

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

<b>Blue Coat Church of England Academy, Walsall</b>	
Address	Birmingham Street, Walsall, WS1 2ND
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	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Excellent

School's vision
Blue Coat Church of England Academy is an inclusive Christian learning community where the uniqueness of everyone is celebrated, nurtured, and realised. All members of the 'Blue Coat Family' are encouraged to flourish, achieve high standards, and become full contributors to society as confident and caring individuals. 'Exercise your freedom by serving God, not by breaking the rules. Treat everyone you meet with dignity. Love your spiritual family. Revere God. Respect the government.' 1 Peter 2: 16-17 Values: Kindness, Wisdom, Endurance, Service, Hope.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visionary leadership, shaped by the Christian vision, transforms the lives of adults and students. This is because the deeply embedded vision reflects the context of the academy and the needs and aspirations of the communities it serves. There is scope to further share this approach to Church school education.</li> <li>• Students relish their learning because the curriculum and additional activities are relevant and prepare them for success especially in adulthood. Support for social, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing is evidence of the Christian vision in practice.</li> <li>• Relationships throughout the academy are exemplary. They nurture and celebrate each member of the Blue Coat family as uniquely made and cherished in the image of God. Diversity and difference is treated as the norm and dignity and respect the accepted response to each individual.</li> <li>• Collective worship is the golden thread that binds the community in moments of stillness and reflection. All recognise it as an opportunity to reflect upon the place of God in the lives of believers. Adults and students of faiths other than Christianity or of no faith appreciate that worship allows for their spiritual needs and growth.</li> <li>• Religious education (RE) is excellent. The curriculum is challenging and exciting. It enables students in all years to grow in their knowledge and understanding of Christianity, a range of world religions and worldviews.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the range of partnerships with other schools. This is so that the impact of the academy's theologically rooted Christian vision extends to other Church schools.</li> </ul>

## Inspection findings

Blue Coat Academy is a beacon of Christian distinctiveness serving its families and local community with humility, energy and integrity. Reviewed, revised and biblically rooted, the Christian vision is deeply embedded and shapes policies, plans, decisions and actions. It empowers the transforming of lives and life chances of all within the academy and extends outwards to the local community. This is possible because the vision and associated values are relevant to the experiences of the academy's diverse, dignified community. Leaders, including governors, inspire with their determination that no one is limited in their aspirations. Consequently, they nurture students' academic, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing and adults' professional expertise and satisfaction. The cycle of self-evaluation is regular, rigorous and perceptive. The principal explains the approach to this, as with everything, as 'front foot forward as a Church school'. This arises from an appreciation of, and expertise in, Church school education that there is scope to share more widely.

Throughout the academy, adults value the formal curriculum and the exceptionally rich extra-curricular programme as vehicles for enhancing experiences and opportunities. Broad, balanced and challenging, the curriculum offers pathways for students to pursue their interests and dreams. Nurturing the concept of being a family, leaders are determined that no one is marginalised or left behind. Support for learning is as diverse as the community itself. It ensures students wellbeing and behaviour enables them to be successful. Where helpful, students access individual programmes that nurture them through each key stage. Older students reflect positively on the difference this exceptional community makes to them. The spiritual flourishing of all is carefully, thoughtfully planned in subjects and opportunities. It is reflected in responses to learning and activities as well as through poetry, art, music, culture and prayerfulness. The annual Diversity Day is a joyous and rich expression of the community's personality and cohesion.

Adults invest in activities and support that foster students in their moral and character development. A rich personal, social, health and relationships programme, enables students to be hopeful, aspirational and confident for their futures. Blue Coat Academy celebrates the good times and offers support through the tough ones. It engenders a sense of responsibility in students that enables them to act as agents for change in the local community. One such example is students independently removing hate inspired graffiti from the local area. They litter pick and fund raise, they pray for and nurture the communities to which they belong. They support national and international causes generously and prayerfully. There is an embedded understanding of courageous advocacy as making the right decisions for the right reasons no matter what. Academy leaders are at the heart of local partnerships to address issues that are nationally significant such as knife crime. Enabling students to question the moral and ethical choices that people make, encourages their individual and collective resilience and determination. The impact of the Christian vision is such that students contribute to their communities, intentionally and positively as young citizens.

