

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John's Church of England Academy			
Address	Winsford Avenue, Coventry CV5 9HZ		
Date of inspection	18 November 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust (DMAT)
Diocese	Coventry	URN	141298

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

School context

St John's Church of England Academy is a primary school with 210 pupils on roll. It is part of a family of schools belonging to the Diocese of Coventry Multi Academy Trust. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The school has a before and after school club that is managed by the governors.

The school's Christian vision

'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven'
Matthew 5:16

The vision, embedded in Christian values, is the heartbeat that develops children into confident, happy citizens providing a platform to flourish in local, global and Christian communities. Founded on Matthew 5:16, and intertwined with the school values, all strive to live out the vision through the school's child-friendly motto of 'I will shine!'

Key findings

- Embraced by all members of the school community, the school's explicitly Christian vision and associated values result in exemplary nurture, pastoral care and academic flourishing that transforms pupils' lives.
- Inspirational Christian guidance is enabled through the passionate and dedicated leadership of the headteacher who is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, middle leaders and a highly skilled governing body. Consequently, both pupils and adults flourish in this excellent school.
- Each child's uniqueness is exemplified through the child-friendly motto of 'I will shine'. Exemplary pupil leadership opportunities contribute positively to the social and moral conscience of all.
- Collective worship contributes greatly to the spiritual development of both pupils and adults.
- Religious education (RE) is very well led, resulting in high standards. It provides opportunities for pupils to explore their own views and opinions about the world in a safe environment.

Areas for development

- Extend the impact of the school's curriculum in order that the holistically based vision and values continue to drive all areas of improvement.
- Increase moderation opportunities in RE to deepen the already high levels of achievement in the subject.
- Increase pupils' understanding of other major world faiths so that they may be better prepared for living well together in our multi-faith society.

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

The school's Christian vision, rooted in a clear, inclusive theological narrative, is the light that shines on every aspect of life at St John's. Highly skilled governors have been instrumental in its development, consulting all members of the school community throughout. Consequently, it is well understood, deeply embedded and embraced by all. Resulting policies and development plans greatly support the flourishing of all.

The headteacher's energy and passion inspire everyone to be the best they can be. Diocesan training and gaining Church of England middle and senior leadership qualifications ensure staff are very well prepared for Church school leadership. Light shines across the wider academy family through sharing expertise. Governors are extremely proactive. Managing the before and after school club is testament to their commitment. Robust monitoring and evaluation systems ensure governors fulfil their role of challenge and support regarding achievement. Keeping abreast of current Church school thinking ensures they holistically monitor the vision's effectiveness.

Excellent partnerships with the Diocese, local churches and schools enable all to flourish. The headteacher strategically supports local and national improvement planning, thus shining light further afield for the greater good. Local clergy plan and lead school worship. Family services are held in church to celebrate Christian festivals. The commitment of St Christopher's Church in supporting the school is exemplary. A weekly Christian movement group from abroad aids understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith. Partnerships are mutually beneficial, exemplified by pupils organising church fundraising activities. Links with an ethnically contrasting school positively promote mutually beneficial understanding of, and respect for, difference.

The innovative values-based curriculum is personalised to meet the needs of all. Ongoing work to ensure that all aspects explicitly link with the school vision is taking place. Individually painted prayer stones, and the motto 'I will shine', perfectly exemplify pupils' uniqueness. Biblical text is linked to topics, enabling pupils to explore spiritual and ethical dimensions in all subjects. Academic attainment and wellbeing are equally valued. Nurture provision such as play therapy, sessions with the family support worker and 'emotional check-ups' have an extremely positive impact on wellbeing even beyond school - a notable example being a past pupil willingly sharing his mental health experiences during mental health week. The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCO) is highly skilled. Robust monitoring identifies and supports pupils requiring extra input. Family and outside agency partnerships are positively facilitated. Staff receive exceptional pastoral care, particularly in times of personal darkness. Consequently, they, too, flourish because they are supported spiritually and emotionally as well as professionally.

