

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

### Shincliffe Church of England VC Primary School

#### Vision

Every member of the school community is valued as a child of God, made in his image and likeness. All are welcome and are encouraged to use their gifts and talents to contribute to the happy and caring environment we strive to create. We seek to develop the highest levels of academic achievement and personal wellbeing within a loving Christian context. We aim to provide a stimulating learning atmosphere in which the potential of all can be realised. We recognise and cherish our role within the wider community and seek to build strong links between home, school and local community.

Our vision is rooted in Jesus' promise that he has 'come that you may have life, life in all its fullness.' (John 10 v 10)

Shincliffe 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 school's Christian vision is central to school life. It inspires decision-making by leaders and governors, enabling pupils and adults to flourish emotionally and academically.
- Nurturing relationships underpin daily life in school. Pupils and adults feel loved and celebrated as unique individuals. There is a relentless determination for each person, including those who may be considered vulnerable, to achieve together.
- Collective worship is a valued part of the school day. It provides well-planned opportunities for pupils and staff to come together for reflection, celebration and prayer. As a result, it contributes significantly to spiritual growth.
- The school's many partnerships are mutually beneficial. Collaborations with the local Church, diocese, schools and external agencies enrich the fullness of life the school offers.
- Pupils are ambitious for themselves and their community. Leadership and enrichment opportunities empower them to lead projects and champion justice with increasing independence.

#### Development Points

- Strengthen pupils' breadth of knowledge and experience in religious education (RE). This is to build on their prior learning of religions and worldviews, including the diversity within them.
- Extend a school wide understanding of spiritual development. This is so that opportunities within and beyond the curriculum are maximised and enhance pupils and adults' spiritual flourishing.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

The vision of 'life in all its fullness' nurtures pupils' personal and academic growth. It inspires leaders, who model its importance through their decisions and actions, supporting pupils and adults to thrive. A focus on the needs of each individual reflects this highly inclusive school. Pupils rightly describe the school as a place that is 'welcoming' and provides them with 'lots of new opportunities'. As a result, pupils and adults are supported and encouraged to develop their unique gifts. Christian values flow from the vision. These values, including thankfulness and service, are modelled daily. They shape relationships, including the ways older pupils look after those that are younger and staff support each other. Governors know their community well and are passionate and ambitious for their school. They work closely with and care deeply for pupils, staff and leaders. As a result, they make bold, informed decisions that reflect the vision, including investment in technology and developing staff. Through purposeful partnerships, leaders enhance the life of the school. Collaboration and training, including with the diocese, deepen understanding of the school's Christian foundation, strengthening confidence and expertise. Consequently, there is a tangible sense of shared purpose across the school.

### Vision and Curriculum

The Christian vision shapes an inclusive curriculum, reflecting the community the school serves. Dedicated staff and collaboration with external specialists enrich and inspire a wide range of creative learning opportunities. These enable pupils to flourish academically and socially in and beyond the classroom. Leaders have designed a curriculum rooted in 'life in all its fullness' for everyone. Teaching is inclusive and staff know pupils well. Thoughtfully planned adaptations meet pupils' needs, including a range of extra-curricular opportunities. This ensures pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), flourish academically and personally alongside their peers. Parents share the confidence of leaders that their children are well cared for, and their voices heard and valued. A school-wide approach to spiritual development is emerging. The shared language of 'looking up, looking in, and looking out' supports daily thinking and reflection. This approach helps pupils consider big questions. As a result, they deepen their thinking about God, themselves and others. Spirituality however is not integrated into all subject areas. This limits pupils' opportunities to make wider connections and so broaden their spiritual flourishing.

### Worship and Spirituality

Daily collective worship is central to school life, offering pupils and adults space to grow and reflect spiritually. Worship follows a planned sequence which is rooted in the Christian vision and values. These deepen opportunities to explore faith and personal spirituality, positively influencing attitudes and actions. Pupils regularly lead prayers and plan class worship, developing their confidence and theological understanding. They describe worship as a time to pray, sing, and reflect, leaving them positive and focused. One pupil explained that learning about endurance in worship helped them to persevere with challenging work. Creative elements such as drama, music and prayer, help pupils connect the school's vision and values to biblical teaching and stories. Leaders are reflective and adapt practice, for example revisiting the Lord's Prayer so pupils better understand its meaning. Opportunities for reflection and exploring prayer extend into classroom spaces and a sensory garden, giving pupils time for stillness and contemplation. Partnerships with local clergy enrich worship, introducing pupils to Christian festivals and traditions such as Advent. Regular church visits help pupils experience worship in a different setting, enabling them to explore being part of a wider Christian community.

### Religious Education

RE is prioritised and reflects its central place in the curriculum as a Church school. Pupils value the opportunity RE offers. They describe it as 'peaceful and reflective', where they explore big questions and share opinions respectfully. As a result, pupils think deeply about life's big questions and make connections to their own experiences. Leaders continue to develop the curriculum. Recent updates have ensured a greater balance



between Christianity, other religions and worldviews. Therefore, pupils' confidence in RE is growing. Teachers actively seek opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom. Visits to places of worship deepen pupils' understanding and support questioning and critical thinking. Ongoing training has strengthened teacher confidence and subject knowledge. However, pupils have limited opportunities to explore diversity within religions and worldviews, therefore their understanding is underdeveloped.

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils confidently take responsibility for their classroom and wider school life, building a culture that values their actions and the reasons for them. Leadership roles are purposeful and well thought out. The school rule of respect is lived out, creating a positive learning community. Inspired by the vision and Jesus as the Good Shepherd looking after the sheep, pupils look out for one another. They serve as playground leaders and use restorative conversations when disagreements occur. As a result, a commitment to justice and responsibility is integrated into daily school life. Pupils can explain why their actions matter and act with empathy and fairness. This ensures they feel valued and able to help themselves and others to flourish. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and recognise that the world can be unjust. Through leadership opportunities, curriculum and enrichment activities, they explore global issues such as racism. For example, after a workshop encouraging discussion about discrimination, pupils reflected how the experience helped them empathise with others. They suggested offering similar workshops to other classes to explore challenging topics. As a result, pupils show deeper understanding of challenging issues and demonstrate respect for diversity in attitudes and actions.

#### Vision and School Culture

The Christian vision shapes day to day relationships in school. Characterised by respect and equality, adults know and celebrate each pupil as a child of God. This encourages pupils to try new things and to seek out and share their unique talents with confidence. Pupils instinctively support and look out for one another with empathy and care. This enhances a shared sense of pride and belonging across the school. Parents and carers trust staff and value how the school goes 'above and beyond' to support families during difficult times. This relentless culture of care for both pupils and staff impacts positively on wellbeing. Well thought out opportunities, such as taking time for walks before some meetings provide welcome time for thinking and reflection. Consequently, morale is high. Staff appreciate how thoughtfully they are listened to. This supports their professional growth. As a result, adults flourish professionally and personally, creating a cohesive and happy school community.

## Information

Address	Beal Walk, High Shincliffe, Durham, DH1 2PN		
Date	20 November 2025	URN	114229
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	196
Diocese	Durham		
Headteacher	Philip Rumbles		
Chair of Governors	Daniela Slanickova		
Inspector	Stacey Rand		