

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Coton-in-the-Elms Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Elmslea Avenue, Coton-in-the-Elms, Swadlincote, DE12 8HE

School vision

“Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace.” 2 Corinthians 13:11

At Coton-in-the-Elms Primary, everything that we do and every decision that we take is driven by 5 simple words, which we hold dear. Perseverance. Enjoyment. Awe & Wonder. Compassion. Excellence.

School strengths

- The school’s Christian vision is deeply embedded and lived out daily. Inspirational leadership ensures that it underpins the school’s development and enables pupils and adults to flourish.
- Wellbeing is a high priority for leaders. Pupils and adults are treated as individuals. They are supported to develop their skills and talents to ‘encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace.’
- Partnerships with families, church and the wider community are strong and positive. These links foster a clear sense of belonging to a loving church school.
- Worship is highly valued, impactful and central to the school day. The deepening understanding of spirituality enriches and enhances spiritual flourishing for pupils and adults.
- Religious education (RE) is a strength of the school. Leaders ensure staff are well supported to deliver engaging and thought-provoking lessons. As a result, pupils are knowledgeable and understanding about a range of religions and world views.

Areas for development

- Ensure that opportunities for spiritual development are strategically embedded within the school’s curriculum. This will enable a consistent and impactful approach to enhance the spiritual development of pupils and adults.

Inspection findings

The Christian vision at Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School is lived out every day by adults and pupils. The associated principles of Perseverance, Enjoyment, Awe and Wonder, Compassion and Excellence are deeply embedded. They enable pupils and adults to flourish and ‘rejoice.’ Known as PEACE, and referred to as the school values, they are evident in every aspect of school life. Pupils speak confidently of how the vision and values support them to be the best they can be. Their respect for others demonstrates this. The drive for the school’s continued improvement is led by the vision. It is the basis for decision making by leaders and governors. They know the school and the

community well. Governors are knowledgeable about how the vision is enabling flourishing. They see how the breadth of the curriculum enriches pupils' learning.

Positive mental health and well-being for all are high priorities for leaders. Relationships are warm and nurturing. The value of compassion is lived out daily. Leaders support staff in all the challenges they face. As a result, staff are positive about working at the school. Those who are new to role receive high quality mentoring and practical support. Strong leadership inspires them to develop their skills further and strive for excellence. Older pupils relish the opportunity to support and encourage their younger peers. As a result of this, behaviour is good, and any disputes are quickly resolved. Wellbeing initiatives are impactful both within the school and the wider community. Wellbeing Wednesday walks for staff and pupils are one example. Pupils comment that these walks give them an opportunity to 'enjoy nature' and to 'share any worries they may have.'

Pupils and adults at the school are respected and celebrated as individuals. Pupils are well supported personally and academically to best prepare them for the next stage of their education. Those who need additional support thrive at the school. Leaders make wise decisions driven by the vision to allow this to happen. This includes a strong focus on training for staff, so they are well equipped to support pupils. Support from outside agencies is sought where needed and interventions have an impact. Pupils explain how sessions with staff have helped with their anxiety about their learning. Pupils are well known and understood by staff. Adjustments, such as calm spaces in school, are made so that pupils feel safe. Families are well supported through positive relationships and clear communication. They remark that 'nothing is too much trouble' for the staff at the school. The school's curriculum offer is driven by their Christian vision. It is strengthened by a wide range of before and after school activities that enhance pupils' academic development. The school's grounds offer multiple opportunities for awe and wonder to be found in the natural world. The forest school provision allows for spiritual reflection to take place. Pupils state you can 'sit, listen to the birds, think and feel calm'. These pockets of spiritual development are recognised and nurtured by leaders and staff. However, planned opportunities for spiritual reflection are not yet written into the school's curriculum.

Collective worship is highly valued by the school community. Worship is carefully sequenced to allow pupils opportunities to reflect on key messages and link daily themes. This enables pupils to flourish spiritually through personal reflections and age-appropriate discussion later in class. Singing of religious songs is enthusiastic and draws the school community together. Worship is inclusive and invitational. Each class brings their candle into worship to show they are included. Adults and pupils are invited to share their thoughts in prayer or in moments of quiet. The school community shows pride when a pupil is chosen to receive the Golden Dove award. This recognises how they have displayed the school's core values. The school benefits from effective partnerships with the local church, the wider community and the diocese. The local vicar works closely with leaders on linking themes with school values and Christian values. He also regularly leads worship to strengthen the links between church and school. Parents value the many opportunities there are for church and school to work together. Lasting relationships are built between pupils, staff and families. The diocese supports the school through networks and training that are impactful for leaders and governors.

Following their vision, leaders provide opportunities for pupils to have an increased awareness of responsibility and justice. Leaders are keen to encourage pupils to be agents of change. Through inspirational collective worship, pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of others in their local community and further afield. This has led to the school funding two toilets abroad in places of need. The pupil parliament has an impact on the way the school runs. Pupils are proud of their work in lessening the amount of water wasted in school. Individual projects are recognised with a courageous advocacy award. One pupil was concerned that the local pre-school needed more funds

so raised money for new toys.

RE is confidently led, planned and taught. Leaders value RE and the opportunities it provides for discussion and questioning. Pupils are encouraged to discuss a Big Question such as ‘Why is hope important?’ at the beginning of each unit of work. This encourages them to understand the relevance of RE by relating it to real life situations in school and the wider world. Pupils are keen to understand the beliefs of others so they can be respectful. Pupils are supported to ask questions and know their viewpoints will be respected by others. The curriculum is well sequenced. It encompasses Christianity and a range of religions and world views. Staff receive regular training and support in delivering RE as a subject. Visits to places of worship are valued by staff and pupils. They bring learning to life and give context to lessons.

The inspection findings indicate that Coton-in-the-Elms Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church School and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Information			
Inspection date	24 June 2024	URN	112812
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	134
Diocese	Derby		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Lisa McIntosh		
Chair	Stephanie Marbrow		
Inspector	Jo Westaby	No.	2128