

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bedlington Whitley Memorial Church of England Primary School

Vision

'Let your light shine' Matthew 5:16

Our school motto of 'Let your light shine' comes from Matthew 5:16: 'Let your light shine before all people, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' This voices our overarching belief that everyone, no matter what their starting point may be, has God-given skills and talents and we passionately believe in working collaboratively with parents, learners, members of the community, our church, educational partners and other professionals to ensure all children receive the very best start to their learning journey and have every opportunity to 'Let Your Light Shine'.

Bedlington Whitley Memorial 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 are inspired by the Christian vision to make choices and to take decisive actions so that pupils and adults flourish. They model and nurture positive relationships that create an aspirational culture where 'letting your light shine' is encouraged.
- The inclusive curriculum brings the vision to life. It promotes curiosity, confidence and resilience. Leaders provide tailored support so that the needs of learners are met.
- Carefully planned collective worship is rooted in the vision and values and draws the school community together. It provides opportunities for spiritual growth through reflection time and moments of silence.
- The vision drives strong support for wellbeing in pupils and adults. This leads to a school community that looks out for each other so that they can 'shine'.
- Religious education (RE) is highly valued by pupils. It is purposefully designed to include study of a range of religions and worldviews. This enables pupils to ask important questions and fosters attitudes of respect and tolerance.

Development Points

- Establish robust processes for governors to thoroughly monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian vision in all areas of school life. This is to provide effective support and challenge to shape ongoing developments as a church school.
- Provide explicit opportunities for spiritual development within the taught curriculum. This is to enable pupils to develop their spirituality more deeply.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to learn about issues of injustice. This is so that they can recognise how they can take action to make a positive difference in the world.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision at Whitley Memorial infuses school life, enabling individuals to thrive. Adults and pupils explain how it applies to them and how they use it to help them shine. Consequently, they flourish. Carefully chosen values of forgiveness, love, kindness, perseverance, respect and resilience, are woven throughout, connecting the vision to daily life. Even the youngest pupils can explain the impact they have, supported through the use of little crocheted value animals. Leaders' ambitions and high aspirations, as expressed through 'let your light shine', are well known throughout the whole community. They are directed in their work by the vision, and this has a significant impact. Responding to the specific context of the school, leaders have made bold strategic decisions that benefit their pupils. A highly committed staff team and carefully nurtured, rich partnerships strengthen provision as a Church school. Highly dedicated and knowledgeable governors have a clear understanding of its work and are committed to success. They visit frequently to witness the vision in action and actively participate in school life. However, formal monitoring and evaluation of the vision lacks consistent focus and rigour.

Vision and Curriculum

Guided by the vision and values, staff collaborate to refine their understanding of the needs of pupils and plan provision to match these. They firmly believe that pupils should be enabled to 'shine'. This inspires them to work as a team to enable pupils to flourish. Consequently, an inclusive curriculum has been devised. The needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or those who are deemed vulnerable are carefully considered. Teaching is thoughtfully adapted to provide appropriate support, and well-planned interventions are introduced in response to specific requirements. Adults pride themselves on knowing each pupil individually and ensuring that their needs are met. Outdoor learning, in forest school, and other extra-curricular opportunities enrich education through experiences that deepen pupils' understanding of the world around them. These experiences meaningfully support pupils' personal growth, wellbeing and spiritual awareness. The school has developed a shared approach to, and a language for spiritual development. However, explicit and planned opportunities for spiritual development within the taught curriculum remain limited. This means that the capacity for deeper spiritual flourishing is restricted.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is a highly valued part of daily life at Whitley Memorial. It provides an opportunity for pupils and adults to pause, reflect and celebrate together. Pupil worship ambassadors regularly support the adults who lead worship. This helps pupils to appreciate its importance and the role they play within it. Bible verses, stories, music, discussion and times of reflection engage pupils. They frequently consider the vision and values, their aspirations and how they can 'let their light shine' both in and outside of school. During worship pupils happily respond and are confident to share their thoughts with others. This enhances their spiritual development. They describe how worship enables them to think about how they can use their God given talents to improve the world. Reflection spaces around the school and in classrooms are well used. This further develops the spiritual impact worship has on pupils and adults. A strong partnership with the local churches is well-established and much valued. As a result, worship unites the community.

Vision and School Culture

This is a nurturing school, where the words of the vision and values are lived out daily. Leaders create a highly effective, supportive environment where pupils and adults are cherished, valued and respected. As a result, a loving welcoming atmosphere is pervasive. Prioritising mental health and wellbeing as a way of living out the vision is recognised by leaders as the foundation for flourishing. Families receive strong support. Parents and staff are compassionately supported by leaders. This creates a culture that nourishes confidence and aspirations. The lives of pupils and adults have been transformed through opportunities offered and the encouragement to



'let your light shine'. Leaders celebrate achievements through the 'shine' awards for pupils and staff. They are a weekly highlight. Staff appreciate the thoughtful actions of leaders in considering their workload, wellbeing and professional growth. They flourish through the strategic investment in training and skill development. Parents are active within daily life at Whitley Memorial and look for opportunities to offer support whenever they can. They value the welcoming presence of staff at drop-off and pick-up times, which allows for informal and supportive conversations. This has transformed behaviour, attitudes and relationships throughout the school.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

A range of leadership opportunities enables pupils to develop their leadership skills and take responsibility. In addition to worship ambassadors, pupils can become school councillors, eco champions, librarians, and reading leaders. Through these experiences they support each other and learn to care for their environment. For example, the school parliament made the decision to renovate an outside area and develop a construction area. They approached local community members to donate items and ensure the project's success. As a community they contribute to the local foodbanks and raise money through a variety of activities for national charities. Through these activities they grow together, whilst fostering a strong sense of justice. However, the range of opportunities for pupils to engage with issues of injustice is limited. Thus, pupils' understanding of how they can take action to promote justice is underdeveloped.

Religious Education

Leaders ensure that RE has a high profile across the school. It is well resourced and given an appropriate amount of curriculum time which shows the priority placed on it. Diocesan and church partnerships support school leaders effectively. This has a positive impact on developing staff confidence and expertise. The curriculum is thoughtfully sequenced to build up knowledge and religious language over time. It is designed to meet the needs of the pupils. The engaging programme of study incorporates a diverse range of religions and worldviews. This extends pupils' understanding of the various ways people view the world, adding richness and relevance to RE.

High quality teaching enables pupils to learn well and make progress over time. Teachers create space for pupils to explore their own views whilst respecting the beliefs of others. Assessments are used to ensure lessons build upon prior learning. This enables pupils to extend their understanding and for teachers to address gaps in knowledge and misconceptions. Pupils greatly benefit from a range of first-hand experiences of visiting places of worship such as a local mosque, a gurdwara and a hindu temple. This engages them in their learning and further extends their knowledge of religious practices and beliefs. Across the school, pupils develop a secure knowledge and understanding by exploring important questions and expressing their views. They believe that 'RE helps them to know how the world works and how they can help to make it better'.

Information

Address	Gordon Terrace, Bedlington, Northumberland. NE22 5DE		
Date	12 March 2026	URN	122281
Type of school	VA	No. of pupils	215 (plus 19 in nursery)
Diocese	Newcastle		
Headteacher	Stephanie Roome		
Chair of Governors	Christian Peart		
Inspector	Natalie Dodd		