

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Austwick Church of England Primary School

Vision

'Let Your Light Shine'

Matthew 5:16

Nurturing all to flourish.

Austwick 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

- Leaders' insightful approach and careful monitoring of the vision promote the school's effectiveness as a Church school. Consequently, bold decisions, taken by leaders at all levels, positively impact on pupils. This includes those who are considered vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND.)
- A culture of dignity and respect, where pupils and adults are welcomed and valued as unique individuals, pervades the school. The focus on inclusion has a very positive impact on behaviour and relationships.
- Rooted in the school's Christian vision, there is a strong commitment to developing pupils' understanding of justice and responsibility. Therefore, pupils are inspired to take action and make a positive difference in their community.
- This is a school where pupils and adults are understood, loved and nurtured. The outworking of a deeply embedded vision, alongside passionate and caring leadership, underpins a community where adults and pupils flourish.
- Collective worship is an outward expression of the vision, enhanced by a range of worship leaders. Gatherings provide rich spiritual opportunities for personal growth in pupils and adults.

Development Points

- Strengthen a common understanding of spirituality throughout the curriculum. This is to help pupils to confidently articulate their spiritual thoughts and deepen a sense of belonging.
- Develop the range of activities to record pupils' work within religious education (RE). This is so pupils and adults are able to accurately assess progress over time.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision of 'let your light shine' is highly effective in meeting the needs of the school community. Its biblical roots are a reminder of the school's rural location and the importance of looking outwards. As a result, the vision is fully understood for its relevance and is lived out daily. For example, the number of leadership opportunities offered to pupils is vast, letting their light shine. These experiences enable pupils to share their passion and skills and grow in confidence. Leaders, at all levels, are committed to the work of this Church school. They lead by example, creating an inclusive, caring school. Governor engagement is particularly effective, as they are visibly involved in the school's life. Regular visits to the school to carry out monitoring allow the governors to see the life of the school in action. The evaluation that follows means the school is striving to be the best it can be. The Christian vision provides clear direction for school life at Austwick. Leaders articulate with conviction that the vision is central to their work.

Vision and Curriculum

The vision of 'nurturing all to flourish' shapes curriculum planning. This is so that pupils, including those who are considered vulnerable or have SEND, can thrive. Big questions act as a focus point for pupils in every subject. These age-specific questions encourage pupils to be curious and reflective in the classroom. Pupils experience a range of extracurricular activities, including trips, music clubs and sporting events. These develop a sense of personal worth and potential. For example, the recently introduced music club is showing new ways of being creative for some pupils. The vast outdoor area, that includes a forest school and dedicated reflection places, enables pupils to find peace in their environment. As a result, these indoor and outdoor areas support pupils' spiritual development. The shared understanding of spirituality, however, is in its infancy, and this restricts discussion and possible experiences. This means that there are some missed opportunities for deepening pupils' spiritual development in the curriculum.

Worship and Spirituality

The rich offering of collective worship across the week provides a space for personal reflection, thus encouraging spiritual growth. These quiet pauses encourage calm at the end of the busy day, which are appreciated by staff and pupils. During collective worship, pupils and adults are fully engaged, demonstrating the inclusive and inviting nature of these gatherings. For example, the buddy system between younger and older pupils enables everyone to be included in reflective conversations. This results in shared spiritual experiences. The pupil collective worship committee organise weekly worship for pupils. They are also 'secret spotters' each week noticing pupils who live out the school values of love, perseverance, respect and forgiveness. These recognitions are shared and celebrated with their peers and families at the weekly praise worship. This results in the values being affirmed as a central part of school life. The reflection spaces in classrooms, and interactive displays in communal areas, complement worship. As a result, they provide additional moments for personal prayer and spiritual reflection. Strong partnerships exist between Austwick and local churches, with services being held in the village church. Churches support the school with worship, visits and local projects. In particular, pupils sing at local church events, strengthening community connection. Parents and carers engage with collective worship, attending the weekly praise worship. This often inspires ongoing discussion at home about the themes and values explored in worship.

Vision and School Culture

The school's wellbeing culture grows from the vision of 'nurturing all to flourish.' Leaders demonstrate a strong commitment to nurturing members of the school community through highly effective and positive relationships. The inclusive ethos is evident across the school. This is exemplified in the encouragement given to pupils to join a committee, such as the school council. The range of roles on offer within the committees ensures that participation is open to everyone and pupils thrive as a result. Pupils and adults' wellbeing is effectively nurtured



through a range of initiatives, ensuring that they feel safe and supported. This includes a member of staff trained in mental health first aid and pupil 'wellbeing champions'. A blue bench outside on the yard and a blue sofa at the heart of the school signal a safe and caring place to go and talk or 'just be'. Pupils know they can also post any worries in the worry box in classrooms. They recognise that they will be heard and action taken to help them, enabling them to be confident and happy.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Rooted in the school's Christian vision, there is a strong commitment to developing pupils' understanding of justice and responsibility. The school provides meaningful opportunities for pupils to engage in local projects. For example, linking local farming with fair prices and food miles. Learning is strengthened through clear links to the curriculum. In geography, pupils explore the impact of fairtrade and consider practical ways to make a difference. As a result, they encourage their parents and carers to make ethical choices in their shopping. Pupils lead projects such as raising funds for local and national causes. Learning as a whole school how each project links to Christian Values, strengthens the 'why' behind the fundraising. Environmental initiatives, including campaigning for local recycling bins, enable pupils to connect learning with meaningful local action. This fosters a sense of responsibility and care for their community. Alongside this, pupils' understanding of responsibility is nurtured from an early age when they are encouraged to take on a range of roles. Pupils are invited to be a member of a school committee, such as sports leaders, librarians and the eco council. Through these opportunities, pupils take a leading role in developing the school further.

Religious Education

Leaders, in line with the school vision, ensure that RE is a high-profile subject. The curriculum enables pupils to learn about other religions and non-religious worldviews alongside Christianity. Big questions are used to encourage pupils to respond thoughtfully and respectfully. Visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning. This is because they see and hear firsthand about a range of faiths, views and places of worship. Visits to mandirs, temples and cathedrals build engagement and curiosity. Leaders, supported by the diocese, ensure the curriculum is relevant and diverse. For example, pupils learn about Humanism as a non-religious worldview and an understanding of a 'good life.' This is taught alongside world religions and worldviews where connections are made across learning. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are enhanced through challenging questions and open discussion within a safe classroom environment.

The quality of teaching in RE, through rich discussion and reflection opportunities, supports pupils to engage deeply in their learning. However, the quantity and quality of work in pupils books is varied. This means that it is not always clear to pupils and adults how learning is linked or what they need to do to make progress in RE. Pupils can recall previous learning. For example, in Key Stage 2, a pupil talked about diversity within religion and how not all Muslims may go on pilgrimage. They explained how this is an example of the lived reality for some Muslims today. The RE curriculum enables pupils to share their own beliefs and worldviews whilst respectfully learning about different viewpoints. Because of this, pupils are empathetic and considerate individuals.

Information

Address	Austwick, Lancaster, LA2 8BN		
Date	29 April 2026	URN	121620
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	55
Diocese	Leeds		
Headteacher	Beth McHardy		
Chair of Governors	Lindsey Smith		
Inspector	Laura Watson		