

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

## Colton St Mary's Church of England Primary School

**Address** Bellamour Way, Colton, Rugeley, United Kingdom, WS15 3LN

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

**Overall grade**

**Excellent**

**The impact of collective worship**

**Excellent**

**The effectiveness of religious education (RE)**

**Excellent**

### School's vision

The scriptures of Isaiah provide the basis for our Christian vision. We believe our children can flourish under God. 'But those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint.' Isaiah 40:31 Through our core values of love, friendship and respect, coupled with an environment where each child is cherished, we enable our children to flourish, fly like eagles and 'believe and achieve'.

### Key findings

- The headteacher, with the unwavering support of the multi-academy trust (MAT), is totally committed to making the 'lofty' Christian vision a lived reality. Consequently, the lives of pupils, staff and the local community are elevated and transformed as they are nurtured in love and trust. The school is constantly seeking creative ways to further explore the theological roots of the vision with its community.
- Strong relationships between the school, church and local community are firmly rooted in Christian values of respect and friendship. Faith and love abound in acts of kindness and service.
- The school's creative curriculum and environment are designed so that every pupil can flourish.
- Inspirational acts of collective worship are planned and led by adults and pupils. Pupils know many Bible stories which inform the depth of their compassion for each other and the wider world. They already experience a variety of worship styles, but this is an area for development.
- Religious education (RE) of the highest quality is a remarkable strength of this calm and reflective community. Pupils develop an exceptional level of understanding about world faiths and beliefs. It is significantly enhanced by highly effective teaching within an embedded culture of curiosity and questioning.

### Areas for development

- Continue to explore even more creative ways of expressing the school's Christian vision to further deepen everyone's theological understanding.

- Provide even more ways of worshipping so that pupils can appreciate and enjoy an even wider breadth of worship from different Christian traditions.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### Inspection findings

Love, friendship and respect are at the heart of this school. They provide the lift that enables everyone to fly. The deeply-considered Christian vision is evident as individuals feel valued and secure. Consequently, they gain confidence and aspire to be the best that they can be as teachers and learners. The devoted headteacher knows every pupil. He is passionate that each precious one, whatever their unique talents and challenges, is able to achieve and believe. That belief is a belief in themselves and others. Individuals gain understanding of Christian beliefs about God. Everyone is free to be themselves whilst respecting the worth of others. An ensuing atmosphere of harmonious calm pervades along with unwearingly passionate endeavour to be successful teachers and learners. Hence, everyone flourishes. The vision captures a longing for every member of this community to 'take wing and soar'. Powerful images of the eagle and the text from Isaiah are displayed. The school has future plans to explore the vision even more deeply using different creative mediums to express theological understanding.

The MAT of four small schools has a highly significant part to play in supporting and promoting the school's Christian vision. The trust board and its members are explicit about their belief in the value of a Christian education. This is evident in policies and relationships, and it informs recruitment processes. The schools are supported in prayer and benefit from wise, shared leadership. Consequently, the school is able to meet the needs of its own community in an extraordinarily powerful way. The school's Christian vision is deeply enriched by the MAT. This includes writing wonderful newsletters of hope and encouragement. School families understand that it is the school's Christian vision that underpins the commitment to education in all its fullness. Staff from all of the MAT schools receive outstanding training together, such as that delivered by the Diocese of Lichfield. They share expertise and are enabled to fly as leaders within the MAT. They are trusted to use their unique gifts and talents to provide innovative learning opportunities for pupils. As a result, staff are highly motivated and find renewed professional and personal energy. The impact of such a high level of staff satisfaction is evident in the quality of learning opportunities that pupils enjoy. The MAT ensures that the school's Christian character is central to school development planning. It is informed by rigorous and meaningful self-evaluation systems. Motivated school leaders and staff inspire each other to aim even higher.

