



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Thornaby Church of England Primary School	
Address	Baysdale Road, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 9DB
School vision	
<p>Our school vision is ‘Walking and learning with faith in the footsteps of Jesus’, which comes from the biblical scriptures of ‘And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.’ 2 John 1 v 6; and ‘Walk with the wise and become wise.’ Proverbs 13 v 20</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deep culture of nurturing and wellbeing enhances lives of adults, families and pupils at Thornaby. This breaks down any barriers to learning, including for those considered vulnerable. Consequently, opportunities exist for all to flourish. • The distinctively Christian vision is lived out in the selfless actions of leaders and staff. It guides their decisions and allows all to encounter a love which can be transformative in impact. This is enhanced through the seamless way it connects with the vision of the Dales Academies Trust (DAT) and diocese. • A deeply rooted culture of acceptance celebrates difference and diversity. This ensures all feel valued as the unique person they are. • Collective worship is a precious and inclusive time for the whole school community to gather together. Moments of singing and reflection enrich the spiritual development of all and enhance a shared sense of unity throughout the school. • The broad and relevant religious education (RE) curriculum extends pupils’ religious literacy. They demonstrate a clear understanding of a range of world religions, including Christianity. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in collaboration with the DAT and diocese, enhance the robustness of governor monitoring of Thornaby as a Church school. This is to further extend the way the vision enables all to flourish. • Deepen pupils and adults’ shared understanding of spirituality. This is to enable them to express the impact of moments of spiritual development within the curriculum and collective worship. • Strengthen opportunities pupils have to challenge injustice. This is to extend the way they can act as agents for change within the school and beyond. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Guided by its Christian vision, the recently appointed headteacher and deputy lead the school with love and aspiration for all. The biblical words that root the vision provide a constant reference point for all decisions. This creates a culture where learning, and learners, are valued. The combination of</p>	

ambitious leadership and highly effective partnerships enhance the effectiveness of this school. The DAT provides invaluable assistance through this period of change. Their own vision of 'Together for Excellence' powerfully resonates with the school's distinctively Christian vision. This 'umbrella' of support ensures that new initiatives are timely, accurate in focus and ultimately enhance Thornaby as a Church school. An effective partnership with York Diocese strengthens this through developmental training and sharing of expert knowledge. Governors are deeply invested in the school, with weekly visits. They accurately understand the way that the vision encourages all to walk with 'learning and faith in the footsteps of Jesus.' The re-invigorated 'ethos committee' are at an early stage in the way that they monitor how this is a living reality for all.

Collaborative work with leaders, DAT and the diocese enhances the effectiveness of the curriculum. Acknowledging that the school is on a journey of change, all are highly ambitious in the evolving curriculum. The biblically rooted vision ensures this 'journey' is 'walked in love' and 'walked with the wise.' These two elements come together in the emphasis on high quality learning and a curriculum relevant for the context of the school. Strengthening academic flourishing for all, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those identified as vulnerable, is a priority. A thoroughly inclusive culture ensures individuals receive appropriate support from staff. It is lived out with a tangible feel of acceptance for all and an 'I can' atmosphere. The ease by which pupils access help is highly valued by parents who speak of a school that 'can't do enough.' Skilfully combined with a range of extra-curricular activities, the curriculum sparks a love of learning. The work of the 'eco group' and engagement in Black History Month expand pupils' horizons of learning. Opportunities such as weekly singing lessons ignite a joy of music amongst adults and pupils. The impact of this goes beyond pupils' musical development in the way it enhances spiritual growth. The new outdoor learning space for pupils in Early Years significantly extends opportunities for creativity and to immerse themselves in nature. Although moments of spiritual development are evident within the curriculum, the way this is planned is at a very early stage. A lack of a shared understanding of spirituality limits the way pupils are able to express the impact of these experiences on them.

Staff encourage pupils to look beyond the school and actively support their local community. Harvest celebrations empower pupils to be generous in their donations to local foodbanks. Pupils are eager to demonstrate love beyond the school and into the wider world. This is highlighted by a parent's view that the vision helped her child to 'put others first.' Leaders are ambitious in plans to enable such generosity to impact on local and global neighbours. They accurately acknowledge that most opportunities for pupils to challenge injustice are narrow and led by adults. The vision guides leaders' aspirations to widen the ways that pupils can be agents of change.

Nurturing systems to enhance wellbeing and good mental health are available to all and transformational in impact. Pupils and families are warmly welcomed into school by leaders who stand by the gate each day. This is an example of some of the many actions which live out the selfless love that is central to the vision. Simple, and yet profound opportunities to highlight how they are feeling at the start of the day, ensure all are listened to. Pupil 'check ins' by staff establish a culture of compassion which impacts positively on their readiness to learn. Relationships are strong throughout the school. It is seen as a safe place for all to speak with trusted adults. Pupils talk honestly because they know their voice will be heard. This listening culture powerfully enhances pupil wellbeing. Staff encounter similar care from school leaders and those in DAT and the diocese. Newly developed behaviour systems, rooted in the vision, create a feeling of calmness and inclusion throughout the school. When faced with difficult decisions, pupils often consider 'what would Jesus do?' Forgiveness, rooted in biblical teachings, heals relationships when problems occur. At Thornaby, the way the vision is lived out ensures that all are treated well.

Shaped by the vision, worship is a valued time to start each day. Inclusive in nature, all appreciate

being united as one school ‘family.’ Practical support is provided for pupils with SEND to enrich the experience they have. Staff describe worship as a special time to stop and just ‘breathe’ in the busyness of the day. A recently implemented planning scheme strengthens staff confidence in delivering worship. From this, and support from the diocese, all have a clear understanding of the structure of worship. Empowered by lessons provided through the week, singing is uplifting. Adults and pupils highlight the positive impact this has on them spiritually. Worship extends pupils’ biblical knowledge, impacting positively on relationships and the way all care for each other. Invitational moments to pray, combined with time to reflect, create a sense of stillness which is spiritually enriching. The way pupils and adults demonstrate a shared understanding of spirituality is underdeveloped. This limits the way they can express the impact of moments of spiritual development within collective worship and the curriculum. Visits to local churches are valued, but infrequent. School is keen to strengthen links with local Anglican and Baptist churches to enhance opportunities for the spiritual growth of adults and pupils. Governor monitoring of worship is at a very early stage, consequently the impact of this is unclear.

A relevant and well-sequenced RE curriculum extends pupils’ understanding of a range of world religions, including Christianity. It has a high profile in the school, although visits to places of worship are limited. RE is a well-resourced subject area which enhances pupils’ knowledge of diversity and difference. This strengthens the culture of acceptance which permeates throughout the school. It is well-led by the recently appointed RE subject leader. However, opportunities for governors and leaders to monitor RE are less developed. Training provided by the diocese strengthens the provision, and leadership, of RE. Pupils demonstrate inquisitiveness in their learning and an enjoyment in discovering new information. RE feeds their natural curiosity through use of questions and time to reflect on different religious practices and customs.

The inspection findings indicate that Thornaby Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	27 November 2023	URN	147254
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	321
Diocese	York		
MAT/Federation	Dales Academies Trust		
Headteacher	Richard Chandler		
Chair	Jean Rigg		
Inspector	Paul Rusby	No.	938