Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St James Church of England VA Primary School

Vision

We believe that every child is made in the image of God; inherently valuable and unique. Jesus is the light of the world and God has placed the light of the Holy Spirit within each of us: Let your light shine to reach your God-given potential. Let your light shine courageously. Let your light shine as a beacon of hope. Let your light shine ~ be the best that we can be!

Matthew 5:16

St James 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.

Notable Strengths

- St James is rooted in an inspiring Christian vision. It underpins the work of leaders, adults and pupils alike. The call to 'shine like a light' inspires enthusiasm for learning and a determination to live well together.
- The school's vision for all to shine drives extensive provision for pupils' wellbeing and mental health. Targeted support ensures that pupils are cared for and thrive as they grow in self-confidence.
- The vision encourages pupils to take a range of opportunities to take responsibility in a range of ways. Effective partnerships, both locally and further afield, help pupils develop as thoughtful members of the school community. This growing sense of responsibility inspires them to take a stand against injustice.
- Inclusive collective worship inspires reflection and response, promoting spiritual growth. Well-considered planning reflects the school's vision and values, fostering a shared sense of purpose for pupils and adults.
- Religious education (RE) is enhanced by strong leadership and ongoing professional development for teachers. A challenging curriculum promotes critical thinking as pupils explore concepts in depth. As a result, their outcomes in RE are improving.

Development Points

- Broaden pupils' understanding of Christianity by exploring a wider range of global beliefs. This is to strengthen their appreciation of the diversity of Christian practice around the world.

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Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision to 'let your light shine' is securely embedded in the life of the school. As a result, pupils confidently articulate the strapline and appreciate its biblical significance. Leaders regularly review the impact of the vision, with governors contributing to this process. It informs policies and decision-making, encouraging pupils to thrive as they try to 'be the best that they can be'. It also guides their behaviour and attitudes towards others. Consequently, they show respect, kindness and practise forgiveness in their daily relationships. Adults' strong commitment to inclusion reflects the belief that pupils are valued and unique. As a result, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are seen and cherished. This inclusive approach enables pupils to develop and use their gifts. A productive partnership with the local church strengthens the impact of the vision. Pupils benefit from opportunities to lead worship in school and in the church on special Sundays. This fosters special relationships within the wider community. The vision is also reflected in a range of pupil leadership roles. As a result, they show care and compassion for others as they live out the call to be beacons of hope.

Vision and Curriculum

Leaders have created a challenging and imaginative curriculum for pupils with a range of strengths and needs. Activities that widen their horizons engage them and extend their learning. The curriculum offers rich opportunities for spiritual exploration. Pupils speak openly about their spiritual growth, which is also nurtured through a varied programme of extra-curricular activities. Staff plan regular moments of reflection that allow pupils to express their own thoughts and beliefs. For example, an investigation into the Holocaust encourages them to challenge prejudice and value difference. Those who are considered vulnerable receive sensitive support through a nurturing start to the day. The school's partnership with a counselling service helps pupils build confidence as they engage in lessons. Together, these approaches reflect the vision's commitment to equity and help pupils work towards their God-given potential. During social times, they are encouraged to be creative and active in the extensive school grounds. Creative play gives pupils opportunities to develop trust in one another and strengthen their character.

Worship and Spirituality

Inclusive collective worship is a valued part of each day. A close collaboration with the diocese supports effective planning. For example, exploring biblical stories in chronological order helps pupils understand the sequence of events across the Old and New Testaments. The regular use of the biblical imagery of a city on a hill, alongside the call to let your light shine, reinforces the school's vision and pupils' sense of belonging. Time for contemplation and response encourages deep spiritual growth. Staff recognise that stillness develops the participants strengthening sense of unity as one body. Pupil worship ambassadors help create a reflective atmosphere using candles and music. They also contribute to the evaluation of worship, suggesting imaginative ways to improve it. A strong link with the local clergy enables pupils to participate in the Eucharist in an inclusive and invitational setting. Through this involvement, they speak enthusiastically about the significance of belonging and being valued. Engagement with the church introduces pupils to various worship traditions and styles, broadening their spiritual flourishing.

Vision and School Culture

A culture of love and care at St James supports the wellbeing of pupils and adults. Practices and policies are closely aligned with the vision, supporting their personal development and empathy. Parents praise staff for their commitment to recognising and responding to pupil's needs. This sensitive approach reflects the belief that each child is made in the image of God. Staff also praise leaders for their kindness and compassion during challenging times. Their mental health is also supported through visits from the local clergy and members of the governing body. A theme day raises awareness of the importance of mental health. Pupil groups select library books that promote self-worth and wellbeing. Together, these initiatives help pupils and adults to flourish, reflecting the vision for all to shine. Leaders prioritise equity for those with the greatest needs. This targeted provision enables these pupils to participate alongside their peers in an atmosphere of joy and respect. Peer volunteers demonstrate empathy in their roles as digital leaders, helping others stay safe online. An indoor den and outdoor areas for stillness provide further evidence of the school's commitment to pupils'

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emotional and social wellbeing. Together, these approaches help them to develop the resilience to flourish beyond the classroom.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

As pupils live out the vision to shine courageously, they recognise the importance of taking responsibility. Learning and worship encourage them to reflect on moral and ethical issues and consider how they should respond. Pupils value sharing their views in debates across a range of lessons. For example, a pupil-led environment group challenges adults to consider the impact of excessive plastic use. As a result, the school has introduced measures to significantly reduce waste. Pupils also explore social injustice in their local community. In response, they organise a sponsored event to raise funds for a local foodbank. Through a partnership with a school in Uganda, pupils explore barriers that prevent some children from attending school. They also contribute financially to help them access education. This also encourages pupils to explore deeper questions around inequality. They use their gifts to shine by visiting a local care home, sharing stories and singing with residents. These visits strengthen relationships between generations.

Religious Education

Insightful leadership has ensured that RE has a high profile on the school timetable. A well-sequenced curriculum deepens pupils' understanding of key concepts by building on prior learning. The curriculum balances the study of Christianity with a range of religions and worldviews. This breadth of study prompts discussion and enables pupils to compare beliefs and practices. Lessons built around challenging questions promote enquiry as they reflect on their own beliefs. Pupils talk enthusiastically about a visit to a mandir. This informs creative follow-up activities in which they explore Hindu beliefs, meanings and cultural practices. Governors regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of RE teaching. Guidance from the diocese encourages new approaches and helps keep the curriculum relevant and engaging. Despite detailed teaching about the Christian faith, there are limited opportunities to explore diverse Christian communities around the world. As a result, pupils' appreciation of the breadth of Christian belief and practice remains limited.

Pupils' work provides evidence of strong progress in RE. Stretch questions encourage them to explore concepts in greater depth and extend their learning. Teachers use assessment strategies effectively to identify areas for improvement. The information gathered also informs their planning of future study. Planned moments of reflection encourage pupils to express their own beliefs both orally and in writing. These activities build pupils' confidence and encourage them to enquire further. Parents receive regular feedback on RE, as they do for other core subjects. This communication reflects the importance the school places on RE.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	Kingsway, Wollaston, West Midlands. DY8 4RU		
Date	15 October 2026	URN	103851
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	411
Diocese	Worcester		
Headteacher	Natalie Sefton		
Chair of Governors	Lee Salton-McLaughlin		
Inspector	Keith Farquhar		

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