Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ermine Street Church Academy

Vision

Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Christian values: Excellence Love Courage Resilience

Ermine Street Church 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.

Notable Strengths

- Leaders and staff at Ermine Street consistently live out the vision. Their commitment to modelling expectations, together with clear routines, creates a calm and purposeful culture where adults and pupils flourish.
- Guided by the school's values, strong and positive relationships enable members of the community to feel valued. Adults and pupils encourage and build one another up so that they thrive within a welcoming and supportive environment.
- The knowledge-rich religious education (RE) curriculum deepens pupils' understanding of the diversity of global faiths and non-religious worldviews. Through exploring big questions, pupils reflect on and shape their own worldviews, expressing their beliefs and opinions with confidence.
- Partnerships, including those with the Church, are mutually supportive and bring the school and wider community together. This creates a strong sense of belonging for both.
- The curriculum enables pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to succeed. High expectations and encouragement reflect the school's value of excellence and inspire pupils to achieve their best.

Development Points

- Strengthen governance so that there is a clear understanding of roles when monitoring and evaluating Christian distinctiveness. This is to enable governors to provide effective support and challenge as the school continues to grow.
- Embed opportunities for pupils, including those in leadership roles, to recognise and explain how their fundraising and other actions address injustice. This is to increase their understanding of how their involvement can bring about positive change and enrich the life of the school and wider community.

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Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Located at the heart of a rapidly growing community, the school plays a key role in fostering connection and belonging. The vision, rooted in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, is shaped by a commitment to embracing change and ensuring that everyone is valued, encouraged and supported. Leaders and staff consistently reference the vision, resulting in a shared understanding that influences behaviour, learning, policy and practice. This is underpinned by carefully chosen Christian values which reflect the context of the community. They translate the vision into a lived experience, shaping relationships, attitudes and actions across the school. As a result, the school is welcoming and inclusive. Arrangements are in place for governors to monitor the vision and Church school distinctiveness through the Grace Schools multi-academy trust. However, there is limited evidence of how this leads to change and impacts on the school's development. The partnership with the church based in the school hall strengthens the vision. This close physical connection provides a strong foundation for building a community in which adults and pupils flourish.

Vision and Curriculum

The value of excellence underpins high expectations for both pupils and adults. An engaging curriculum enables pupils to enjoy learning and achieve well. In keeping with the vision, a culture of encouragement and support ensures that learners are continually built up, developing confidence, resilience and the courage to embrace challenge. Consistent routines across the school provide security and help pupils flourish academically and personally. The Four Hearts framework is helping pupils recognise the connections that shape their spiritual development. While pupils can identify and name each heart, they do not consistently use them to reflect on their experiences and thinking. Opportunities for spiritual growth are woven into the curriculum through moments of reflection, discussion and curiosity. In mathematics, for example, pupils are encouraged to appreciate the beauty and pattern found in numbers. These 'wow' moments help them make connections between their learning and the wider world, deepening self-awareness and fostering a sense of awe and wonder. Pupils with SEND are sensitively enabled to succeed because adults know them well and provide timely, personalised guidance when needed.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship provides a comfortable and inclusive space where pupils and adults can explore their thoughts and beliefs, building one another up spiritually. Bringing the whole school together around shared themes strengthens the sense of encouragement and belonging that lies at the heart of the vision. Worship is streamed when appropriate to meet pupils' needs, enabling them to participate and share the sense of being together. Through reflection and questions, pupils develop their own worldviews. Bible stories are linked to everyday experiences, helping pupils to recognise how Christian teaching provides a moral purpose that can guide choices and actions. Singing together is a particularly valued aspect of worship and reinforces the understanding that each person is part of a wider community. Lighting a candle from the church and using words of greeting and response connects pupils to the wider Anglican tradition. Clergy regularly lead worship and are actively involved in the school. This is valued by pupils who enjoy different ways of worshipping. The close relationship between church and school creates meaningful opportunities for pupils, families, staff, church members and local residents to worship and celebrate together. Sharing events and services nurtures a strong sense of welcome and shared purpose.

Vision and School Culture

Adults consistently model the vision and values, fostering a culture of respect and trust. Pupils understand the vision well and use it to encourage their friends and remind them how to behave. There are high expectations, and excellence is a value that adults and pupils aspire to. They build each other up with kindness and encouragement. Adults and pupils are kind to one another, with relationships characterised by care and consideration. Pupils trust adults to help them when they are unhappy or have a problem. Adults appreciate the encouragement and support they receive from colleagues. Staff build strong relationships with pupils and their families, including those with SEND. They know them well and respond thoughtfully to their individual needs, especially in difficult times. Leaders actively nurture and develop staff, encouraging professional

growth and confidence in taking on new responsibilities. As a result, they feel valued. Aware of wellbeing and workload, leaders make adjustments which enable staff to thrive.
Vision, Justice and Responsibility Strong partnerships are central to the outworking of the school's vision. Working together to build a community, the church and school create a sense of belonging. Development partners, including Urban and Civic, provide valuable insight into the changing needs of the community. Pupils are proud to take on responsibilities, such as becoming school councillors, and make an active contribution to living out the vision. Membership of the Eco council reinforces the need to be stewards of God's world and gives them pride in their surroundings. Staff create purposeful opportunities to contribute and 'build each other up' through initiatives such as the gardening club. Participation in clubs has been transformative in some instances. Fundraising for local causes provides practical help to those who need it. However, pupils do not have a clear understanding of how contributing money can help address injustice or bring about longer-term change. Membership of the MAT provides opportunities for collaboration as schools work together to 'build each other up'. Mindful of the school's Methodist roots, leaders ensure this tradition continues to inform its purpose.
Religious Education Leaders plan the RE curriculum to be creative and engaging. This motivates pupils and they enjoy their learning. Through exploring faith from a range of perspectives, pupils learn to think critically, ask meaningful questions and consider various interpretations. Consequently, they speak confidently about religious and non-religious worldviews, showing respect for the beliefs and experiences of others. This approach fosters empathy and openness, enabling pupils to value diversity across cultures.Pupils recognise that Christianity is a global faith expressed in a variety of ways across the world. Applying this understanding to Hinduism, for example, they appreciate diversity within and between a range of faith traditions. Through discussion of big questions, pupils form their own worldviews. Enrichment days provide opportunities to focus deeply on Christian themes and develop spirituality. Working with the diocese and MAT, leaders support teachers to develop their expertise and confidence in teaching RE. Through monitoring and evaluation, leaders and the MAT confirm pupils make at least expected progress and teaching is of a consistently high standard. Pupils articulate a high level of knowledge and understanding as a result. The curriculum is planned to revisit pupils' prior learning. This is reviewed and assessed regularly so that misunderstandings are challenged and addressed, and knowledge is deepened over time.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	2 Swinford Rd Alconbury Weald Huntingdon PE28 4HX		
Date	29 September 2026	URN	141949
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	366
Diocese and Methodist district if a joint CofE/Meth school	Ely Cambridge		
MAT	Grace Schools		
MAT Chair	Helen Jackson		
Headteacher	Ashley Martin		
Chair of Governors	Rob Paddison		
Inspector	Rachel Beeson		

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