development

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build upon the opportunities for pupils to challenge injustice. This is to extend all pupils' engagement in being agents of change. • Embed opportunities to enrich spiritual flourishing across the curriculum. This is to deepen pupils' spiritual growth. |
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Inspection findings

<p>Highfield St. Matthew's is a school with a huge heart, welcoming all with warmth and Christian love. Clearly rooted in the Bible verse from Matthew 5:13, the vision is underpinned by the school's Christian values. All are challenged to shine, share and grow their light before others. Leaders and governors share an accurate understanding of how the vision is underpinned by the teachings of Jesus. Decisions made by leaders and governors stem from the vision. As a result, there is a deep sense of belonging and a flourishing school community. Adults and pupils value feeling safe, listened to and have a sense of care wrapped around them. It is seen, heard and felt in the nurturing school atmosphere. The vision of the trust resonates with the school's vision and enhances their work.</p>
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The vision inspired curriculum is carefully designed to meet the needs of pupils. Using the key principles of the SHINE curriculum, opportunities are planned to strengthen learning and experiences. Placing the whole child at the centre of curriculum decisions is the key driver for leaders. There is effective provision for special education needs and/or disabilities and more vulnerable pupils. The unwavering conviction from leaders for all pupils to 'shine their light' is central to the support provided. Key curriculum opportunities are specifically chosen to enhance and broaden pupils' horizons. These moments offer experiences for pupils to become curious to learn about what is beyond their school and the local community. Leaders have dedicated time to the growth of spirituality throughout the school. Discussions for adults to understand their own spiritual growth are valued, resulting in a shared language of spirituality. This language provides the basis of planned learning experiences for spirituality within the curriculum. However, it is not fully embedded, limiting the depth of pupils' spiritual growth.

Worship is central to the school day. It provides an opportunity for the school to come together to live out their Christian vision and 'shine their light' with each other. Worship is valued by members of the school. It offers a space to ask questions, to grow spiritually and to connect with each other. The messages resonate with the pupils long after worship. Pupils speak about how they share God's messages and actions, beginning to walk within his path and shine for all to see. Areas for individual quiet prayer and reflection moments are available for all throughout the school day. Pupils share confidently about how they use these spaces to be quiet, to reflect or to just 'be' with God. Leaders and clergy speak passionately about the growth of their community worship. Families come together with clergy and members of the staff to encounter Jesus. It is valued as a space to reflect and explore together. Clergy and adults talk about how families are growing in faith and developing a deeper spiritual connection.

Strong relationships are integral to school life. They are clearly underpinned by the school's vision and values. Leaders create an environment of growth for everyone, which is complemented by compassion and care. The development of staff is enhanced by learning from and with each other. As a result, the most appropriate support is put in place, meeting the needs of adults and pupils effectively. Pastoral support is central to the school's relationships. Adults know each other, families and pupils well. Trusting, open and transparent relationships are what binds the school together. When and if support is needed it is put in place immediately. A pupil said, 'Because the teachers know us so well, they know we aren't feeling ourselves before we tell them.' Valuing each other, how they learn and live well together, is at the heartbeat of this school. Leaders and staff are determined to see adults and pupils thrive. The vision underpins every element of this.

The school enjoys fruitful partnerships with the church, the trust and the diocese. The partnership with the church is inspiring and fully envelops the school vision. Clergy actively support wellbeing, spiritual growth, worship and develop community connections with the school. Adults shared how this support impacts positively on their lives and the lives of others when facing challenges. Through the curriculum and wider opportunities pupils are encouraged to appreciate what is happening in their community and beyond. Families speak with enthusiasm about how this impacts pupils' ethical decisions beyond the school and into their community. Leaders encourage pupils to think about the wider world by supporting charities locally and globally. The curriculum provides support for pupils' development as advocates of social justice and understanding of ethical decisions. This is evident with regards to the local environment, for example, being responsible citizens by litter picking. Access to these initiatives by all pupils is less developed. As a result, not all pupils have the opportunities to be agents of change.

RE is a strength in the school. The RE lead has implemented a new curriculum. It is well-balanced and challenging, meeting the needs of pupils. RE builds upon the values and vision of the school. High quality support for teachers has deepened their knowledge and improved confidence. Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies making the pupils' learning memorable and builds upon prior knowledge. High expectations and well-sequenced planning results in pupils making sustained progress. Learning about world faiths is embedded throughout the curriculum.

Pupils talk confidently about why it is important to know and understand about those who have different beliefs. They shared that they are encouraged to ask questions and feel confident to do so. RE is a safe place for them to critically reflect on their own beliefs.

RE teaching and learning is strong across school. Pupils demonstrate high levels of curiosity, knowledge and use of vocabulary. They have an excellent recall of stories from the Bible and share these with confidence and enthusiasm. The use of the school's open questioning approach in RE allows pupils time to be curious, reflect and think about their learning. Time in RE lessons to discuss these questions is valued, enabling pupils to share their learning. High quality teaching, alongside thorough monitoring and assessment ensures the continuous development of the subject.

The inspection findings indicate that Highfield St. Matthew's is living up to its Christian foundation as a church school.

Information

Inspection date	26 June 2024	URN	145713
VA/VC/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	429
Diocese	Liverpool		
MAT/Federation	Liverpool Schools Diocesan Trust		
Executive Headteacher	Alison Barron		
Head of School	Jennifer Kilshaw		
Chair of Governors	Joy Oliveros		
Inspector	Kathryn Magiera	No.	c.23/24