

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mark's Church of England Primary School

Vision

'Together in God's love, we will shine'

We provide a secure and happy learning environment where everyone is valued and demonstrates our core values of respect and kindness. In partnership with the home, the Church and our local community, we will foster a lifelong love of learning. We are thoughtful, responsible citizens in the Global community promoting the value of understanding in all its forms. We believe that every child is an individual with equal rights to our care, time and attention and we will nurture and support each other on our journey of discovery, knowledge and faith guided by God's love. We create an environment in which everyone learns that he/she is made in the image of God. We develop honest and thriving independent learners with high self-esteem who persevere within strong Christian ethos. We encourage a natural curiosity and excitement for learning through our curriculum and with creative, challenging and personalised teaching and learning, each child WILL achieve.

St Mark's Church of England 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.

Strengths

- As a result of compassionate school leadership and supportive governance, the Christian vision provides exceptional support to pupils. This vision is lived out daily through love, acceptance and nurture, enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- Leaders have ensured that their vision and values are the key drivers of the curriculum. A broad and rich curriculum, planned for pupils' varied needs, provides opportunities for spiritual enrichment.
- Daily collective worship is varied, inclusive and transformational. Enhanced by the valuable contributions made by the local church, it has a significant impact upon pupils and adults, developing their spirituality.
- Inspired by the vision for everyone to shine in God's love, leaders actively create a school culture of inclusion and equity. Pupils and adults are known as individuals, valued for their unique talents and are supported to succeed.

Development Points

- Within the religious education (RE) curriculum, ensure RE lessons provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their personal views about faiths and worldviews. This is to enable them to think critically and deeply.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to respond to issues that they see as unjust. This is so that pupils understand how they can make a positive difference in the world.



Inspection Findings

Pupils and adults thrive at St Mark's. The school's Christian vision is the driving force behind policy, practice and the day-to-day life of the school. Compassionate leadership has a transformational impact on the whole school community. Pupils, parents and staff recognise and appreciate how the vision to let all 'shine in God's love' is lived out. Leaders and staff have a strong awareness of the school community they serve. Consequently, their vision for all to achieve has inspired a culture of inclusion and equity. School governors also hold the vision central to their leadership role, which guides their monitoring and informs decision-making.

Leaders have considered their pupils' needs when planning their curriculum. 'Big questions' for each area of learning are underpinned by core values and effectively spark debate and curiosity from pupils. As a result, pupils broaden their horizons and find out more about their world, past and present. Inclusion is central to the school's curriculum design. Embedded and rigorous systems are in place to plan for the varied needs of learners, to allow vulnerable pupils to flourish. The wider curriculum offers a breadth of experiences beyond the academic, both in and outside of school. Leaders and staff intentionally monitor access to clubs, such as art, sport and science, to ensure these are made accessible to all, including the most vulnerable. These carefully planned experiences build upon pupils' interests and harness deeper opportunities for their spiritual development.

Collective worship is a strength of this school. Pupils and adults alike value this time to come together to reflect, learn and pray. The liturgical calendar, alongside a focus on selected Christian values, support the planning and delivery of worship. Times of singing, prayer, discussion and thought provide a varied worship experience. Worship is invitational and highly inclusive, with adaptations made to support those who may find whole-school worship overwhelming. Opportunities to add prayer requests and reflections to the worship wall are valued and well-used by pupils and staff. The pupil-led 'vision in action council' further enhance worship through the experiences they plan for the school. For example, they led Easter collective worship outdoors, providing activities in nature, prayer opportunities and Bible verses for moments of reflection. Strong links with St Mark's Church further enhance the worship experience for pupils and adults. Weekly worship at the church includes parents and governors, which is followed by a time of adult reflection after each service. These spiritually-rich experiences are well attended and highly valued, supporting families to grow in their faith. Worship permeates across the school beyond the daily event of coming together.

Moved by the vision to be 'lights on a hill' to others, pupils are curious and interested about the world, and their role within it. Both the curriculum and collective worship themes provide insight into local and global issues of injustice. Leaders intentionally encourage pupils to take responsibility within school, through initiatives such as a weekly eco-club, pupil 'wellbeing champions' and the leadership of anti-bullying assemblies. This ensures that pupils are able to use their skills and talents to help others to flourish. Partnerships have strengthened pupils' awareness of different cultures. For example, visitors have shared their experience of visiting a Kenyan school, leading to pupils writing letters to those students. Pupils are knowledgeable about issues of injustice, such as food waste and poverty. They demonstrate compassion and a desire to help, when discussing these issues. However, they are less able to articulate how they can make independent ethical choices and be active agents for change to address these issues.



Leaders of RE have effectively crafted the curriculum to provide pupils with knowledge about a breadth of religions and worldviews. Leaders participate in training and RE network opportunities to support their professional development, and this knowledge is shared with those who teach RE. As a result, teachers feel confident and well-supported in their delivery of this subject. Pupils value their lessons, eagerly discussing world faiths and explaining the importance of learning about different religions. As a result, pupils offer opinions and share ideas, reflecting on religious differences respectfully with their peers. Key questions are embedded into the curriculum and support pupils to explore taught concepts. Leaders have focused on identifying key knowledge and vocabulary for pupils to develop and build upon their learning. This enables pupils to speak knowledgeably about religious concepts, such as salvation and resurrection. Whilst the curriculum is well-sequenced in content, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to articulate their own philosophical questions and explore personal beliefs. This limits development of critical thinking and restricts deeper engagement with key concepts. As such, pupils' capacity to engage confidently with challenging religious and ethical ideas are not fully realised.

Underpinned by the vision for all to be valued, respect and kindness are central to the culture at St Mark's. The behaviour practices in place have been devised to meet the needs of the pupils within the school. An ethos of restorative justice and mediation exists to support behaviour and nurture relationships. As a result, pupils know they are listened to and have learnt how to consider the views of others. Leaders have placed a focus on supporting children to recognise and regulate their own emotions, to enhance their well-being and learning. Trained Year 5 and 6 'wellbeing champions' provide a range of calming activities during playtime for those seeking support. Further partnerships between older and younger year groups strengthen bonds and build a sense of community within this small school. School leaders have implemented robust systems to identify pupils who are going through difficult times, so that tailored support is offered promptly. Leaders create a culture where staff are listened to and supported, professionally and personally. Staff wellbeing is also prioritised by school leaders and governors. Leaders value the mental health of the whole school community and utilise available support to meet these needs as they arise. As a result of the strategies in place, wellbeing is enhanced and pupils and adults flourish.

Information

Address	Brantridge Lane, Staplefield, West Sussex, RH17 6EN		
Date	27 June 2025	URN	126015
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	101
Diocese	Chichester		
Headteacher	Laura Kelsey		
Chair of Governors	Denise Harber		
Inspector	Rosie Piper		