

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy

Vision

Develop the individual light in everyone, so they can learn as much as possible and reach their unique potential. We want to ignite curiosity through our curriculum and create a culture of gratitude and good deeds. With hope and humility, we want our pupils to take on the world and make it a better place.

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

St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy 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

- Leaders understand their community well and have developed a deeply embedded Christian vision that is central to pupils and adults flourishing.
- Collective worship is well planned and purposeful, making a significant impact on how pupils understand and live out the school's vision and values.
- Inspired by the Christian vision and the actions of leaders, the school is highly inclusive. Adults know pupils well and provide the right care and support so that they feel valued and can thrive.
- The Collaborative Learning Trust provides effective support, strengthening the school's Christian foundation and supporting its continued growth and improvement.
- Inspired by the Christian vision, leaders have built strong, effective relationships across the school. This proactive approach directly improves mental health and wellbeing, enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Development Points

- Embed the school's approach to spiritual development by connecting opportunities across the curriculum and wider school life. This is so that pupils and adults can recognise and reflect more deeply on experiences.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to respond to issues that they care about through meaningful, practical actions. This is so that they broaden their understanding of justice, responsibility and active citizenship.
- Continue to strengthen assessment in religious education (RE) so that teaching meets pupils' learning needs and deepens understanding.



Inspection Findings

St Mary's is a highly inclusive and aspirational school, where the Christian vision shapes a culture of dignity, hope and positivity. Leaders know their community well and have embedded a vision that encourages everyone to aim high. One pupil summed this up by saying, 'This school welcomes everyone with a kind heart.' Leaders, including governors, have developed a vision centred on building aspiration and resilience. They ensure that it shapes decisions and actions. Leaders invest in staff development, recognising individual needs. The Collaborative Learning Trust and the diocese play a valued role in supporting leadership and staff. Together, their guidance strengthens the school's Christian foundation and continued growth. Governors carefully monitor and evaluate, ensuring that the vision continues to drive the work of the school effectively.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' spiritual development and reflects the school's Christian vision, enabling them to flourish. It is designed to spark curiosity, encourage deep thinking, and celebrate individual strengths. Staff adapt the curriculum thoughtfully. This helps pupils, including the most vulnerable, access a rich variety of opportunities so that they experience success in their learning. Sessions in personal, social, and health education encourage pupils to explore their beliefs and feelings. This contributes to their understanding of purpose and identity. Leaders have recently introduced a school framework for spirituality. This helps staff begin to identify meaningful links across subjects and draw opportunities for spiritual growth together. Pupils and staff are beginning to use the school's shared language to explore spiritual moments. This is not embedded. The school's commitment to enrichment aligns with its Christian vision. After-school clubs offer varied activities that help pupils discover new interests and express their talents. Pupils also take part in regular trust-wide events, including music festivals, arts initiatives, and sporting opportunities. These experiences build confidence and help pupils understand their place in a diverse, connected world.

A well-designed RE curriculum helps pupils gain strong knowledge of different faiths and encourages thoughtful reflection. It is carefully planned to build knowledge over time and ensure that pupils revisit important ideas. Teachers adapt content to suit pupils' needs. For example, through exploring elements of the Qur'an, pupils develop an appreciation and respect for its significance within Islam. Pupils also learn about key Christian concepts, such as the events of Pentecost, and consider their meaning for believers today. Opportunities for reflection are woven through lessons, so that pupils connect beliefs with everyday life. Ongoing monitoring by leaders ensures that the subject continues to develop. Training from the diocese and internal support help maintain its high profile across the school.

RE is taught effectively. Teachers show clear examples to help pupils understand new ideas and encourage thoughtful discussions. For example, pupils explore the Bible verse 'God is our protection and strength. He always helps in times of trouble.' They reflect on how faith can support people during difficult times. Creative ways of teaching engage pupils and help them to remember what they have learnt. As such, pupils make sustained progress and are proud of their learning. Teachers check what pupils have learnt and have a growing understanding of how pupils are progressing over time. Refinements to the assessment system to ensure that it is consistent and robust are currently being developed.

The school's inclusive, compassionate culture ensures that pupils feel valued and supported. Staff know their pupils well and plan carefully to meet their individual needs. This includes providing targeted teaching strategies, emotional support through dedicated spaces, and timely access to specialist help when required. Leaders create



thoughtful environments that help pupils settle in and feel safe. They explain that they 'help children see their own light, even if it is hidden.' The school has established a clear approach to behaviour that helps pupils make positive choices and build respectful relationships. This creates a calm and supportive atmosphere. One pupil said, 'We feel safe because teachers help us let our light shine.' Pupils speak with passion about their school and show deep awareness of values that matter. Their interactions reflect this, greeting visitors warmly and holding doors open. 'The Guiding Light Mentors' initiative empowers older pupils to support younger peers, building confidence and self-worth. Leaders prioritise wellbeing, reinforced by trust initiatives like wellbeing champions and staff voice sessions. As a result, staff feel listened to and well supported, which contributes to a positive working environment. Forums and workshops build trust with families and share the school's approach. This strengthens partnerships with parents and carers, ensuring that pupils feel cared for.

Pupils develop a strong sense of justice and responsibility through meaningful involvement in school life and wider community projects. The school's vision shapes caring relationships and inspires compassion for others. Pupils take part in activities that make a difference, including litter picking and charitable fundraising. They recently worked with a local artist to celebrate the Hunslet community, fostering pride and belonging. Pupils help decide which charities to support, such as contributing to the food bank at harvest time. Worship and curriculum activities provide regular opportunities to discuss fairness and responsibility. School leaders promote pupil leadership through roles such as playground buddies and school council representatives. These initiatives are primarily adult-led. Pupils speak passionately about the injustices that they see in the world and the positive changes that they would like to make. However, they do not have regular opportunities to explore these concerns or take meaningful action in response. As a result, their understanding of how to make a positive difference and contribute as active citizens is not fully developed.

Spiritual development is a priority, with planned opportunities that help pupils explore faith, meaning and purpose across school life. Collective worship is skilfully led so that it is well planned and inclusive, seamlessly integrating the school's vision and values. Termly themes, such as respect, deepen understanding of Christian values and biblical teachings. For example, pupils confidently discuss respect and its importance within a multicultural community. Whole-school worship flows naturally into class worship. This helps pupils make deeper connections. Class worship books capture ongoing reflections that show how pupils' thinking is developing. Leaders have strengthened the quality and coherence of worship through a carefully planned cycle, ensuring that it is progressive, purposeful and impactful. For example, a worship focusing on VE Day helped pupils link the event to the compassion shown within the Bible story of the Good Samaritan. Pupils experience awe and wonder and explore 'I wonder...' questions to deepen their thinking. Pupils and adults are beginning to use the school's shared language to explore how worship supports spiritual growth. Ongoing monitoring ensures that worship is open to everyone. It encourages pupils to take part in ways that feel comfortable to them. Pupils value visits from clergy who lead worship and share Christian teaching in ways that are accessible and engaging. This regular input provides a meaningful link with the wider Christian community. Enrichment events, such as 'Interfaith Week' and 'World Mental Health Day', deepen spiritual reflection. They help pupils consider diverse perspectives, human connection, and the values that they explore in worship.

Information

Address	Church Street, Hunslet, Leeds, LS10 2QY		
Date	8 May 2025	URN	147633
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	217
Diocese	Leeds		
MAT	Collaborative Learning Trust		
Executive Headteacher	Alison Smith		
Head of School	Jessica Crisp		
Chair of Governors	Pippa McPherson		
Inspector	Michael Walker		