

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bollington St John's Church of England Primary School

Vision

'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.' Colossians 3:3.

Guided by faith, with an understanding that we have all been given different talents by God, we strive for excellence in everything we do. We believe every person has talents within them. As such, we nurture confidence and aspiration, supporting each other to work with all our hearts, to become the best that we can be. This truly makes St John's a school 'where talent grows'.

Bollington St John's Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Notable Strengths

- The well-established, ambitious and inclusive Christian vision provides a sense of moral, civic and spiritual purpose for pupils and adults.
- Careful use of the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals across the curriculum ensures a consistently global context for learning. This contributes to the broadening of pupils' horizons and their flourishing as citizens of the world.
- The carefully structured daily acts of collective worship are warm and welcoming. They encourage the individual spiritual development of pupils and adults while fostering a strong sense of community.
- Pupils thrive in a highly caring and nurturing environment. Leaders, including governors, prioritise support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Responsibility for the environment is developed throughout the curriculum, in forest schools and in worship as an act of service. This flows naturally from the Christian vision.

Development Points

- Embed the shared understanding, language and experience of spirituality across a wider range of school activities. This is so that more opportunities are identified and used to encourage pupils and adults in their spiritual journeys.
- Extend the study in religious education (RE) of Christianity as a global faith. This is to ensure that pupils develop a deeper understanding of diversity in the expression of Christian faith around the world.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The clearly expressed Christian vision guides the work of the school and inspires pupils and adults. It includes everyone and provides a compelling principle that can be applied to all areas of life. Pupils understand what working 'with all your heart' means. They develop an intrinsic motivation for learning and development of talent beyond pleasing others and gaining reward. Leaders are driven by a strong sense of moral purpose to serve the community. While they have high expectations of themselves and others, they provide a secure environment of care, nurture and support. Staff encourage pupils in their various interests and hobbies, celebrating success in activities both in and outside school. This contributes to a culture of mutual respect and concern for the wellbeing and development of others. The work of the governing body is guided by the vision. This is evident in the commitment to provide high levels of staffing to support pupils with SEND. They support leaders with a robust programme of monitoring and evaluation which feeds into continuous school improvement.

Vision and Curriculum

Leaders are keen to broaden the horizons of pupils and help them understand the world beyond their direct local experience. The globally focussed curriculum is shaped by the Christian vision. As pupils learn about the world, they are encouraged to consider how they could make a difference in multiple ways. They 'work with all their hearts' by seeing themselves as serving the needs of the world. This aspect of learning is built on the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals. These underpin curriculum planning, shape discussion and prompt activities which constantly reinforce the part each pupil can play. One aspect of this is the commitment made by leaders to provide high quality forest schools experiences for all pupils. They benefit from regular time working in and with the natural world. Pupils are also able to develop skills and talents in an impressive range of after school clubs and activities. Staff strive to ensure the curriculum is accessible, offering creative adaptations to include those with SEND. As a result, needs are identified early and support is provided in timely and effective ways.

Worship and Spirituality

The daily act of collective worship is a vital and vibrant part of school life. Pupils and adults feel a sense of belonging which is supported by an expectation that all can contribute and benefit. Regular use of candles, prayers and music help to create an environment that sets worship apart from the rest of the day. Singing is enthusiastic and a joyful expression of the shared community experience. Pupils and adults are confident to share thoughts and ideas when prompted, but equally comfortable to remain quiet and thoughtful. There is a clear structure to the way spiritual development is nurtured, supported by both words and images. Different ways of looking at the world are encouraged using the symbols of windows, mirrors, doors and candles. Adults leading worship include questions that guide reflection in these ways. This gives regular opportunity for rich and varied individual spiritual flourishing. The worship life of the school is enriched by the involvement of local clergy and a Christian youth worker. They complement the worship programme with creative approaches and activities, adding depth to spiritual experience. However, the potential of opportunities for spiritual development is not fully realised in some other school activities.

Vision and School Culture

Pupils and adults flourish in a caring and nurturing environment. Leaders are guided by the Christian teaching that every person is 'made in the image of God'. This means that they aspire to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Pupils feel known and listened to and are confident in sharing concerns as well as their hobbies and interests. Staff are well trained and skilful in identifying need and providing what is necessary for pupils with SEND. The wellbeing of staff is a high priority for leaders and the governing body. They benefit from regular training and opportunities for professional development. They are included in the development of policy and the review of effective practice and know that their voices are heard. Staff are confident of support from leaders and colleagues when facing challenges in their personal lives. The staff 'shout out board' is a powerful source of mutual support and encouragement and reflects the strong culture of wellbeing.



Vision, Justice and Responsibility

From early on pupils develop a strong sense of responsibility for themselves, those around them and the environment. This is a result of the consistency of approach linking the Christian vision, the curriculum and the provision of forest school experiences. They have constant reminders of sustainable development goals that are presented as a 'to do' list for the planet. Pupils are encouraged to work 'with all their hearts' and see learning and action as acts of service. This naturally leads to an impetus to make a difference to the world and the lives of others. The eco council takes a lead in organising activities such as reducing food waste and recycling clothes. There are many other opportunities for pupils to act on their sense of responsibility and an awareness of injustice. They exchange letters with pupils in Uganda and Melanesia and joined a session at the COP30 meeting of world leaders. These direct experiences of communicating with others provide pupils with deeper understanding of the challenges people face. Pupils write to MPs and local leaders enabling them to understand where the power to make meaningful change often lies.

Religious Education

RE is valued highly as a core academic subject. Pupils enjoy their weekly RE lessons. They talk knowledgeably about what they are learning and thoughtfully about their own beliefs. There is a commitment by leaders to provide high quality training and resources. This is to address needs identified through regular review of the curriculum. Governors are involved in monitoring activities that lead to effective challenge. This contributes to a constant drive for improvement. The curriculum is well-structured, ensuring that pupils learn about a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. They learn about faith in terms of people thinking, believing and living, which enables a good depth of understanding. However, the study of global Christianity does not provide sufficient breadth to enable pupils to appreciate its full, rich diversity. Pupils' learning is enriched through experiences including visits to different places of worship and welcoming visitors to school. Older pupils were inspired by hearing first-hand accounts of Christian pilgrimage from one such visitor. The teaching of RE is very effective and pupils make good progress. Pupils with SEND are supported to access the full RE curriculum and build on their knowledge and understanding. The key question in each lesson stimulates thought and enables pupils to contribute. They express views and demonstrate learning in creative ways, using art and debate as well as written responses. This provides teachers with a rich variety of evidence with which to assess progress through the curriculum. Assessment of learning in RE is supported by a clear structure which provides half-termly data for analysis by staff. This recently identified the need for more challenge for certain pupils. As a result, teachers provide more opportunities for deeper thinking in lessons.

Information

Address	Grimshaw Lane, Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 5LY		
Date	28 November 2025	URN	111324
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	102
Diocese	Chester		
Headteacher	Melanie Walker		
Chair of Governors	Mike Akerman and John Rogers		
Inspector	Peter Barfoot		