

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John's Church of England Primary School

Vision

St John's is a church school with God at its centre. The school vision seeks to transform the lives of our community through a collective understanding that we are all:

Loved by God, Learning with Jesus, Living by the Spirit

Loved by God (John 3:16), Learning with Jesus (Matthew 7:24), Living by the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

St John's 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 school's Christian vision motivates and inspires leaders at all levels. It is the driving force of action and policy, creating an aspirational and supportive community founded on God's love.
- The vision has inspired a curriculum for holistic flourishing, built around themes of enquiry, diversity and possibility. It supports pupils to aspire to be the best that they can be culturally, spiritually and socially.
- Teaching and learning in religious education (RE) is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy the subject and make very good progress. As a result, they are reflective and thoughtful learners, grasping complex concepts and able to compare, contrast and evaluate ideas.
- Fulfilling the vision's aim to live by the Spirit, compassion lies at the heart of leaders' responses to need. Those in the school community feel known, accepted and cared for.
- Collective worship is a valued time of gathering, togetherness, inspiration and reflection. Supported by positive relationships with the local church, adults and pupils are given the opportunity to grow spiritually during this time.

Development Points

- Further develop opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in response to issues of injustice. This is to promote an understanding of themselves as agents of change who can make a difference in the world.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Leaders have established a clear Christian vision for St John's School. Its three elements create a strong foundation for learning, living and relationships in this aspirational community. As a result, pupils and staff, secure in their acceptance and value, strive for excellence and care for one another. The school provides a range of professional development opportunities for staff. Through coaching and mentoring, they, along with pupils, are 'Learning with Jesus', seeking wisdom and putting into practice what they hear. Governors are inspired by the vision and pray for the work of the school. They support and challenge leaders through meetings, monitoring and policy development. Leaders have an unswerving commitment to the vision's aims. They apply this ethos to the development of this Church school, its learners, families and staff. Supportive relationships with the local church, further enable the impact of the vision's effectiveness.

Vision and Curriculum

Using Jesus as a model of excellence, leaders have devised a curriculum that reflects the school's vision. They want pupils to be their very best, valued and unique, striving in their learning, compassionate and generous in their relationships. As a result, they are rounded individuals academically, creatively, spiritually and socially. Their flourishing is clearly evident, and this is recognised at a national level. Bespoke provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to be the best that they can be. This can include the provision of safe spaces for those who need to withdraw, for example. The school has a clear approach to spirituality, that runs through the curriculum design. Here, big questions are asked and possibilities explored. Consequently, pupils honour the individuality of each person's ideas and celebrate what is deeply personal. Sporting, musical and spiritual activities are promoted in the wider curriculum including a Rock Solid club and Church school council. Pupils are enabled to explore their sense of self, others and the world. This pursuit of holistic flourishing fulfils the vision's aim of developing the whole child.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is an important and valued time of togetherness for the school community. Using liturgy and symbol, prayer, reflection, song, story and drama, diversity of spiritual expression is experienced. Adults value the space and time to pause and reflect. Pupils see this as a time to get ready for the day and a reminder to centre their thoughts and actions around the vision and Christian values. Parents report the impact of worship in pupils' daily lives as they see them being generous, caring and understanding. Supported effectively by church partners and the school chaplain, pupils can grow spiritually in this space. They are aware of the Christian teaching that God loves them and that He is with them. Some find consolation in difficult times. Those who are worship leaders, grow in confidence as they help the school to worship. Provision has been made in each classroom for a prayer and reflection space which enables spiritual growth. Leaders' monitoring of collective worship and the use of pupils' opinions leads to improvement. For example, monitoring has ensured consistency across the times of worship during the week.

Vision and School Culture

The Christian vision positively impacts the culture of the school. The understanding that each person is unique and loved by God motivates a profound appreciation of one another. Consequently, relationships between pupils are good, characterised by generosity of spirit. They understand the needs of others and want to help them to be the best that they can be. People are treated with respect and dignity. The staff show compassion for the vulnerable and those having difficult times. The wellbeing of both pupils and adults is prioritised. Families experiencing difficult times receive support which contributes to alleviating pressure and helps them steer their way through problems. Trained mental health staff offer support to those with issues such as self-confidence or anxiety. A parent prayer group is welcomed into the school weekly to pray for the needs of the whole community. The genuine concern of leaders for each individual and their open-door policy enhances this sense of compassion. Pupils with additional or complex needs are nurtured and cared for as individuals. In finding ways to support families during times of difficulty, the school is living out its distinctive Christian vision. The vision is appreciated by the community as, not just a motto, but a way of living.



Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Driven by the school's vision, that the Spirit enables Christ-like living, leaders help pupils to relate to and interact with issues of injustice. Through topic work, pupils become passionate about global problems, such as the use of palm oil or building on green spaces. They write letters of protest to prominent figures as part of the curriculum. Pupils support charities which are meaningful to the school community. At harvest time, donations to a local food bank are encouraged. Pupils appreciate that they can act responsibly, help and give. Most responses have been spearheaded by teachers and enthusiastically embraced by the community. There is less evidence of pupil initiative in this area. Although, work with the chaplain, helping them to understand and react to the difficulties of the persecuted church, has begun. Empowering pupils themselves to become agents of change is currently in its early stages. A wide range of leadership opportunities, such as the school council, gives class representatives a chance to develop responsibility. For many, this has positively impacted on their levels of self-confidence.

Religious Education

RE is treated as a core subject in the school. It has a high priority and is well-resourced. The curriculum is well-sequenced and diverse. Christianity, a range of faiths and worldviews are studied. Using a balance of disciplines, the curriculum focuses on beliefs, big questions and thinking about the impact of faith on life. It is well-sequenced so that knowledge and skills develop over time. Leaders, in partnership with the diocese, ensure that teachers' training is regularly updated through regular high-quality professional development. Consequently, the effectiveness of the curriculum is good.

Teaching in RE is highly effective. Pupils enjoy the subject, recalling and applying their learning with dexterity and they make good progress. They can take themes, such as pilgrimage, and compare them across different faiths and cultures. Pupils understand what motivates and inspires believers of different faiths to live and worship. Assessment systems enable staff to effectively track progress across the range of disciplines. Younger pupils can recall important stories, such as the birth of Jesus, whilst older ones can discuss more complex theological concepts, for example, the Trinity. Consequently, teaching and learning in RE at St John's School fulfils the vision's aim of 'Learning with Jesus'.

Information

Address	Victory Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. IP4 4LE		
Date	24 September 2025	URN	124781
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	211
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich		
Headteacher	Janita Betts		
Chair of Governors	Stephanie Thorne		
Inspector	Jane Trampnow		