



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School	
Address	Meadow Lane, Oxford, OX4 1TJ

School vision
<p>'Let all that you do be done in love.' (1 Corinthians 16: 14)</p> <p>As a Church of England Primary School, we are committed to making St Mary & St John an inclusive environment, fostering curiosity, spirituality, creativity and respect. At our school we want everyone to feel valued, to explore the joy of learning, and to be the best that we can be.</p>

School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deeply embedded vision is woven into the life of the school like a golden thread. This draws together a successful and harmonious community. Leaders consistently live out the Christian vision as role models to everyone. • As a highly inclusive and diverse school, the uniqueness of the individual is valued and nurtured. A varied curriculum empowers pupils to tackle issues of inequality and to become advocates for change locally and internationally. • Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspires pupils and adults to live out the vision. People make explicit links between their actions, and the teachings of Jesus, and the Bible. This makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of those present in worship. • Pupils considered to be vulnerable are supported effectively. Wellbeing and good mental health are prioritised within a culture of inclusion and support which are paramount to leaders. • High quality religious education (RE) is a strength of the school. Dedicated leaders have developed a rich curriculum that challenges thinking and ensures that pupils ask and answer questions about religions and worldviews.

Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop more systematic monitoring by governors. This is to ensure that all leaders have a clear understanding of the impact of the Christian vision on pupils and adults. • Enhance the assessment of religious education so that teachers and leaders know how well pupils are progressing in RE from their starting points.

Inspection findings
<p>Leaders have crafted an inclusive vision which embraces the diverse community within the love of God. Pupils and adults are confident that leaders live out the vision for the good of everyone. There is a palpable sense of community at St Mary and St John, which is harnessed by leaders to great effect. Members of the diverse community are welcomed and included fully in the life of the school. Through their actions, school leaders live out the Christian vision as witnesses of Jesus' inclusive nature to love everyone. Leaders, including governors, make strategic decisions based upon the</p>

vision. The recent expansion to welcome reception pupils and staff from a different site exemplifies the vision. Consequently, leaders are faithful to the school's foundation. The transition and induction of staff is managed with love. Time to explore the Christian vision and how this drives policy and procedure is prioritised for new staff. People strive to be the best that they can be. This ensures that they flourish academically, socially and spiritually, because all is done in love. Recent changes to the structure of governance do not enable governors to robustly monitor the impact of the vision effectively enough. Leaders utilise support from the diocese to develop the school as a Church school. For example, expert training for RE, pastoral support for leaders and practical guidance for recent changes to buildings.

Curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities are grown from the desire to foster curiosity. Pupils are empowered to ask and answer many questions across the curriculum. They confidently explore the joy of learning in many subjects. Leaders have woven the vision and associated values within curriculum planning. This makes a significant contribution to the teachers' depth of understanding regarding the ambition of the vision. For example, in phonics lessons younger pupils are encouraged to persevere, as teachers are ambitious for all. A shared understanding of spirituality among staff is harnessed skillfully in planned and spontaneous opportunities across subjects for spiritual growth. Moments of wondering and curiosity are greatly encouraged, resulting in pupils taking regular opportunities to ask questions and ponder their answers. A common language is used by staff to enable pupils to explore a sense of meaning and purpose. For example, a diocesan contemplative toolkit, 'Space Makers', is being embedded to further strengthen experiences of spiritual growth.

Acts of collective worship are known as celebration assemblies. This decision ensures that acts of worship are inclusive. People rightly identify it as the heartbeat of the school. Each day begins with the joining together of the school to explore the vision. A strong partnership with the parish church enriches school life as clergy lead invitational and prayerful initiatives. Worship is planned to reflect the church calendar and local Anglican traditions. Pupils are regularly engaged in leading and evaluating the impact of worship. This leads to improvements, for example, enabling pupils to write prayers and poems focused on the vision. The diverse community is celebrated within worship. A variety of festivals from world religions are incorporated into the worship programme. Leaders skillfully build connections between religious festivals and the school's Christian vision. For example, linking Diwali to the Christian concept of light. Worship inspires people to help each other when times are hard. Leaders enable pupils to link their actions to Jesus' parables, such as the Good Samaritan. They grow spiritually throughout the rich worship life of the school. Pupils have an impressive knowledge of Bible stories and make relevant links between the parables and how they live. People are offered comfortable places to take time out for prayer and reflection. Quiet spaces within classrooms are utilised by pupils. Staff have access to a room for their spiritual growth, reflection and prayer.

People feel safe and are well treated at St Mary and St John. Parents rightly attribute this to the inclusive Christian vision and culture of love. Strategies for wellbeing and good mental health contribute to the emotional flourishing of people. Provision for staff wellbeing is highly effective and aids a tangible sense of teamwork. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well nurtured because of dedicated and expertly trained staff. Refugee families are blanketed in love. A group of Ukrainian pupils meet to share their interests, language and heritage within school. Consequently, they feel rightly appreciated. Staff know families well and a culture of trust permeates the outworking of pastoral support. Bullying is very rare and tackled robustly by clear policies built on reconciliation and forgiveness. The result is a harmonious school where pupils behave exceptionally well.

The inclusive nature of the Christian vision ensures that relationships are fostered and built on love. There is a strong culture of taking responsibility for self and others. Issues of injustice and inequality

are sensitively addressed because policies and procedures are written to be inclusive of everyone. Consequently, pupils are aware of differences and similarities among the community and learn to appreciate one another. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum offers plentiful opportunities to explore environmental issues. For example, the junior leadership team have campaigned to support a local organisation that tackles river pollution. Collective worship is used to highlight and inspire pupils to undertake projects beyond the school. This demonstrates the outworking of the vision very well. Local issues relating to traffic and safe travel are championed by pupils through initiatives such as 'School Streets'. As enthusiastic advocates for change, pupils are living out the vision.

Religious education (RE) has a high profile across the school. The curriculum is developed by skilled leaders who are enthusiastic about the subject. The Christian vision is woven throughout planning and within lessons which reinforces a sense of curiosity about religions and worldviews. The curriculum offers pupils a wide variety of opportunities to study world religions and worldview in depth. The curriculum is challenging and well-sequenced, ensuring that it is relevant to the pupils' experiences. Diocesan support and training are utilised to enhance RE provision. Pupils enjoy RE lessons as they are challenged to think and reflect on big questions. Lessons support the exploration of the vision as opportunities to reflect on learning and ask 'I wonder' questions, to foster curiosity. Those from a faith background feel valued when invited to share their personal stories and experiences with the class.

The regular monitoring of RE is robust and thorough. Lesson observations, pupil interviews and work scrutiny contribute effectively to this system. Consequently, teachers are well equipped, and lessons are well resourced. Evidence supports the school's evaluation that teaching and learning in RE is highly effective. An assessment system is placed to review achievement at the end of each unit of work. However, this is not drawn together by leaders to inform teaching and learning over time. Work in RE books shows that pupils take pride in their learning. This work is of a high quality and shows that pupils progress in their learning because of a rich curriculum.

The inspection findings indicate that St Mary and St John Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	6 November 2023	URN	123213
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	387
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Rebekah Stott		
Chair	Sarah Franklin		
Inspector	Toby Long	No.	896