

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy			
Address	Cundy Street, Sheffield. S6 2WJ		
Date of inspection	5 March 2020	Status of school	Academy inspected as Voluntary Aided. The Diocese of Sheffield Academies Trust
Diocese / Methodist District	Sheffield	URN	140341

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	The impact of collective worship	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### School context

St Mary's is a primary school with 211 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a significant number from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The school has gone through significant changes in leadership during the last 12 months following a long period of staff stability.

### The school's Christian vision

Inspired by our faith in Christ, and together with our parents, carers, churches and communities, we aim for all children to reach their full potential in body, mind, heart and spirit, providing a welcoming, safe and happy school where everyone is respected and children become confident and successful learners.  
"Life to the full"(John 10:10) "Press on to the goal"(Phil 3:14) "Build people up" (1Thess 5:11)

### Key findings

- The deeply embedded Christian vision, which is embraced and developed by leaders, shapes and informs aspects of school life and provides motivation for the whole school community.
- The vision for living life to the full and developing confident and successful learners underpins the school curriculum. Religious Education (RE) permeates the whole curriculum, leading to a deepening of pupil's spiritual understanding.
- Christian values including love, respect and care have an extremely strong impact on pupils' exemplary behaviour. Pupils demonstrate these values through their valuable contribution to the leadership and development of the school.
- The positive outworking of the school's Christian vision is the inclusive, proactive and nurturing pastoral support which benefits the entire school community and beyond.
- Collective worship is inclusive and central to the daily life of the school. As a result, pupils have a strong understanding of prayer and learn to use time for reflection exceptionally well.

### Areas for development

- Share the school's highly effective practice beyond the school in order to support other schools in the diocese.
- Further develop the highly valued global links so that pupils extend their experiences and knowledge.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### **Inspection findings**

'Excellence through faith and learning' is understood by the school community to sum up the vision and the aspirations of the community. Underpinned by a carefully crafted theological rationale, leaders and pupils are passionately committed to building a loving, caring and inclusive community. The school family work together to give every child learning experiences of the highest possible quality. The distinctively Christian vision is well-embedded and rooted explicitly in theology. Governors and school leaders clearly articulate and demonstrate how all key decisions, processes and policies radiate from their shared Christian vision. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the biblical roots of the vision. The Christian vision effectively underpins planning for RE and personal, social, health and citizenship education. Inclusiveness, love, respect, care and compassion for the schools and the community it serves, ensure its Christian vision and values are highly effective, appreciated and make a difference to people's lives. All members of the school community know each other really well and speak fondly of events in life where they have felt truly supported.

Having high aspirations is fundamental to school improvement, as is raising self-esteem. Building resilience, to equip all to 'Press on to the goal,' is seen by leaders as key to a healthy life and mental wellbeing. It is fundamental in the drive to improve standards. The school family have access to support so that positive learning experiences can be enjoyed by all. The wellbeing of all is a priority across school and executed to the highest standard. This is clearly and effectively underpinned by the embedded Christian vision of 'building each other up'. To support this, pupils and adults embrace and appreciate many partnerships by working with other schools with a 'common aim'.

The curriculum is crafted round the school's Christian vision, 'living life to its fullness', and national expectations for each year group. The recent reordering of classes into single year groups has enhanced its effectiveness. Pupils identified as vulnerable are given exceptional support enhanced by careful tracking which ensures they achieve their full potential. This has resulted in progress measures for all pupils being good or better. Much work has been done by the RE curriculum leader to ensure curriculum content is progressive and encourages deep thinking and debate. Progress in RE is carefully tracked and the subject is effectively monitored regularly by leaders. The adoption of the Discovery RE syllabus, enhanced by the 'Understanding Christianity' resource, for RE has ensured prior learning is systematically built upon. Pupils refer to times when their learning about other faiths has helped them to understand how other people feel and see things from different perspectives. This has resulted in the whole community showing immense understanding and care for each other. Planning for RE is extremely effective and ensures that pupils are challenged to think profoundly and consider other viewpoints. Theological discussion is deep and thought provoking. Pupils and the curriculum leader are passionate about RE. All class teachers confidently deliver progressive, interesting and effective lessons. Pupils are regularly challenged to answer life's 'big' questions. Pupils show maturity in their fearless questioning and profound responses. Pupils' Bible knowledge, their understanding of different faiths and other viewpoints is impressive.

Through the loving and extremely well-coordinated approach to meeting the needs of all pupils, the Christian values and inclusive practices ensure diversity is understood and embraced by all. A parent of a past pupil says 'Once a member of St Mary's school you are always a member of the school family'. Leaders speak of themselves as being 'torch bearers' within the community. Past pupils still refer to 'our school'. Before and after school care provision prioritises social action projects, including making food donations to local projects.

Pupils' contribution to the leadership of the school is excellent. One example is the CREW council. Their highly effective role in school is to develop RE and collective worship further. Collective worship is regularly written and led by the pupils. The council raise money to send a child in another country to school and have identified and working on other projects. They, along with other leaders, carefully evaluate the impact of projects. These evaluations have led to developments, for example the inclusion of less traditional worship songs. Singing creates a wonderful atmosphere which engages everyone and was beautiful. An important aspect of the highly effective school improvement strategy is the carefully planned collective worship. This links directly to the school's Christian vision of 'Excellence through faith in action'. Leaders plan meticulously, ensuring that worship provides a rich range of opportunities for all. Christian themes are at the core of

collective worship with global themes featuring regularly. This ensures that the area to improve from the last inspection has been fully addressed. Daily prayer and reflection are prioritised and important to all. Pupils make mature comparison to texts and traditions from other religions and cultures. Spiritual growth naturally develops across the entire school community through conversation, debate and prayer.

School enjoys strong partnerships including the multi-academy trust, the triad of local schools and the diocese. These partnerships have supported rapid school improvement. The RE curriculum leader has a significant impact on the Christian distinctiveness and quality of RE. Practice is driven by the vision. However, this excellent practice is not at present shared with other schools, particularly those serving multi-faith communities. School has benefited greatly from its well established and close links with St Mary's church and the local community. The highly valued parents' prayer group supports the distinctive Christian mission of the school. School worships in church at key points in the liturgical calendar. Families value these opportunities to join together to pray and praise God. A tangible sense of love and care for each other runs throughout the school and spills out into the community around it. There is a real sense of everyone being part of a family where no-one is isolated and everyone belongs.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in this nurturing environment. The vision for a welcoming and happy school ensures that any who struggle are nurtured and loved by staff and peers, reflecting their shared Christian values. Attendance is sympathetically managed. Staff rigorously, but sensitively, track and follow up absences resulting in overall attendance being around the national average. All pupils have access to areas where they can find support. They know that they will be given space and strategies to help them to work through their feelings with someone they trust, resulting in them feeling more resilient. Christian values form the foundation of the school. As a result, many pupils form strong lifelong relationships and think deeply about faith.



#### **The effectiveness of RE is Excellent**

Leaders ensure that the teaching of RE is of high quality and impacts on learning. As a result of the quality of lessons pupils are excited by, make excellent progress in and love RE. Monitoring and assessment is robust and implemented consistently across school. Careful tracking demonstrates the way pupils make significant developments in understanding within each unit. Progress is at least as good but for the majority of pupils is better.

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