An embedded and mutually supportive relationship between the parish Church and school extends and deepens the school's Christian vision. Members of the local community express how the school and church elevate levels of fulfilment and joy for young and old alike. Love is seen in action, from random deeds of kindness, such as pupils putting out chairs for the village Friendship Group, to shared fund-raising events. The vicar serves the community with joy, imagination and compassion. She plays a significant role in making collective worship a meaningful time when the school community renews its strength by being together. The vicar meets with the school's pupil worship team to develop ideas for collective worship. Together they plan how a Bible story can be best presented to help everyone understand a Christian value such as peace, compassion or justice. They write prayers together, choose songs of praise, a welcome and a blessing. A child-friendly, yet highly reverent, weekly act of worship in church is then led by the vicar and the worship team. It is a precious time which contributes richly to spiritual development. Pupils know an impressive number of Bible stories from daily acts of worship and many use these to inform the choices that they make. For example, they understand Christian beliefs about seeing everyone as a friend, as in the parable of 'The Good Samaritan'. Collective worship was a powerful source of encouragement for many during the pandemic. The vicar, headteacher and pupils recorded their own worship times which kept hope alive and raised spirits to loftier heights. Pupils are extremely familiar with worship within the Church of England. However, they do not fully benefit from the richness of worship as experienced by an even wider range of Christian traditions. Sign language is learned to support the school's commitment to inclusion and to make learning memorable. Pupils sign the Lord's Prayer, the Grace and the Bible verse from Isaiah. In such ways the school's vision and prayers are at the forefront of everyone's hearts and minds.

The awe-inspiring environment and curriculum of this rural school are driven by the vision to direct thoughts upwards, inwards and outwards. Many pupils develop a sense of wonder in God's creation that is underpinned with displayed verses from the Bible. Many pupils express that God would be pleased that they look after His world. They discover the joy of hard work and patience as they watch vegetables grow. A deep sense of compassion prompts pupils to be champions for environmental issues. Eggs from the rescued chickens are sold at the school gate and produce is donated at Harvest time to the local food bank. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The practices of forgiveness and reconciliation are aspects of love that are evident in relationships. Pupils, who may be new to the school, rise to this remarkably natural and good way of living and lives are transformed. Trust abounds and pupils enjoy the freedom to roam and explore the natural world. A fabulous reflection and prayer area in a tree house is typical of the provision that the school makes for pupils to soar in every way. Inside the school there are echoes of the outside with calm colours which engender a sense of peace and purpose.

In RE lessons pupils enjoy learning because teaching is inspirational. Pupils often choose a way of expressing their understanding of what they have learned. Therefore, everyone is able to achieve. Learning is made memorable because of carefully considered lesson-by-lesson self-assessment questions and repetition. Pupils are curious, discuss issues and explore connections to their lives, ethical issues and world events. The pupils' ability to talk knowledgeably about faiths and worldviews is impressive. Pupils engage deeply with the mysteries of life and develop sincere respect and understanding for all people. Regular visits to places of worship bring learning about faith alive. They reinforce the school's commitment to preparing pupils for life in our diverse society.

The image of flying like an eagle fires aspiration. There is a deep understanding that it is the power of love which is having a life-changing impact on this school community.



**The effectiveness of RE is**

**Excellent**

Inspirational and skilful class teachers create a sense of awe and wonder as they teach RE. Pupils follow a carefully considered curriculum, supporting strong moral and spiritual development. This, along with robust monitoring, ensure that pupils make exceptional academic progress. The youngest pupils use religious language confidently and pupils leave the school with a very high level of religious literacy.

**Contextual information about the school**

Date of inspection	16 June 2022	URN	142097
Date of previous inspection	17 March 2015		
School status	VA	NOR	089
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation	The Staffordshire Schools Multi Academy Trust		
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Lichfield		
Headteacher	Jonathan Wynn		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	In Line with National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)	Colton St Mary's Church of England Primary School became a member of The Staffordshire Schools Multi-Academy Trust in August 2015.		
Inspector's name	Angela Daniel	No.	0757