Blue Coat Academy embraces the educational and cultural heritage and diversity of the communities it serves. Accepting students from whatever their starting points, it nurtures them to reach their potential. Inspired by the vision, all acknowledge that everyone is unique and deserving of dignity and respect. Courteous, harmonious relationships are evident throughout the academy. Adults model desirable behaviours and language. Therefore, students attend regularly and behave well. They appreciate the art of disagreeing with dignity and resolving issues. Students see this as part of living out the academy's vision. Mistakes are acknowledged, opportunities given, and forgiveness and fresh starts abound. Support for mental health and wellbeing are prioritised to support adults and students. The Christian



vision inspires the systems and decisions that enable all to grow as individuals precious in the eyes of God.

The understanding and appreciation of diversity and difference among adults and students oozes throughout the academy. It goes far beyond recognising differences of race and religion to embrace every individuality of a person. An awareness and appreciation of heritage is woven through the curriculum at all key stages. This enables all in their understanding of the history, future and cultural richness of Walsall and modern Britain. Individuals and groups know how to be safe and build positive, respectful, empowering relationships because adults enable them to do so. All understand how to stay safe including online.

Collective worship holds a remarkable place at the heart of this fiercely cohesive community. Robust evaluation of the impact of worship leads to thoughtful, careful and creative planning. Worship reflects the breadth of the Anglican tradition. It celebrates the Christian and secular calendars and responds to the joys and concerns of the academy community. Invitational and universally accessible, it provides moments of deep reflection that students and adults appreciate whatever their personal beliefs and views. Central to worship are the Bible, prayer, music and stillness. This is equally evident in small and large gatherings. Weekly, whole academy worship in the local church is cherished as unifying and unique. Attendance by all staff and students demonstrates the powerful appreciation that all have for each other and all that they share. Similarly, gathering to celebrate the Eucharist is an impressive symbol of Christian witness. Increasingly, students are confident in leading and contributing to worship and to share their own prayers and testimonies with the community. The local clergy, lay chaplain and other worship leaders ensure worship is inclusive, inspiring and spiritually enriching.

The inspiring leadership and collaborative working and networking of the RE team ensures that teaching of, and learning by, students is exceptional. Using a variety of resources including Understanding Christianity, the subject leader has designed a curriculum that enthuses students. It reflects Christianity as both the core of British religious heritage and a living world faith. Students tackle complex theological and philosophical concepts across a range of religions confidently. They express their opinions maturely and using subject specific vocabulary accurately. This applies equally at each key stage. All Key Stage 4 students complete a GCSE qualification in RE. Sixth form students appreciate the relevance and challenge of their weekly core RE lessons. Providing a safe space in which to learn about religion and its impact upon believers. Students in all years are effusive about their enjoyment of their lessons. They appreciate the breadth of religions that they study and the respect that is shown for all belief systems and worldviews. In this way, RE contributes significantly to the religious and racial harmony that is palpable throughout the academy. It exemplifies the aspiration of the academy's Christian vision to treat everyone with dignity.



	The effectiveness of RE is		Excellent	
	<p>The sequential and bold curriculum ensures that learning in RE is excellent. Students are consistently challenged and engaged by their lessons retaining and building upon their prior learning. They confidently use religious terms to express their knowledge, understanding and mature opinions. Rigorous, meaningful assessment ensures students including those with SEND and the most able make excellent progress. Students completing external GCSE and A Level qualifications achieve at least in line with their challenging targets.</p>			
Information				
School	Blue Coat Church of England Academy, Walsall	Inspection date	20 June 2023 - 21 June 2023	
URN	138606	VC/VA/Academy	Academy	
Diocese/District	Lichfield	Pupils on roll	913	
MAT/Federation	Blue Coat Church of England Academy (Walsall) Trust			
Principal	David Smith			
Chair of Governors	Lauren Parker			
Inspector	Fiona Ashton	No.	860	