

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

<b>Belmont Church of England VC Primary School</b>	
Address	Buckinghamshire Road, Belmont, Durham, DH1 2QP
School vision	
<p>'I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the promise between me and the earth.' (Genesis 9:13)</p> <p>God sent Noah a rainbow as a sign of his promise of love and protection. We seek to flourish together, in our Belmont family, by providing a place of love, safety and peace and by living out our rainbow promise.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We promise to love and care for everyone in our Belmont family. We promise to be: loving, kind, respectful, honest, peaceful, patient and forgiving.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rooted in the story of Noah's ark, the language of the vision is accessible to all and woven throughout the school. It enables adults and pupils to grow and flourish together through the way it is lived out in caring relationships.</li> <li>• A culture of wellbeing and care for one another powerfully and tangibly enhances lives and relationships. All are known and valued as the unique person they are within a loving school family.</li> <li>• Worship is a deeply valued part of each day, enhancing the spirituality of pupils and adults through meaningful moments of reflection. A highly effective partnership with local churches, entwined with active pupil involvement, enriches worship.</li> <li>• Pupils are inspired to make ethical choices and be agents of change through a carefully developed curriculum. This encourages them to look beyond their school community into the wider world seeking practical ways they can make a difference.</li> <li>• Religious education (RE) is a highly valued subject. The revised RE curriculum carefully balances the study of a range of world faiths, including Christianity and worldviews. This provides opportunities to further enhance pupils' religious literacy, deepening their understanding of a range of beliefs and views.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further extend the recently implemented whole school approach for spiritual development within the curriculum and worship. This is to enrich opportunities for pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.</li> <li>• Embed the revised RE curriculum. This is to strengthen pupils' understanding of Christianity as a global faith and extend their knowledge of worldviews and faiths.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>Rooted in the Bible story of Noah's ark, Belmont's Christian vision is known, and lived out, by all. The words of the vision underpin the positive relationships and nurturing environment which permeates throughout the school. The symbols of the ark, rainbow and dove are so deeply embedded that they are the natural language of pupils and adults. This ensures that the vision is</p>	

both understood and lived, woven seamlessly through all areas of school life. Consequently, this creates a deep-rooted compassionate and aspirational culture where all have the opportunity to flourish. The vision guides leaders' actions and decisions. The impact of the vision is carefully monitored by leaders, including governors. Their monitoring actions are inspired by the language within Jesus' parable of the vine. They describe how they review where the vision 'bears fruit and where it doesn't' and carefully consider what 'pruning' needs to take place. This ensures that carefully planned actions, which enhance opportunities for pupils and staff, result from their monitoring of Belmont as a Church school. Governors know the school well and are highly invested in ensuring that adults and pupils have the opportunity to flourish.

Inspired by the biblically rooted vision, the rainbow promise creates a highly effective culture where all are treated well. Parents, staff and pupils speak of the importance of the sense of 'family' which fosters a powerful sense of togetherness. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are known as the unique person they are. School has intentionally invested additional resources in areas such as counselling to enhance good mental health. The words within the vision of 'dignity' and 'respect' are made a reality through the love and care shown to all. This includes pupils considered to be vulnerable or disadvantaged. Staff and pupils benefit from a culture which prioritises their wellbeing. Leaders' actions to review workload, leads to staff feeling valued and respected. Areas in classrooms, known as 'arks', provide meaningful spaces of calm and reflection for pupils. Leaders accurately describe how this lives out the words of the vision into tangible actions which can be transformative in impact. The introduction of 'Wellbeing Wednesday' is just one of many initiatives to enhance areas such as resilience. Paintings of rainbows provide a visual reminder of the importance of the rainbow promise within the vision. The impact of this is evident in the nurturing culture that shines throughout the school. It is shown in loving and caring relationships and high standards of behaviour.

Adults and pupils value time to reflect and be still during worship. Staff describe how this daily gathering uplifts them and provides meaningful moments of calm which enriches their own spirituality. Close partnerships with the local Anglican and Methodist churches strengthen worship. Bible stories are brought to life through drama in the 'Open the Book' gatherings they lead in school. These provide welcomed opportunities for pupils to retell stories with members of the local churches. Pupils describe how this is enjoyable to be part of and also helps them to remember the stories. Staff know their pupils well and provide sensitive support enabling those who have SEND to have the opportunity to engage in worship. The pupil group known as 'Seedlings' are actively involved in planning and evaluating worship. All are provided with opportunities to reflect and think. This directly impacts on the way pupils are inspired to take action as a result of what they have heard. Examples that pupils highlight include showing forgiveness to others on the playground and thinking about how to help people throughout the world. Worship is a clear expression of the Christian vision in the way it enables both pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.

A recently introduced language of spirituality is woven throughout the curriculum and collective worship. This is at an early stage but pupils are already able to consider moments of wonder and deep questions coming from these. Reflection areas within classrooms are age appropriate and provide planned opportunities for pupils to think, write prayers or be still. Pupils are developing their own language in which to describe their own spiritual questions and development. Each class studies a contemporary figure, or someone from history, who has worked to make a positive difference. This inspires pupils to look beyond themselves towards others in their local community and their global neighbours. Pupils describe how this encourages them to chase their dreams, be themselves and help others. Through this they are able to question fairness and injustice in the world. Pupils are inspired into action, such as taking part in community litter picks. This outward looking work is directly guided by the symbol of the dove which is central to the biblically rooted vision. Pupils and adults speak with clarity about how the dove, rainbow and ark are key to the school vision. They are effective as they provide a language that even the youngest pupil in the school can articulate. This is embedded within the rainbow promise which is lived out

in the care that pupils and adults show to themselves and others beyond the school.

Strong and effective partnership with the local diocese provides valued support for RE. Links made with the diocese and Melrose Learning Trust enhance staff development. Pupils enjoy RE which is viewed as an important part of the curriculum by leaders, including governors. Effective action following the monitoring of the RE curriculum has led to a curriculum which is now more diverse in content. Pupils' understanding of Christianity as a global world faith and the depth of their understanding of a range of beliefs is underdeveloped. The careful introduction of new units of work ensures that the curriculum is now balanced and relevant to the needs of learners.

The Christian vision at Belmont Church of England Primary School drives and guides all aspects of school life. It is deeply embedded, providing a visual and practical set of language accessible to all. Consequently, the individual words of the rainbow promise naturally flow from the vision, enriching the lives of all pupils and adults. This powerfully ensures that all are 'flourishing together.'

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

Information			
Inspection date	18 September 2023	URN	114227
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	301
Diocese	Durham;Newcastle		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Kirsty Harrison-Brown		
Chair	Nicola Lee		
Inspector	Paul Rusby	No.	938