

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools

St Leonard's Church of England Primary School

(SIAMS) Report

Vision

Firm Foundations: Rooted in Love.

Rooted in love, we grow and learn together; supported by our firm foundations. We nurture and respect the individuals within our community, so that all can flourish and succeed, with aspirational hope.

Do everything in love – 1 Corinthians 16:14

Strengths

- The Christian vision is deeply embedded and visible in all aspects of the school's work. It is known, understood and accepted. As a result, staff and pupils are able to flourish.
- Collective worship is highly valued by the school community. It brings meaningful opportunities for prayer and reflection, allowing both adults and pupils to develop spiritually.
- Leaders have created a clear culture of care and love that ensures that all are treated well.
- Religious education (RE) is well structured, challenging and diverse. This contributes to pupils' well developed knowledge and understanding of a range of religions.
- The school's robust commitment to pastoral care benefits all, including the most vulnerable. This is underpinned by strong partnerships with the church and a local charity.

Development Points

- Work with pupils to broaden their opportunities to engage in meaningful social action and challenge injustice. This is to inspire them to make a difference beyond the school and make an impact on the world in which they live.
- Secure the ongoing leadership of RE within the school. This is to ensure that strong provision is maintained and the momentum of development continues.



Inspection Findings

St. Leonard's is a happy and welcoming school. In recent times, the importance of the vision has been raised significantly by new school leadership. It is deeply embedded and at the heart of decision making. Pupils know the importance of the vision and values, which are clearly displayed on posters around the school. The commitment to building firm foundations has underpinned recent improvements and is apparent at all levels. Pupils speak reflectively about the importance of 'starting strong'. Consequently, they make good choices, engaging well with each other, adults and learning. Therefore, they are living out the vision to 'grow and get better'. Staff embrace the vision, which has grown out of the recent improvement journey. Their commitment to living it every day is visible. This creates a powerful sense of ownership that impacts positively on pupils, fostering a sense of togetherness. Carefully cultivated relationships with the diocese support the vision, underpinned by effective relationships across the academy trust. High expectations support the aspirations held for all. This enables members of the school community to grow and flourish.

Leaders have shaped the curriculum carefully to the local context. This results in a variety of relevant learning experiences that are engaging for pupils. They are actively involved in their learning and well prepared for future challenges. This aligns well with the vision of building firm foundations. Enrichment opportunities, for example visits and 'hook days', successfully enhance the curriculum. These develop spirituality by enabling pupils to grow in confidence as they reflect on prior learning. In this way, pupils' experiences bring a deeper self-awareness. Extra curricular activities such as choir, netball, storytelling and creative club further enhance spirituality. Teachers are well-supported both by leaders and through the trust's networks and collaborations. Consequently, teaching is engaging and sharply focussed on meeting the needs of pupils. As a result, they enjoy learning and value their time at school. Inclusivity is embraced. Staff are collaborative and proactive. This ensures that vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can access learning. Because of this, there is opportunity for all to learn well and make progress.

Collective worship is a focal point in the day. It is a highly valued aspect of school life contributing to spiritual growth. Everyone is invited to pray, allowing all to engage or sit respectfully. Pupils make thoughtful responses using traditional prayers to express their developing spirituality together. Worship is well planned and rooted in the calendar of the church. Well-chosen texts available encourage deeper thinking and have become a focal point for discussion. Staff and pupils respond well to the effective opportunities for reflection which are carefully woven through. These give space to be 'calm, relax, reflect and think about what you have done throughout the day'. Pupils are deeply involved in worship. Their responses to questions demonstrate the depth of their thinking and growing spiritual maturity. Spiritual spaces in classrooms offer the opportunity to reflect and pray outside times of collective worship. The addition of a reflection room has been well received by pupils. Older pupils talk confidently of what it means to be able to connect with God. Staff and pupils value strong involvement from the local church community.

Leaders create a culture where pupils and staff are treated well and thrive together. Approachable adults lead by example. This affects how all those within the school community treat each other. Staff know they are valued and supported by leaders and the academy trust. There is a strong sense of belonging and a commitment to doing 'everything in love'. Consequently, a nurturing and loving environment is created. The wellbeing of staff has a high priority. Strong levels of collaboration across the trust ensure workload is carefully considered. Parents are both supported and supportive, appreciating the values their children bring home. They speak passionately about the school and positive changes under the school's new leadership. Effective partnerships contribute to the success of the school. There are strong working relationships with other local schools and the diocese. The partnership with the parish is a major strength. Combined with school links to a local educational charity, the pastoral and spiritual needs of the school community are well met. Vulnerable families benefit from the combined care and love shown through these partnerships. Training provided by leaders around trauma underpins the restorative approach. Children are explicitly taught a range of techniques to support this through the zones of regulation. As a result, there are clear strategies allowing pupils to grow, including those with SEND. This has had a demonstrable impact and creates a calm school where pupils settle well. The school rules of 'safe, respectful and ready' are closely aligned to the vision. They are highly visible, clearly articulated and noticeably followed. Pupils play happily and safely together. They interact well and show care for each other.



Pupils have multiple opportunities to explore justice and responsibility. Leadership roles are undertaken with enthusiasm and pride. For example, pupil parliament representatives share the views of classmates to inform the decisions of leaders. The elected head boy and girl are clear about their role. They take this seriously 'setting an example to others'. Support for national charities such as Comic Relief and Children in Need, coupled with thoughtful class names, support advocacy. In this way pupils are aware they have a voice and can use this to act, doing 'everything in love' to work for change. They show good understanding of the role models after whom classes are named, explaining their impact on others. Pupils recall their Harvest support of the Food Bank, commenting on how this supports the local community. However, opportunities for them to work for a better world beyond their school and local community are limited.

Leaders show strong support for RE. Learning is broad and thoughtfully sequenced. This means that pupils develop an understanding of wide range of faiths and beliefs from an early stage. In this way pupils build their knowledge over time. Vocabulary is explicitly taught and well understood. Consequently, pupils can speak accurately and confidently about what they have learnt. Pupils like RE and are very proud of their work, readily sharing their own ideas and thoughts. Staff are supported well by leaders and the trust. Resources and training to support RE have been carefully selected to build staff confidence and subject knowledge. There are strong links with the diocese which foster the development of RE teaching. As a result, teachers adapt lessons to meet the needs of learners enabling them to flourish.

Information

Address	St Leonard's CE Primary School, Burnham Road, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7ES		
Date	16 October 2024	URN	140180
Type of school	Academy (formerly VC)	No. of pupils	246
Diocese/District	Chelmsford		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Chelmsford Vine School Trust		
Headteacher	Wendy Woods		
Chair of Governors	Charlotte Little		
Inspector	Anthony Cosans		