



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

Mountnessing Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	279 Roman Road, Mountnessing, Brentwood, CM15 0UH

### School vision

To unlock every child's potential as a unique child of God.  
'May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and know the love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge so that you may be filled with the fulness of God.' Ephesians 3: 17 - 19

### School strengths

- The highly aspirational and inclusive Christian vision is built on clear biblical teaching. It ensures that pupils and adults are encouraged to flourish in all aspects of their lives.
- The carefully crafted curriculum motivates and inspires pupils to learn. Leaders make a strong commitment to adapting, enhancing and supporting learning to make it fully accessible to all.
- Collective worship is enriched by regular opportunities for prayer and reflection both inside and outside the school building. This creates a strong sense of community which supports pupils and adults on their spiritual journeys.
- Leaders create and maintain a loving, nurturing culture in which everyone is known and cared for individually. As a result, they are able to thrive professionally, personally and in their learning.
- The school has strong, mutually beneficial partnerships with the Mid-Essex Anglican Academy Trust and with local schools, the diocese and the church. These contribute significantly to leaders' ability to provide opportunities for pupils and the development of Mountnessing as a Church school.

### Areas for development

- Fully embed the agreed school-wide approach to spirituality. This is so that opportunities for spiritual development are identified and used successfully across all learning opportunities.
- Implement the revised religious education (RE) curriculum, monitoring its effectiveness carefully. This is so that pupils develop knowledge and understanding of a wide range of worldviews, both religious and non-religious.

### Inspection findings

The school's bold Christian vision creates a strong foundation for the flourishing of adults and pupils. This is because leaders recognise everyone's God-given uniqueness and the potential of each individual. They are inspired by teaching in the Bible about God's love, and power, filling people's lives. Leaders use the vision to inform the way that the school develops, particularly as it grows in

size. Deciding to provide dedicated space and staff for forest school sessions for all pupils is one example. The provision contributes significantly to the unlocking of potential for many pupils and to the development of character. The vision is expressed successfully through the school's Christian values. They are chosen specifically to contribute to the nurture of personal growth. The focus on thankfulness and perseverance helps pupils develop gratitude and build resilience. Leaders monitor and regularly review the impact of the vision, to ensure it meets the needs of the community. Membership of the trust provides significant support and challenge, contributing to the development of staff, buildings and resources. This has a direct impact on the quality of the environment provided to pupils and supports their flourishing. The positive partnership encourages Mountnessing in retaining its uniqueness. Leaders are able to share expertise and so contribute to the development of Christian distinctiveness in other trust schools.

The vision shapes the curriculum, with the needs of individuals and the community used as starting points for planning. The careful allocation of staff and resources ensures learning is adapted so that it is fully inclusive. As a result, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given high priority. Staff support this through clear, open communication and regular review of the impact of the curriculum on pupils' development. Leaders ensure that an impressive range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities are made accessible to all. There is a strong commitment to enabling everyone to explore interests and abilities, as a way of unlocking their potential. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning. This includes considering questions prompted by learning across the whole curriculum. As a result, pupils are encouraged to develop spiritually by contemplating aspects of the world beyond themselves. Adults use the images of 'windows, mirrors, doors and candles' to support pupils in this way of thinking. However, a consistent, school-wide approach to spiritual development is not fully developed.

Collective worship plays a significant part in the life of the school community. Pupils and adults value highly the times they spend together. Whatever their own personal beliefs, they feel welcome and confident in the contribution they can make. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, can participate in gatherings of the whole school. All aspects of worship are well-supported by the partnership with the local church. The chaplain and Christian schools worker offer further variety of approaches to worship. Leaders from different traditions offer a richness of experience that encourages the spiritual flourishing of all. This is particularly the case for the 'leading lights' group of pupils who plan and lead worship with the chaplain. Pupils make good use of opportunities for reflection through prayer in classrooms, corridors and the school grounds. They respond with prayers of different kinds inspired by the challenging themes explored in worship. Reflection is, therefore, a natural part of the daily life of the school. Leaders provide motivation for this with regularly changing displays and questions relating to the Christian values. There is a culture of thoughtful contemplation that nurtures both personal development and a sense of community.

The wellbeing of all is a high priority for leaders, including governors. This is supported by the principles and practices of the trust. Pupils are relaxed and happy in school, caring for each other across different age groups. The school provides effective programmes and resources to improve mental health. Regular, clear communication keeps parents well informed and encourages involvement in their children's learning. Leaders pay close attention to the needs of staff, both professional and personal. They actively encourage career progression by providing development opportunities through the school, the trust and the local schools' partnership. The school and trust governing boards regularly monitor staff wellbeing, including that of the senior leaders. School policies and practices have a positive impact on wellbeing and work satisfaction. Consequently, pupils benefit from an enthusiastic and motivated staff team.

Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to make a difference for individuals and the community. These include work with a local dementia group and projects to improve the local environment.

Pupils enjoy meeting with people from different generations and develop a deep sense of responsibility. Leaders make a strong commitment to ensuring that the voices of pupils can be heard. They encourage pupils to initiate projects to raise awareness or money for particular causes. An emphasis on developing personal responsibility from early on helps pupils look outwards and want to help others. The varied activities across the school community inspire pupils to develop a sense of themselves as agents of change. The school benefits from strong relationships with its partners, built on openness, trust and accountability. Within this wider community, staff flourish and grow in their roles with a sense of security. From this position of strength, leaders and others share expertise and offer support across the partnerships. This contributes to the culture, modelled by adults, of everyone having the potential to make a difference to the lives of others.

Pupils enjoy RE which is given high priority as a well-resourced, carefully planned academic subject. The curriculum is sequenced to support pupils' growing understanding of Christianity and a range of world religions. There is a clear rationale for the choice of topics studied, based on a good understanding of the local context. Leaders know the needs of pupils and ensure that the starting points for learning match their prior knowledge and experience. Teachers make learning relevant and challenging. There is a strong commitment to providing high quality training and resources. Units of work are based on key questions and core knowledge. Pupils explore their own beliefs and share ideas in a safe, supportive environment. They are encouraged to consider what they know before and after each topic. Leaders gain useful information about the effectiveness of the curriculum through monitoring. However, there is not regular evaluation of this monitoring to guide improvement.

The inspection findings indicate that Mountnessing Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	25 March 2024	URN	145773
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	160
Diocese	Chelmsford		
MAT/Federation	Mid Essex Anglican Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Holly Obank		
Chair	John Dorrington		
Inspector	Peter Barfoot	No.	2216