Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary the Virgin Church of England Primary School

Vision

Being the best we can be, in a thriving community, following the example of Jesus

St Mary the Virgin 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

- The Christian vision powerfully shapes decision making and relationships throughout the school community.
- Collective worship inspires deep reflection and strengthens pupils and adults' understanding of the values of love, strength and faith in daily life.
- Leaders and staff create a nurturing environment where pupils, including those with additional needs, flourish socially, emotionally and academically.
- The school's commitment to justice, responsibility and service encourages pupils to contribute positively to their community and the wider world.
- Religious education (RE) develops pupils' curiosity, confidence and respect for different beliefs and lived experiences.

Development Point

- Extend and deepen planned opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum. This is to enrich the way that pupils recognise and express how they are flourishing spiritually across all areas of learning.

Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The inspirational Christian vision shapes school life with clarity and purpose. Leaders have high expectations and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to members of the school community 'being the best they can be'. They communicate the vision consistently through the school's identified values of love, strength and faith. As a result, pupils understand how these values shape relationships, attitudes and behaviour and they live these out with integrity. Inspired by Jesus' example, pupils exemplify love as caring for others. They show strength by persevering through challenges and display faith by trusting themselves and others. Adults model these values with integrity each day. This creates warm, respectful relationships and strengthens pupils' confidence, resilience and emotional security. Leaders and governors evaluate the vision's impact rigorously and accurately. This sustains the school's strong Christian character and nurturing ethos. Regular visits and purposeful conversations give governors first-hand knowledge of the school community. Consequently, they support and challenge leaders with precision. They also maintain ambitious expectations for pupils' wellbeing, development and flourishing.

Vision and Curriculum

The curriculum reflects the school's vision because leaders prioritise both academic success and personal development. Pupils experience learning that nurtures confidence, curiosity and resilience. Music, drama and outdoor learning provide rich opportunities for them to discover their talents and develop independence. For example, pupils explain how performing poetry helps them express emotions confidently and understand different viewpoints. These experiences help them become reflective and enthusiastic learners. Teachers know pupils exceptionally well and adapt learning thoughtfully to meet individual needs. Sensory resources, nurture support and carefully planned interventions help them engage successfully with lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities therefore participate confidently in learning and wider school life. Calm classroom environments and trusted adult support reduce anxiety for vulnerable pupils, helping them feel secure, included and ready to learn. Leaders have developed a shared understanding of spirituality. Pupils discuss spirituality with increasing confidence. Reflection spaces and spirituality journals encourage thoughtful responses to awe, wonder and emotion. The school provides effective opportunities for spiritual reflection, but it has not yet embedded them consistently across all subjects. Therefore, the depth of pupils' spiritual development varies between different curriculum subjects.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is central to the school's spiritual life. It is engaging, inspirational and rooted in the Christian vision. Prayer, storytelling, singing, reflection and discussion engage pupils in an inclusive way. These help them connect worship meaningfully to daily life. The bespoke vision song reinforces love, strength and faith. As a result, pupils remember and apply these values naturally. Adults deepen pupils' understanding of Bible stories by relating them to everyday life. Therefore, pupils understand how Christian teaching shapes attitudes and actions. Reflection on Jesus washing the disciples' feet deepens understanding of humility and compassion. Similarly, the biblical story of the feeding of the five thousand prompts discussion about generosity, hope and community support. The school's partnership with the church is highly effective. Regular worship in church strengthens pupils' understanding of Christian traditions and belonging. Clergy and staff broaden pupils' spiritual experiences through facilitating reflection groups and lunchtime activities. This deepens pupils' confidence in understanding and discussing spirituality. Faith council members help lead worship reflection activities, developing leadership skills and encouraging responsibility within the school. Ultimately, pupils and adults flourish spiritually during worship in a profound way.

Vision and School Culture

The school's highly caring culture helps pupils and adults feel valued, respected and supported. Relationships are rooted in patience, compassion and mutual respect. Pupils see the school as a welcoming place where everyone

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belongs. Behaviour expectations link clearly to love, strength and faith. Therefore, pupils understand kindness, honesty and perseverance within a thriving community. Leaders prioritise emotional wellbeing through therapeutic approaches and consistent pastoral care. As a result, reflection areas, nurture spaces and lunchtime activities strengthen confidence and friendships. They also help pupils discuss worries openly. Pupils with additional needs benefit particularly from this personalised support. Adults respond quickly and sensitively to concerns. This enables pupils to participate fully and build strong relationships. Staff wellbeing is also valued through collaborative systems and supportive leadership. This reduces pressure and enhances teamwork. Therefore, adults feel respected and contribute positively to the community. Governors and church leaders further strengthen this nurturing culture through sustained involvement and pastoral support.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Underpinned by the Christian vision, the school helps pupils understand justice through practical action and meaningful learning. Leaders create opportunities to support others, protect the environment and contribute positively to society. Pupils learn that responsibility involves compassion, fairness and service. Projects on community and environmental issues connect learning to real life. Younger pupils learn to care for creation through planting and recycling. Older pupils explore conservation and cultural awareness. Supporting an elephant sanctuary in Kenya helps pupils learn about threats to wildlife and local communities. This deepens understanding of responsibility beyond their immediate surroundings and prompts thoughtful discussion about fairness and stewardship. The eco-committee leads environmental work with enthusiasm and promotes sustainable choices across the school. Pupils willingly join litter picking, planting and wildlife projects to improve their surroundings. They recognise that 'small differences can make a major impact in the future'. Pupils also serve the local community through choir performances and visits to elderly residents. These activities strengthen confidence, empathy and communication skills. Pupils develop a strong understanding of service, responsibility and belonging. They also consider how their choices nurture empathy and stewardship.

Religious Education

RE has a high profile because leaders recognise its importance within the school's Christian foundation. Carefully sequenced learning helps pupils develop knowledge and understanding progressively over time. Lessons encourage curiosity, thoughtful questioning and respectful discussion. This enables pupils to engage deeply with different beliefs and viewpoints. Drama, visits and practical activities help pupils explore complex ideas in accessible ways. For example, pupils compare celebrations of Diwali in India and the United Kingdom. This deepens their understanding that religious traditions can be expressed differently across communities and cultures. Pupils study Christianity alongside a range of religions and worldviews. Their learning broadens knowledge and nurtures respect for diversity. Visits from and discussions with faith representatives deepen understanding further because pupils encounter lived experiences directly. Adults receive high-quality training and development through the diocese and across the federation. This strengthens subject expertise and ensures effective provision.

The quality of RE is very strong. Teachers revisit key concepts regularly, enabling pupils to use religious vocabulary accurately and discuss ideas with increasing confidence. They use secure subject knowledge and skilful questioning to deepen pupils' thinking. Adults also encourage respectful dialogue about Christianity, other faiths and worldviews. This helps to challenge assumptions and extend thinking, enabling pupils to make thoughtful connections between beliefs, values and everyday life. As a result, pupils show curiosity, reflection and increasing maturity in their understanding of religion and belief. Teachers systematically use assessment to check understanding, inform teaching and identify clear next steps in pupils' learning.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	High Street, Hartfield, East Sussex TN7 4AA		
Date	18 May 2026	URN	114153
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	80
Diocese	Chichester		
Federation	Pioneer		
Executive Headteacher	James Procter		
Headteacher	Naomi Fry		
Chair of Governors	Alan Brundle		
Inspector	Andrew Wignal		