Family partnerships are strong. Being part of a church family is important to parents. They speak highly of the values' positive impact on their children, one parent commenting on her five-year-old discussing 'character' and 'identity'. The values are just as relevant outside school: 'We can talk about the values when watching the news or talking about friendships - there is no disconnect ...' Parents love the motto 'I will shine' as it shows every child is special. A commendable example of parental involvement is their lunchtime leadership of 'Mellow Mondays' and 'Feel Good Fridays'. Courage is displayed by the school in welcoming pupils who have failed to thrive elsewhere. This has a transformational effect on those pupils as they find that they, too, can shine.

Relationships, underpinned by the Christian vision, ensure all are treated with dignity and respect. Staff are exemplary role models. Pupils live well together, are accepted for who they are and really believe that 'everyone shines'. They look out for values being put into practice and nominate peers in weekly awards celebrations. There is a healthy, open-minded culture where pupils, as well as adults, challenge prejudice and injustice. An outstanding feature is that pupils speak openly about difficulties, an example being a whole school presentation on dyspraxia led by a pupil with that disability. Pupil play leaders organise games during break times. They have formed an eco-team and are reaching out to the wider community about reducing single-use plastic. On a global level, the school council has led fundraising for 'Aid 2 Africa'. Pupils have also organised fundraising for Water Aid. Proudly they say, 'We made a big difference ...' Through leadership opportunities, pupils are learning that they can make a positive difference to the world.

Collective worship is the school's heartbeat, impacting positively on living well together. Pupils plan, lead and evaluate worship, which is based around the vision and values, Jesus' teachings and biblical stories. This strengthens pupils' understanding of the vision's relevance to their own lives. Elements of Anglican worship are embedded, such as responses and opportunities for silence, prayer and reflection. Hymns enhance understanding of the church calendar, for example 'Jesus, You're my Hero' at Easter. Pupils articulate God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as one. They show a growing understanding of the Eucharist, confidently speaking about the Last Supper, saying what the bread and wine represent. Staff are proactive during worship and explain how it impacts positively on their own spiritual development. Parents derive spiritual strength from weekly parental prayer groups. Personal prayer and reflection areas in classrooms and the innovative outside prayer garden greatly enhance spirituality. Prayer garden leaders work alongside younger pupils writing prayers. One spoke about the comfort derived from painting a stone there in memory of a family member.

RE reflects the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement. Rigorous assessments monitor progress. Governors are actively involved in the process. The highly skilled RE lead supports staff through training and RE 'surgeries'. Pupils engage in philosophical thinking through reflection tasks and 'big' questions. The vicar supports theological understanding by working with small groups on concepts such as, 'What does it mean God being loving and holy?' Links are made between the ten commandments and the school's values in leading a good life. The Understanding Christianity resource impacts positively on pupils' learning and ability to critically engage with text. Pupils make links between Bible stories and their own lives saying, '...even if you're little you can still achieve big things' in reference to Daniel and the Lions' Den. Involvement in overseas projects makes pupils aware of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Theme days support understanding of other major world faiths. A Diwali-themed day led to reflection on the significance of light across various faiths. The school has rightly identified the need to visit different local places of worship to enhance understanding of major world faith worship practices.

St John's is an excellent school, embracing its Christian vision, and associated values, in order that all may flourish, shine and project their light further afield for the common good.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

ONLY

RE enjoys high status. In-school monitoring and moderation show teaching and learning is highly effective, attainment being in line with core subjects (and sometimes higher). The school does not yet take part in moderation with partner schools. Staff are well supported and regularly up skilled so that learning activities are appropriately pitched, providing appropriate scaffolding and reinforcement for those with additional needs and extra challenge for the most able. Consequently, all pupils flourish academically in the subject.

Headteacher	Gary Watson
Inspector's name and number	Krysia Vickery 940