

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Blackfordby St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Vision

'By their fruits shall you know them' (Matthew 12:33).

At Blackfordby Saint Margaret's, we nurture every child so that all develop a genuine love of learning and are prepared for the next stage of their education. Our school vision emphasises our commitment to providing an ambitious education within a strong Christian framework. We encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and spirituality and promote Christian values through the experiences we offer to all pupils and staff.

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

Strengths

- The school's Christian vision is deeply embedded in the life of the community and shapes the attitudes and behaviours of pupils and adults. As a result, pupils and adults consistently demonstrate kindness, respect and compassion towards one another.
- Collective worship is at the heart of the school day. Through this, pupils embrace the school vision and values in their own lives. Opportunities to pray and reflect enable staff and pupils to grow spiritually.
- A shared language for spirituality, developed across the whole school community, enables individuals to articulate and explore spiritual experiences with confidence and depth.
- Religious education (RE) teaching is inclusive, engaging and creative. As a result, pupils achieve highly, contributing to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Development Points

- Develop opportunities for pupils to reflect and act upon issues that they see as unjust within their local community. This is to deepen their understanding of how they can positively impact their community and beyond.
- Provide pupils with opportunities to engage with diverse religious and worldviews, beliefs and practices. This is to enhance their understanding, respect and appreciation of different faiths and support their development as compassionate and informed citizens.



Inspection Findings

Blackfordby St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School maintains a nurturing and caring atmosphere that is immediately apparent upon entry. This is shown through warm greetings from staff and pupils and the calm, respectful way pupils move around the school. The Christian vision permeates school life, creating an environment where pupils and adults are supported and able to thrive. Pupils demonstrate patience, perseverance, and hope, reflecting the vision's Bible inspired principle 'By their fruits you shall know them.' Staff meetings ensure all adults model and understand the vision's practical application in everyday situations. Dedicated governors maintain oversight of the vision through visits, pupil voice activities and scrutiny of the headteacher's reports. Pupils actively embrace inclusivity. Regardless of background, individuals treat each other with kindness and respect. Parents accurately recognise how the vision creates a supportive partnership between home and school that prioritises individual needs. Recent survey results indicate that parents recognise the positive impact of the Christian vision on pupils. The multi-academy trust (MAT) provides effective oversight, supporting the school's leadership team, ensuring the impact of the vision remains embedded.

The school's commitment to its Christian vision encourages a love of learning. Thoughtful adjustments are made to ensure pupils can access learning and participate fully in school life. Staff demonstrate deep knowledge of pupils, adapting curriculum materials and resources to address specific needs. Visual timetables, sensory support, and calm spaces provide essential structure for pupils requiring additional assistance. The MAT's personal development curriculum enhances opportunities for pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff receive regular training to support diverse learners and embed the school's vision. Pupils, including those with additional needs, participate in events such as sports festivals and creative activities that build confidence. Strong relationships with external agencies, including educational psychologists, enrich provision and ensure parents' voices are heard. The school's commitment to inclusion creates a foundation where pupils develop academically and socially. The shared language of 'looking in, looking out and looking up,' creates a common understanding of spirituality across the school. The school supports spiritual growth through reflective thinking and learning across a range of subjects and activities. Pupils explore moral issues in discussions, developing their empathy and self-awareness.

Collective worship is the heart of school life, providing opportunities for reflection, spiritual growth and community building. The structure remains consistent daily, creating a safe, calm space where pupils and adults can express themselves with certainty. The Christian ethos team confidently helps plan and lead worship. Worship invites pupils and staff to engage in prayers, readings and songs. It also provides time for quiet reflection and personal thought. Teaching staff collaborate with neighbouring schools to plan and deliver worship. This creates diverse and meaningful worship experiences that nurture spiritual growth in both adults and pupils. Collective worship is inclusive, with individual needs accommodated using designated roles, flexible seating arrangements and sensory supports such as fidget toys. Pupils speak positively about worship, describing it as calming and helpful for understanding the Bible, God and Anglican worship. Reflection areas in each classroom create spaces for spiritual development during and beyond lesson time. Parents appreciate being invited to celebration worship and state that pupils sing and pray at home. Strong links with the local church and clergy further enhance the community's worship. The impact is evident through special, pupil-led, church services, such as Harvest and during Advent.



