

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Thomas Church of England VA Primary School

Vision

God's love in action.

Through God's love in action, we are the rich soil in which roots grow and seeds flourish. Children are at the heart of everything we do through Christian values and relationships. Living and learning together we celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of our family. We nurture a sense of self belief, mutual respect and belonging through social emotional learning and academic excellence. We are dedicated to building the foundations for happy and successful life-long learning.

St Thomas Church of England VA 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.

Strengths

- Through exceptionally strong relationships, leaders ensure the Christian vision and values drive and permeate through the life of the school and its community. It is a place of flourishing.
- Tailored to the needs of pupils, the vision energised curriculum transforms their lives and those of their families.
- Collective worship is a daily highlight creating a strong unified worshipping community. It is underpinned by the vision and values which are enthusiastically embraced by the diverse school community.
- The school's vision promotes a culture of compassion, encouragement and respect for all. Pupils and adults are cherished for who they are. This enables the community to live well together.
- Due to the inclusive religious education (RE) curriculum, pupils blossom and thrive. This contributes significantly to their spiritual development.

Development Points

- Incorporate a clear understanding of spirituality across the school community. This is so pupils and staff are enabled to further embed, consider and express its impact on themselves and others.
- Support pupils in taking ownership of positive action that will empower them in becoming champions of social justice.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision is at the heart of the school's work. It is powerfully demonstrated in daily practice. Interwoven within relationships and behaviour are the school's values, secured and strengthened with key messages in Bible stories. Pupils and adults flourish because leaders understand their diverse community. A nurturing culture has been created in which pupils and adults are cherished for who they are. Trusting, steadfast and reciprocal relationships are key to the school's supportive environment. Leaders are resolute in their determination to support the wellbeing of the school community. Their conviction to live out the vision drives forward all aspects of their work, including challenging financial decision making such as funding the 'Magic Breakfast Club'. Enriched by close partnerships between school, church and trust, exceptionally enriching relationships enable the community to grow together. Parents and carers value this unified, inclusive school in whom they have great confidence.

Governors and trustees know the school well through their monitoring and evaluation. Leaders are motivated to maintain a journey of continuous school improvement. In-house training is enhanced by the diocese and trust. Leaders ensure support staff, as well as teachers, are enabled to access high quality professional development. As a result, both staff and pupils flourish.

Pupils enjoy learning, achieve well and thrive. The vision underpins the design of the curriculum because it provides opportunities for pupils to develop their self-belief and resilience. Innovative learning experiences relating to diversity, thoroughly engage pupils. They are relevant to the school and stimulate rich discussion. The use of events in history such as Windrush, enables pupils to think deeply about their own and other's experiences within their wider community. Staff know their pupils and provide a nurturing environment where pupils feel safe. Consequently, pupils grow in confidence and become enthusiastic learners who blossom. Pupils apply the vision to themselves and describe flourishing as 'pushing beyond the limits'. Pupils keenly express that within the school community 'we are different but we love one another and show respect for others' faiths'. They match these examples to the messages in Bible stories such as the good Samaritan.

Pupils show insight into the meaning of spirituality such as coming from, 'your soul' or 'things you can't touch'. These descriptions indicate that amongst some pupils, there is a developing understanding of what spirituality means. Currently there is limited understanding of spirituality or shared use of associated vocabulary. Identified opportunities within curriculum plans, to encourage a deeper understanding offered through subjects, have been developed. The impact of this growing. The highly valued and enthusiastic pastoral and special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) teams work tirelessly to support the wellbeing of pupils and each other. They continually reflect on provision and make effective use of outside agencies and specialist support services. Strategies are shared with the wider staff team. In this way individual pupil needs are met. Parents and carers recognise that staff go 'above and beyond' usual expectations and are appreciative.

School and trust leaders support staff wellbeing with an open culture of compassionate care. Regular 'check-ins' with staff are undertaken. Access to a counsellor is available if needed. Training and further qualifications are offered. Consequently, staff feel highly valued and morale is high. Robust yet sensitive relationships thread through the work of the school community. Built on trust and faith, restorative practices support pupils. This helps them to recognise and acknowledge their actions in a reassuring and dignified way. The school enjoys a well-established relationship with the church, which is on the same site. Alongside the school, the church provides support and advice responding to community needs. When needed the vicar provides encouragement and comfort.

Pupils demonstrate powerful voices in a range of leadership roles such as the 'Faith Group' or 'Anti-Bullying Ambassadors'. Conscientiously they articulate their responsibilities. They emphasise the inclusion of different



faiths and ethnic groups demonstrating how much they value individuals. Pupils have a very keen sense of justice. Their understanding of the causes they support and the impact of social action on others is in the early stages of development. Awareness of ethical issues is increasing. They express their concern for child labour in the production of cocoa in Ghana. Pupils understand the challenges of climate change and are keen to look after the planet. Their support for the use of sustainable materials linked to caring for the environment is strongly encouraged. This led to designing re-usable pencil holders from plastic bags. They considered the use of graffiti art as a means of 'calling out' the injustice of racism. Pupils have increasing awareness of the ways in which they are able challenge injustice and make a difference.

Whole school worship is intrinsic to the life of the school. All gathered are welcomed into prayer, reflection or stillness. Worship, often led by the church, is highly inclusive resulting in respectful sensitivity towards those of faith. School values rooted in carefully chosen Bible stories inspire spiritual growth. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the stories used to illustrate school value messages of love, trust, friendship and faith. They understand how these values make a difference to their lives. A pupil explained that faith is 'when I pray I know God is always with me'. Singing unifies and encompasses the school family. The impact of daily worship on the school community is profound. It is integral to the exploration and daily living out of the school's vision in the relationships within its community. Prayer spaces around school provide opportunities for prayer and reflection throughout the day keeping the vision alive in hearts and minds.

Pupils flourish in RE. It is well led, managed and resourced. Curriculum planning supports progression of learning across the school. The subject leader is proactive in seeking and sharing appropriate training from the diocese. Teachers stay up to date with strategies and resources. Pupils acquire substantial knowledge due to the carefully planned and sequential curriculum. Good progress is made including those pupils with SEND as reflected in pupils' workbooks and monitoring reports. Pupils encounter diversity of faith, belief and viewpoints in a safe and respectful environment. A range of religions and world views are explored. As a result, pupils demonstrate and are tolerant of each other's views. As a pupil remarked 'It gives us a better understanding of each other and prepares us for life.' Pupils gain an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith through their school links with Jamaica and from pupils with extended family in other countries. Their factual knowledge of different religions is noteworthy. Key Stage 1 talk confidently about different places of worship. Older pupils demonstrate that they have a clear understanding of the importance of learning about lots of religions and the impact it has on living well together. Pupils enjoy RE lessons because there is opportunity for discussion stimulated by 'big questions', deep thinking and reflection. They confidently express opinions. As a result, RE contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual development.

Information

Address	Great Colmore Street, Attwood Green, Birmingham B15 2AT		
Date	18 th November 2024	URN	142375
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	237
Diocese/District	Birmingham		
MAT/Federation	Fioretti Multi Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Sarah Williams		
Executive Headteacher	Charlotte Ward Lewis		
Chair of Governors	David Lyall		
Chair of Trust	Phillip Wood		
Inspector	Sally Kaminski-Gaze		