



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

Shelton St Mark's Church of England Primary School	
Address	Wood Terrace, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST1 4LR
School vision	
<p>St Mark's is an inclusive, welcoming and nurturing family where everyone is loved, RESPECTed and valued. We are proud to be recognised as unique individuals, who celebrate diversity within a supportive Christian environment, where all can flourish. We aim to make a positive difference to the world we live in for ourselves and others by following the example of the Good Samaritan.</p> <p>'Loving to Learn, Learning to Love' is at the heart of all we do and is underpinned by our School Values of RESPECT – Responsibility, Equality, Spirituality, Perseverance, Enthusiasm, Commitment and Trust.</p> <p>'Let all that you do be done with love.' 1 Corinthians 16:14</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Mark's is very effective at living out the Christian vision and values. As a result all are made very welcome, nurtured and loved to flourish.</li> <li>• The curriculum is the outworking of the Christian vision. The aspirational and inclusive curriculum is well designed and activities to enrich understanding of diversity are effectively woven through it. As a result pupils treat each other well.</li> <li>• Pupils enjoy religious education (RE). This is because the curriculum actively engages them and supports their learning with knowledge of a range of religions and worldviews. They learn much by engaging with visitors and visits to places of worship.</li> <li>• The school's welcoming and nurturing ethos ensures that relationships between all members of this community are extremely supportive. Consequently, pupils build up their resilience and keep trying when facing challenges.</li> <li>• The dedication and expertise of leaders ensures that collective worship is valued and brings this community together each day. Reflection in collective worship helps pupils to flourish spiritually.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed the revised approach to assessment of RE to ensure the next steps for teaching and learning are clearly identified.</li> <li>• Extend opportunities for pupils to explore questions of justice and think deeply about global inequality. This is so that they may understand how they can influence positive change.</li> <li>• Develop further what spirituality means in all aspects of school life. This is to deepen experiences and to support pupils in their personal spiritual development.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>The Christian vision is at the heart of St. Mark's Primary School. This gives leaders clear strategic direction and is bringing about progress. Pupils are loved and settle quickly to begin their education.</p>	

The vision makes a significant contribution to the community that it serves. It is very effective in addressing the needs of the locality. It raises the aspirations of pupils and enriches their understanding of diversity and the world in which they live. Pupils talk about loving everyone as in Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan. They also use the language of the Christian values to reflect and respond to everyone, showing respect to everyone. Pupils and adults regularly talk about the vision. Through the associated values they are actively living out the vision in their daily lives and interactions. Loving and welcoming each other underpins a deeply caring ethos. This is a very warm, welcoming and friendly school. Everyone is nurtured. Through the vision, strong leadership and support from Orchard Community Trust (the trust) and the governors, this school is ensuring adults and pupils flourish.

Relationships within the school are exceptionally strong. It is a haven for pupils because the vision underpins all actions and relationships. All are encouraged to show love and compassion as shown by the Good Samaritan. Pupils play well together and help each other with enthusiasm during the school day. Staff give genuine, caring support to each other professionally and personally. They compassionately help parents when they have difficult times. Parents are very grateful for the support and guidance they receive. Pupils, parents, and staff talk about the St. Mark's family. They clearly enjoy living and working together in this community. It is a highly inclusive school where all are welcomed. The sunbeams room, where pupils new to school are welcomed, provides a bespoke programme of support. This enables pupils new to the United Kingdom to settle quickly and begin their learning journey well. The biblical underpinning of the vision is lived out daily, all is done with love.

The aspirational and inclusive curriculum is well designed. Activities to enrich understanding of diversity are effectively woven through it. Visits, including those to places of worship, develop and deepen pupils' understanding of cultures and customs. Pupils treat each other with dignity and respect because of their awareness of refugees and the disadvantaged. The vision and its outworking through the pupils' understanding of the values ensures that this community is extremely harmonious. Pupils are given opportunities to celebrate their talents by engaging in various partnerships. One example is Coventry Cathedral Arts competition which they won. Pupils and staff are developing a shared understanding of spiritual 'pathways'. The pupil worship team have led worship on different pathways, giving examples for everyone to experience together. Understanding of spirituality is developing further as there are increasing opportunities within the curriculum for spiritual flourishing.

Collective worship is a joyful celebration, daily reinforcing the vision and values of the school. It is well led by the dedicated staff team. The school comes together to worship, reflect and sing, ensuring that the vision is lived out fully. It enriches pupils' understanding of living in global harmony within their community. Worship is significant in inviting this diverse community to come together as one and pray to God. Pupils can explore questions in greater depth as part of class worship. The rainbow room and reflection spaces in each classroom provide opportunities to pause and think about the values. They focus on one each half term and this results in a deepening of pupil spirituality. Pupils, of all faiths and none, give examples of living out the Christian values in harmony in this community. Worship enables everyone to contribute with integrity, loving each other and showing respect. The church and local clergy make a valuable contribution. Messy Church activities led by the church extend pupils' understanding of festivals. They have recently enjoyed a Eucharist with the families. Clergy regularly meet and chat with parents on the school gate over a hot chocolate. Relationships are growing and developing with the church. The engagement with the church is the living out of the vision, a loving and respectful partnership.

Pupils behave extremely well and their understanding of the vision leads them to resolve differences well. They rightly say that there is always a teacher that will help. Parents speak very highly of the

staff and value that their children are known as individuals. They enthusiastically share that the school vision and associated values have influenced their child. Diversity is celebrated and is used as a learning experience for parents as well as pupils. Parents and pupils learn from each other. Parents value the opportunities they have to engage with the school for worship and community events. Pupils and adults alike feel loved, valued, and treated well in this multi-cultural school.

The pupils use the story of the Good Samaritan, helping a stranger in a different land and culture, to help them to live out the vision. This leads to the wellbeing of pupils and adults being a priority. There is care and consideration given to all. Pupils are very clear in their desire to help others and regularly support a variety of charities. They particularly enjoy the 'big breakfast' events where families come and eat together at the start of the school day. Any money raised is then donated to various good causes. Pupils care for God's creation and the world and demonstrate a sense of justice and responsibility. Families organised a litter pick of their local area, raising awareness in the process. However, pupils are not yet confident in being independent agents of change.

Leaders ensure RE has a very high profile. It is well led. RE is well resourced, staff have professional development and it is therefore supporting pupils' understanding and knowledge. Pupils enjoy RE because it is stimulating, well balanced and diverse. They are encouraged to respond to and ask big questions. As a result of the safe and secure learning environment they can explore their own beliefs. This helps them to further develop a respectful appreciation of world religions. RE also extends pupils' understanding of diversity and difference in society. The quality of teaching is strong and pupils make progress. However, in order to secure greater progress leaders are further developing assessment processes.

Partnerships are driven by the vision. The school is chosen by the trust for the sharing of good practice. Leaders have used the school to provide RE support to other schools within the trust. There are also strong and effective relationships with the diocese. St. Mark's is a school that embraces diversity. The strong Christian ethos very well meets the needs of the community it serves, sharing love and a very warm welcome to all.

The inspection findings indicate that St. Mark's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	18 April 2024	URN	146465
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	454
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT/Federation	Orchard Community Trust		
Acting Headteacher	Sarah Goodwin		
Chair	Gill Howell		
Inspector	Sara Goddard	No.	976