At the heart of the school's vision is a culture that promotes wellbeing, rooted in dignity and equity. The Christian ethos team creates value-based stickers that recognise peers demonstrating the qualities of patience, hope, perseverance and constancy. Behaviour reflects high expectations, and a restorative approach rooted in the school's Christian vision. As a result, pupils take responsibility for their actions, reflecting the Christian values of love and respect for others. Pupils demonstrate exceptional behaviour both inside school and during trips, receiving positive comments from the wider community. Older pupils actively support younger members of the community, embodying the values through their positive role-modelling during social times. Parents rightly describe a welcoming, family atmosphere where each child and their family is valued and respected. The playground offers both active areas and peaceful spaces where pupils can reflect quietly. This supports pupils' emotional well-being, helping them return to learning calm, focused and ready to engage.

The school shows strong commitment to justice through anti-bullying policies and restorative conflict resolution. Pupils clearly understand fairness and equality in discussions about global citizenship. The curriculum explores social justice themes through history and RE. Cultural awareness is developed through experiences like Diwali dancers and visits to a multi-faith centre. However, these opportunities are not yet fully embedded, resulting in a restricted understanding of diversity and cultural appreciation among pupils. The MAT's Pupil Charter fosters cross-school collaboration, enabling pupils to develop essential teamwork and communication skills. Through structured interactions with peers from different trust schools, pupils gain diverse perspectives, build confidence and establish wider social networks. The junior leadership team organises initiatives like pupils' mental health week, demonstrating pupil agency in addressing important issues. The school emphasises environmental stewardship and responsibility toward creation. Pupils lead recycling and sustainable practice initiatives. The school fosters strong community links, putting its vision into action through meaningful involvement in both local and wider contexts. This includes donating to local food banks and fundraising activities for global charities.

In RE, pupil voice activities provide evidence of engagement and allow leaders to check pupils' understanding of their learning. Teaching of RE is consistently high quality and pupils make strong progress, showing confidence in expressing their own views. The impact of RE extends beyond the classroom, shaping pupils' moral and spiritual development. Teachers receive specific support to adapt lesson plans, ensuring all pupils can engage with challenging religious concepts. The regular review of important ideas, clear explanations and tailored support ensures pupils make good progress. Assessment focuses on key questions and outcomes, enabling teachers to monitor progress. Teachers form accurate judgments about pupil achievement. They consistently deliver RE lessons with high expectations for presentation and content. One pupil described the RE books as the 'most important books in school'. Parents receive regular updates on pupil progress in RE through school reports and parents' evening discussions.

RE is at the centre of learning. Carefully planned and adapted resources meet the diverse learning needs of pupils. RE lessons begin with thought-provoking questions that encourage pupils to consider moral dilemmas through a lens of religion and worldviews. This inspires a sense of awe and wonder as pupils explore big questions about life, faith, and meaning. The RE curriculum progresses logically through school, building on previous learning. It incorporates both the Leicestershire RE Syllabus and Understanding Christianity. Pupils understand that Christianity is a global faith, followed by people in many countries and cultures. They enjoy learning about different religions and are enthusiastic to share their knowledge. Pupils especially like exploring Judaism and Islam, showing curiosity and respect. They enjoy discussing religious festivals, beliefs and traditions with others. Parents state that pupils share their RE learning at home, particularly about different religions and cultures. RE Champions receive recognition during celebration assemblies, reinforcing the subject's importance throughout the school.

Information

Address	Off Main Street, Blackfordby, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 8AB		
Date	19 May 2025	URN	145084
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	98
Diocese	Leicestershire		
MAT	Rise Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Hayley Ryder-Smith		
Chair of Governors	Andy Tipton		
Inspector	Daniel Walls		