

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Saint Nicholas Church of England Primary School and Nursery

Vision

Learning, Loving, Living in God's Family

'But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love forever and ever.' Psalm 52:8

Saint Nicholas Church of England Primary School and Nursery 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 Christian vision drives the work of the school, enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Both pupils and adults speak about its profound impact, highlighting how it creates an environment where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.
- The vision shapes a culture of inclusion where the school community is valued, treated with dignity and shown respect. Pupils, staff, and the wider community feel welcomed, safe, and accepted within the school.
- Strong and effective partnerships with the diocese, the local church, governors, and a range of external agencies enhance the school's expertise and actively support the development of both pupils and staff.
- The school's daily collective worship is inspiring and firmly rooted in its Anglican foundation. It is Christian in focus and character. It enables both pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. Invitational and inclusive, it is structured around a pattern that the pupils are familiar with.
- The RE curriculum is thoughtfully sequenced and relevant. It enables pupils to appreciate and understand a range of faiths, including Christianity, as well as different worldviews, promoting respect, tolerance, and empathy toward others.

Development Points

- Integrate opportunities for spiritual development into the curriculum in order to foster deeper and more meaningful spiritual growth in pupils.
- Build on pupils' strong sense of fairness by developing an understanding of the biblical foundations of justice. This is so that they can develop an awareness of both their own rights and the rights of others, enabling them to make age-appropriate ethical decisions.
- Strengthen leadership of RE. This is to ensure that there is sufficient capacity for the ongoing and strategic development of the subject.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision inspires and guides the work of this supportive, inclusive Church school. Despite key changes in staffing and governance, the school's vision has consistently remained central to its work and decision-making. Clearly defined governor roles and responsibilities ensure that there is regular and useful evaluation of the school's effectiveness as a Church school. They provide strong support for leaders in sustaining its Christian distinctiveness. Pupils, parents, and staff experience the school as a close-knit community where they feel genuinely welcomed, safe and valued. This builds a foundation of trust that empowers the school to address challenges and help individuals overcome barriers to their thriving. The school's expertise and provision are enriched by strong, purposeful connections with the local church, the diocese, governors, and relevant external agencies.

Daily collective worship offers a meaningful opportunity to pause, reflect, and come together in a shared experience. Strong links between the school and the local church result in worship that is carefully structured to reflect both the Anglican calendar and the school's vision. The invitational and varied nature of worship strengthens the sense of community, with leaders ensuring that learners who are vulnerable and those with additional needs are fully included. Pupils value these moments, recognising when to approach them with quiet reverence and when to join in with joyful celebration. The words of the school prayers and church liturgy are well known and understood by the school community. Aligned with the school's ethos, shared prayers punctuate the day, taking place each morning, lunchtime, and at the end. Collective worship holds a significant place in nursery and reception, where school and church leaders deliver sessions tailored to both age and understanding. Parents enjoy being included in the school's worship services in church. Recent developments have further strengthened the central role of worship in the life of the school. These include blessing each area of the building with holy water on St Nicholas day and holding a leavers' service. During this important time, Year 6 leavers receive a Bible-focused gift, in one year for example, a Bible and a cross. Parents' involvement in worship services fosters a stronger relationship between the school and families, enabling opportunities for spiritual development. Collective worship provides an opportunity for both pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.

Led by the vision and context, the curriculum is designed to enable learners to flourish. The wide range of creative opportunities, external speakers, educational visits and extracurricular clubs allow pupils to discover and develop their talents. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' success. Opportunities for spiritual development are woven into the school calendar. Activities such as participating in the stations of the cross, within the school's wooded area, provide key moments of spiritual reflection for both pupils and staff. Learners contributed to an olive tree by writing personal reflections about how they flourish on blossom-shaped notes, deepening their opportunities for reflection. Additional reflection spaces have been created throughout the school to encourage pupils to be still and calm. However, although pupils are able to access these areas during break and lunchtime, they are not used purposefully. At present, curriculum planning does not clearly identify opportunities to promote spiritual development across subject areas, leading to missed chances.

Supported by the school's approach to behaviour, pupils demonstrate a strong sense of fairness within their school community. Guided by the vision, they take on a wide range of school-wide responsibilities. The curriculum helps pupils to recognise injustice where they encounter it. Through collective worship, as well as 'wondering Wednesdays' and 'thinking Thursdays', each class thoughtfully explores issues such as climate justice, racial justice, and food poverty. However, opportunities to explore the concept of justice in greater depth, particularly its biblical



foundations, are limited. As a result, pupils' ability to consider and take meaningful action in response to these issues is not sufficiently developed.

The RE curriculum is thoughtfully planned, carefully sequenced and well resourced. While Christianity is appropriately given the most curriculum time, pupils also successfully study a range of world religions and non-religious worldviews. Learning is enriched through visits to places of worship, including the local church, the diocesan cathedral, and a large Hindu temple. Teaching in RE is generally good and pupils make steady progress. In lessons, teachers regularly revisit prior learning to help learners build on and deepen their understanding. They encourage thoughtful engagement through shared activities, effective questioning, and purposeful feedback. Work in RE is creatively adapted to ensure pupils with additional needs can fully access and succeed in their learning. Teachers are well supported through training provided by the diocese. Pupils approach RE lessons with enthusiasm, enjoyment, and clear respect for the subject, recognising its relevance to their lives now and in the future. Assessment is used effectively to inform both pupils and teachers about progress and next steps. RE has a strong presence in nursery and reception, where school staff and church leaders work together to deliver 'Godly Play' sessions and provide a variety of artefacts to support early learning. However, the subject currently lacks the leadership needed to secure the capacity for future planning, development, and ongoing improvement in the subject.

Careful decisions made by school leaders ensure that the wellbeing of staff and pupils is at the heart of policy and action. Leaders have a strong understanding of the local community and are aware of its changing needs and challenges. This insight, combined with the leaders' approachability, help to build strong relationships and trust between the school and the community, enabling the school to support families through difficult times. The school's nurturing environment helps new pupils settle quickly and feel secure. The school's consistent and relationship-building approach to behaviour helps pupils feel listened to and valued. As they progress through the school, pupils develop a deep respect and tolerance for people whose lives and experiences are different from their own. The school leadership team actively identifies, nurtures, and celebrates the potential of both pupils and staff. Pupils are encouraged to develop their leadership skills through a variety of roles, such as peer mediators, librarians, and worship leaders. Furthermore, staff are supported in their professional growth, with opportunities for ongoing learning and progression into new roles within the school and beyond. This creates a culture where leadership is shared, potential is recognised, and everyone feels included, respected, and inspired to aim high. As a result, both pupils and staff feel valued and are motivated to contribute fully to school life.

Information

Address	Six Hills Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 0PZ		
Date	19 June 2025	URN	117456
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	212
Diocese	Saint Albans		
Headteacher	Lorraine Collins		
Co-Chairs of Governors	Karen Mitchell and Judy Crook		
Inspector	Catherine Allard		