

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Thomas' Church of England Primary Academy

Vision

We aspire for everyone to achieve their God-given academic, personal and spiritual potential, so they flourish and make a positive impact in the world. Jesus came to offer life in all its fullness, and we aim to support this through providing a Christian education for the children of Kidsgrove and the surrounding areas through learning for life with Jesus. We want children to 'learn for life with Jesus' and flourish in every aspect of their lives. We also want all members of staff and our school community to be flourishing.

Strengths

- The school's Christian vision is lived out in daily life. Its values of thankfulness, fairness, forgiveness, trust and celebration are known and understood by pupils and staff.
- Pastoral care is highly effective. Thoughtful and careful consideration enables individuals to meet their potential and celebrate personal achievement.
- Inspired by the Christian vision, leaders ensure that staff wellbeing is of high priority in the school. Practical action from Three Spires Academy Trust enhances this. This enriches the culture of nurture and care which permeates the school.
- Through the curriculum and extra-curricular offer, the school goes above and beyond to develop the pupils. They are enabled to experience life in all its fullness and develop to their potential.
- A vibrant and positive energy enables pupils to thrive. Dedicated staff are unwavering in their nurture and support. This enables pupils to grow and flourish as unique individuals.

Development Points

- Ensure implicit opportunities for spiritual development are integrated across the curriculum. This is to enhance the way pupils and adults flourish.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to understand injustice and equality at a global level. This will enable pupils to deepen an understanding of social justice and act as agents of change across a wider world.
- Develop first-hand opportunities for pupils to experience the diverse range of faiths within modern Britain. This is to ensure pupils deepen their understanding and extend their knowledge



Inspection Findings

St Thomas' Church of England Primary Academy is on a transformational journey of growth. As the founder academy within the Three Spires Academy Trust, the school is committed to growing and succeeding. Seeds sown are enabling a new positivity, a renewed energy and opportunities to flourish. Effective leaders supported by the Three Spires Academy Trust ensure that a shared Christian vision is at the forefront of every decision. It acts as the lens through which leaders view the school. The vision is known by staff, parents and pupils and has become a clear thread at the heart of all work. School policies and procedures align to the school's vision. Arising from the vision, values of thankfulness, fairness, forgiveness, trust and celebration are an embedded part of the school's fabric. Pupils can reference biblical script linked to these values. This strengthens the impact of the values across the school. Leaders understand the importance of nurturing pupils, adults and families. They believe it is their duty for every child to thrive and are keen to make this happen.

The school is inclusive in its approach to serving its community. Skilled staff ensure targeted support is deployed to support pupils effectively. Regardless of background or need, pupils are at the heart of their work. When initiatives are not effective, directions are changed swiftly and issues remedied. The Christian vision is considered at the heart of all curriculum development. Leaders' firm belief that all should experience life in all its fulness is clear. They are passionate in devising a curriculum offer which supports every learner. Staff are deployed effectively and training and development opportunities tailored to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils. The school has structured areas which support pupils with greatest needs. The Haven and the Nook enable pupils with greatest need to make positive steps in their learning. The school has welcomed support and guidance from both the multi-academy trust (MAT) and a partner trust school. At every level staff show a commitment and passion to enable every pupil to meet their potential. The school benefits from a talented staff team who go above and beyond. Enrichment opportunities are popular and wide ranging. From arts focused through to sporting activities, such opportunities are enabling the development of the whole pupil.

Collective worship is planned thoughtfully being centred around the vision and its core values. Worship is a time and space where pupils and adults experience prayer, stillness and reflection. Pupils talk warmly of worship in school. They effectively articulate how the values of thankfulness, fairness, forgiveness, trust and celebration are expressed and weaved into worship. The local church supports the inclusive collective worship planning and is involved in its delivery. Pupils listen and respond, eager to participate and engage. Spectacular artwork depicting scripture and school values enhances the environment. Reflective spaces in the classrooms offer the opportunity for pupils to reflect and pray outside times of worship. However, few pupils see these as an opportunity to develop an understanding of spiritual growth. Prayer is a feature in worship and pupils talk warmly of the place of prayer in worship. However, a consistent approach to prayer at class level is still to be achieved. The MAT monitors and supports in the development of collective worship. Further opportunities for collective worship coordinators to meet periodically ensures a consistency of approach.

A new leadership team and a clear direction is igniting a passion for success. Staff value the support, direction and care of leaders. They talk of being a family. Staff talk of a positive vibe and how they are living life in all of its fullness. Leaders talk of the paternal work of the MAT. Whether prayers at the beginning of meetings or the value which they place on all adults. Leaders at all levels are keen to support the mental health and well-being of the staff team. Positive relationships are a strength of this school. Staff know the pupils very well. Professional care and compassion exemplifies work with pupils and families. This is highly inclusive and enables varied needs to be met. Parents talk of a vibrance and a positivity. They talk of the welcome received at all levels. They value the place of the local church and the presence of the clergy team. For some families, such opportunities have led to a growing faith journey. They value the 'Inspire' church experiences and the family services.

Arising from the vision, pupils are aware of the need to support others. They actively support local causes and are keen to be seen as agents of change. Pupils are proactive in leading action in support of the local foodbank and charities within the local hospital. A number of pupils have taken further action in support of a wide range of other worthy causes. Their understanding of needs across the wider world is less developed. The school provides opportunities for pupils to be responsible and



respectful citizens. Whether as Eco-School council members, pupil leaders or school council representatives; they are keen to take leading roles. The school's drive to introduce the Rights Respecting School Award is a positive initiative. The impact of which is pupils who are exploring the big issues facing the world today. Their awareness of individual rights in our world is growing and how their actions can change the world for the better. The school provides many opportunities for talents to be nurtured. 'Shine Workshops' provide opportunities for parents to learn alongside their children. These experiences result in the growing confidence of both parent and child. Pupils feel happy and safe at St. Thomas' Church of England Primary Academy. Pupil and parental questionnaires show a growing satisfaction and happiness in the provision on offer. Specialist individuals support families successfully, manage attendance effectively and ensure that safeguarding matters are handled timely.

Religious education (RE) has a high status at St Thomas' because leaders consider it as a core subject. The teaching of RE is good. Teachers ensure that tasks are designed effectively to match the learning in the curriculum plan. This results in pupils who make good progress. The trust's networks support the ongoing and innovative development of the teaching of RE. Pupils learn a range of vocabulary that is essential for their understanding of different religions. This is reflected in the pupils' work and class floor books. Considerable thought in sequencing content builds on prior knowledge resulting in strong, successful learning. The school welcomes Diocesan training and support. This is resulting in precise actions taken by the school and a greater confidence of staff. The curriculum ensures that pupils have broad learning experiences rooted in theology. However, despite the opportunity to learn of other world faiths, there is a lack of first-hand experiences for learners. The effective support from both Three Spires Academy Trust and a neighbouring trust primary school serves to support the ongoing developments within RE. The impact on assessment and the drive to develop spirituality is attributed to these working relationships. Robust monitoring and evaluation by school and trust leaders is used effectively to inform RE development plans. Pupils, their parents, staff and the wider community are right to be proud of the improvement journey which the school has made.

Information

Address	Poplar Drive, Kidsgrove Stoke-On-Trent ST7 4HT		
Date	24 September 2024	URN	148401
Type of school	Academy (inspected as Voluntary Aided)	No. of pupils	194
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT/Federation	Three Spires Trust		
Headteacher	Donna Pierpoint		
Chair of Governors	David Shemilt		
Inspector	Shaun Miles		