

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Hild's College Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Renny's Lane, Gilesgate, Durham, DH1 2HZ
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
<p>'In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.' Matthew 5:16</p> <p>At St Hild's we let the light of Jesus shine through all we do. St Hild shone like a bright jewel. We follow her example, not hiding our light, but letting our unique gifts shine brightly. We are an inclusive, loving community, where everyone is valued and nurtured to grow and fulfil their God-given potential.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rich culture of acceptance of difference and diversity creates a sense of togetherness which results in pupils who thrive. Pupils are valued as the unique person they are, living out the school's vision and its associated values. • Inspired by the life of St Hild, pupils shine bright through nurturing relationships and the ambitiousness of adults. Through inclusive provision and a deeply nurturing culture, staff go the extra mile to support pupils and families. The high quality pastoral support at St Hild's impacts positively on the lives of families and pupils. • The curriculum provides rich, purposeful experiences for everyone. However, there is not currently a shared understanding of spirituality across the school. Intentional opportunities for the development of spirituality are in the early stages of planning. • Collective worship is a valued time of togetherness that provides meaningful moments of reflection. Opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship are less developed. • Religious education (RE) is valued and enjoyed by all. Through strong subject leadership, an engaging curriculum and valued partnerships with the Diocese, pupils have the opportunity to make good progress. However, the impact of this across the school is inconsistent.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen adults' and pupils' understanding of the Christian foundation and biblical language which underpins the vision. This is so that all can articulate the way the vision guides them to 'shine bright'.



- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality so that planned and spontaneous moments for spiritual development are explicit within the curriculum. Enhance opportunities for personal reflection for adults and pupils to further support their spiritual growth.
- Develop opportunities for pupils to be courageous advocates of change so that they can shine beyond school and into the wider world.

Inspection findings

An atmosphere of warmth and welcome fills every part of this school. This is directly inspired by the vision and its associated values which are lived out in shared actions of kindness. Everyone flourishes as all respect the worth of others. As a result, an environment of calm and purpose is created which results in good standards of teaching and learning. There is a great sense of unity among staff who are motivated to kindle the light in every pupil and staff member. As a result, staff go above and beyond to meet the needs of all whom they serve. Pupils demonstrate that everyone has a right to shine in their own unique way by treating one another with compassion and dignity. The vision for everyone to shine inspires and motivates all. It is underpinned by six core values chosen, and lived out, by pupils and the school community. This is driven by the highly respected headteacher along with the senior leadership team who lead the school with understanding and humility. Their manner of concern and care for each pupil and adult illuminates a Christ-like way of life and service. In turn, this is reflected in the behaviour and attitudes of staff and pupils. Adults and pupils flourish because they are valued. However, the school is more reserved in its use of explicit biblical language that underpins the vision. Therefore, the way members of the school community identify how the school's light is fuelled by a distinctively biblically rooted vision is inconsistent.

Pupils and adults positively embrace the school values of community, thankfulness, forgiveness, courage, justice and love. Pupils' moral and character development is enhanced in the way they live out these values. They impact positively on relationships with each other and encourage a sense of ambitiousness for each member of the school community. In doing so they 'shine bright.' Alongside this, a half termly value is focused on, such as generosity. Pupils accurately identify anyone who they feel demonstrates their school values, including adults. Pupils confidently recall Bible stories that exemplify these values and are determined to follow these values in all that they do. Consequently, they are able to play and learn peacefully alongside one another with infrequent cases of upset.


Leaders in school work tirelessly to ensure good attendance from all pupils so that they can engage positively in the curriculum provided. Pupils, led by the school council, engage in charity work. Adults and pupils can explain how this lets them shine bright in the local community and beyond. Pupils speak about donating to the Durham food bank at Harvest time and raising money for Comic Relief. However, they have a less developed understanding of courageous advocacy and the impact they can have as change makers in the wider world.

The positive way the vision is lived out has a profound impact on the wellbeing of all at St Hild's. In the last two years school leaders, including governors, have prioritised pupil and staff wellbeing as an area of focus. In recognition of this key area, leaders have taken the bold decision to employ a 'positive futures' worker for part of the week. This decision by governors and leaders improves the support network for pupils and families the school serves in the community. This enhances opportunities for all to flourish. The impact of leaders' self-evaluation on pupils' spiritual development and the school's distinctive Christian character is less evident.

Words of welcome and dismissal, combined with thoughtful prayers, make worship a joyful and reflective time for all. Reflection areas are well maintained in each classroom. However, these areas are not consistently well established and sometimes confused with the teaching of RE. Therefore, some pupils think that prayer is something to be only done collectively. Opportunities for pupils to pray on their own are less well developed. The headteacher and senior leaders video-recorded worship times and these were a source of hope and encouragement for the school community. The school values its partnership with the local church and members who serve as governors. The school is keen to enhance valued partnerships with the local church to develop future work on the vision. The Worship Crew, alongside the recent welcome introduction of Open the Book are used to support worship times. This enables pupils to deepen their understanding of the school's values.

The school provides an aspirational and creative curriculum which sparks curiosity and provides real experiences for all pupils. This provides rich opportunities for the individual gifts and talents of all pupils to flourish. Pupils have a real sense of worth through the ambitiousness of the school which is directly inspired by the vision. There is high regard for the importance of RE and its significant contribution to the school's Christian vision. RE lessons prepare pupils for life as they understand themselves and others more. As a result, enabling their own lives and the lives of others to shine. The school accesses high quality staff training for RE through the Diocesan advisors. The RE curriculum, planning and resources enable teachers to deliver creative lessons which are progressively more challenging. Pupils acquire a deepening understanding of what people of different world religions and worldviews believe and how they choose to live. Class teachers create a sense of curiosity as they teach RE and this impacts positively on pupils' academic and moral development. Engaging and inclusive RE lessons ensure that all pupils develop a sincere respect and understanding for all people. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' work in RE books.

Strong relationships and living well together are key characteristics of the school. Inspired by the school's vision and the life of St Hild, this is a school where all are encouraged to shine bright. They express that this enables them to be their very best selves. The kind and unwavering love and support, created by the strong family community, means that pupils and staff feel valued and are able to flourish.

	The effectiveness of RE is	Good
	Curriculum planning for RE is engaging, well-led and uses a range of approaches to ensure coverage and access for all. Resources are used effectively and lessons are graded as good through formal and informal monitoring by school leaders. The creative curriculum motivates pupils to engage with interest in RE. Progress for pupils, including those deemed to be vulnerable, is generally good and in line with core subjects within the school.	

Information			
School	St Hild's College Church of England VA Primary School	Inspection date	9/12/2022
URN	114270	VC/VA/Academy	VA
Diocese	Durham	Pupils on roll	178
MAT/Federation	N/A		
Headteacher	Alex Ryder		
Chair of Governors	Jen Moss		
Inspector	Abigail Clay	No.	2203