

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Halton

Vision

Inspire and grow a compassionate community of excellence.

'Do everything in love' 1 Corinthians 16 v 14.

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Halton 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

- The school's Christian vision is central to its work, inspiring pupils and staff to achieve their best while fostering a strong sense of being valued and supported.
- Leaders put the school's Christian vision into consistent action. They build a warm, welcoming environment where pupils and staff feel respected, supported, and encouraged to do their best.
- Pupils show genuine care and responsibility to others. They demonstrate a clear understanding of fairness and actively contribute to positive change within both the school and the wider community.
- The wellbeing of pupils is prioritised with thoughtful and compassionate support provided. This is particularly the case for those needing additional help, ensuring pupils feel nurtured and included.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum encourages pupils to engage thoughtfully. Important questions are considered, fostering deep reflection and meaningful exploration of values.

Development Points

- Develop a clear understanding of spirituality among pupils and adults, rooted in the school's Christian vision. Use this to deepen spiritual development across the curriculum and enhance the impact of collective worship.



Inspection Findings

St Mary's places its Christian vision at the heart of school life. The vision is rooted in the belief that pupils are made in God's image and are deeply loved. It shapes policies, relationships, and the learning environment. Pupils feel safe, nurtured, and valued. They explain how the vision guides their behaviour and decisions. Staff model Christian values like kindness and respect. Pupils respond by treating others with care and fairness. The school radiates warmth, joy, and love. It creates a place where you feel welcome and included. Leadership is visionary, compassionate, and deeply rooted in Christian values. Decisions prioritise inclusion, wellbeing, and flourishing. Governors offer clear challenge and support, holding the school accountable to its Christian foundation. Senior leaders inspire staff, promote innovation, and create space for growth. As a result, staff feel empowered, valued, and committed to modelling the vision.

The curriculum is exciting, ambitious, and full of opportunities for pupils to thrive. It is shaped by the Christian vision, which places great value on pupils as unique individuals. Learning is designed to help them grow in confidence, curiosity, creativity, and compassion. Teachers carefully plan lessons that spark interest and encourage pupils to ask thoughtful questions. Topics are meaningful and often link to real-life issues, helping them understand how they can make a positive difference in the world. Pupils learn to value themselves and others, to act with kindness, and to take responsibility. What pupils are learning helps them grow as independent thinkers, by nurturing both academic achievement and personal growth. The curriculum at St Mary's prepares pupils to flourish in life. It reflects a deep belief in the worth of individuals and a commitment to helping them grow with purpose and joy.

St Mary's is making progress in developing a shared understanding of spirituality rooted in its Christian vision. This understanding is increasingly shaping both collective worship and wider school life. In turn, collective worship reflects and reinforces the Christian vision. Leaders use worship intentionally to explore and nurture spirituality. They recognise its importance in personal development for pupils and adults. Collective worship provides space for reflection on identity, relationships, and the world. This is building awareness of life's spiritual dimension across the school community. Themes like love, justice, and kindness support reflection and connect Christian teaching to everyday life. Worship is inclusive and invitational, using music, prayer, silence, and storytelling. These elements offer meaningful opportunities for personal and shared reflection. Such experiences are building a growing sense of purpose, belonging, and spiritual development. The local church contributes actively to worship and supports Christian distinctiveness. Its involvement enriches the theological depth of worship. As a result, collective worship has greater impact across the school. The school is beginning to embed spirituality more widely in the curriculum. It is a priority for development and improvement. Leaders are committed to making spiritual growth central to school life.

The school prioritises wellbeing focusing on supporting emotional health alongside academic learning. Care is taken to provide extra help for those who face difficulties, through dedicated support and strong partnerships with families. Inspired by Christian values, the school community works together to create a positive and encouraging environment where staff and pupils alike have the opportunity to grow and succeed. Pupils express a genuine love for their school, shown in their positive attitudes and respectful behaviour. This is also clear in the way they interact with each other and the wider community. They embody the school's vision in their daily action, showing kindness, compassion, and a strong sense of responsibility. Pupils demonstrate pride in belonging to a community where values are lived, not just taught. Their behaviour reflects a deep understanding of the school's ethos and a



commitment to making it a nurturing and inclusive place. Adults also feel respected and encouraged. The introduction of a staff wellbeing charter has strengthened a culture of trust, recognition, and mutual support. Leaders take proactive steps to manage staff workload and emotional health, ensuring they feel heard and appreciated.

Pupils understand love as something lived out through action and see justice not as optional, but as a vital expression of the school's Christian vision. They are inspired to care, advocate, and lead by example, knowing that their voices and actions can make a meaningful difference. Pupils often lead charity projects and join in campaigns that help others. They carefully collect gifts and buy items for local people going through hard times, especially during special or difficult moments. These acts of generosity are rooted in empathy, dignity, and a genuine desire to serve others. Through such experiences, pupils grow in moral courage and social awareness, reflecting deeply on both local and global issues. They speak with maturity and compassion about fairness, equity, and hope. Staff consistently model ethical leadership and moral responsibility, nurturing an environment where thoughtful discussion and courageous action are encouraged. As a result, pupils are developing as brave and compassionate citizens. They live out the school's Christian vision with integrity and a deep commitment to building a more just and loving world.

RE is an important and successful part of the wider curriculum. It offers a rich and meaningful experience from the very beginning. The curriculum also promotes respect for a wide range of worldviews and diverse religious beliefs. It enables pupils to engage in lively discussions and imaginative tasks, confidently asking big questions about life, faith, and values. This supports strong religious literacy, enabling pupils to articulate theological and philosophical ideas with clarity and confidence. The RE curriculum nurtures empathy, compassion, and respect, aligning with the school's Christian vision and enriching pupils' character and spiritual growth.

Assessment in RE is thorough and purposeful, helping teachers to evaluate and monitor pupils' understanding and progress effectively. They make clear progress in religious education, developing their knowledge, understanding, and ability to reflect on religious and spiritual concepts. This ensures that learning builds cumulatively, with pupils developing a deeper knowledge and stronger skills over time. Lessons are creative and thought provoking, encouraging pupils to explore Christian concepts with curiosity and deep reflection. Pupils take pride in their work, which is presented to a high standard, reflecting their engagement and respect for the subject. Overall, RE makes a significant contribution to the school's Christian vision by helping pupils to flourish academically, morally, and socially.

Information

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| Address | Castlefields Avenue South, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2NR | | |
| Date | 20 June 2025 | URN | 150879 |
| Type of school | Academy | No. of pupils | 184 |
| Diocese | Chester | | |
| MAT/Federation | Chester Diocese Academy Trust | | |
| Headteacher | Rachel Tainsh | | |
| Chair of Governors | Theresa Worrall | | |
| Chair of MAT | Neil Dixon | | |
| Inspector | Karen Collett | | |