Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Nicholas Church of England Primary School

Vision

'Our Christian community learning and growing together'

To inspire in all our children a deep sense of imagination, and equip them with knowledge, to develop their fullest God-given potential, and to be the difference needed to make the world a better place.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches." Matthew 13:31-32.

St Nicholas Church of England Primary School 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

- The school's Christian vision influences daily life, including relationships and decisions about how pupils and adults are supported. This creates a strong sense of community in which individuals are enabled to flourish.
- Pupils experience meaningful opportunities for spiritual development across the wider curriculum. These encourage them to reflect, question and make connections between their learning, themselves and the wider world.
- Collective worship enables pupils and adults to encounter biblical teaching, reflect and respond. Exceptionally strong reciprocal relationships with local churches strengthen this provision.
- A highly inclusive culture ensures pupils and adults are treated with dignity and care. Those who are vulnerable or have additional needs benefit from relationships and support that respond to their individual circumstances.
- In Religious Education (RE) pupils develop secure knowledge and understanding. They engage thoughtfully with challenging questions and relate different faiths and worldviews to their own experiences.

Development Points

- Deepen pupils' understanding of justice and responsibility. This is so they can consider a broader range of informed actions for change alongside charitable responses.

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Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision has a clear biblical foundation that shapes the direction of the school. Pupils and adults understand the significance of Jesus' parable of the mustard seed and its growth into a tree. They connect this image with developing their God-given potential. As the tree grows, they recognise it provides support and shelter for others. Understanding that growth can happen unevenly shapes leaders' approach. They acknowledge that pupils develop in different ways and at different rates, influencing how individuals are nurtured according to their needs. This understanding informs how the school responds to changing needs and circumstances. Leaders and governors evaluate the impact of their decisions through regular monitoring and engagement with pupils and adults. The trust provides challenge, expertise and practical guidance while enabling the school to retain its distinctive Christian character. Adults experience the vision through a culture of professional collaboration and shared responsibility. This enables them to contribute confidently to the school's continuing development. Consequently, the vision is both aspirational and influential. It provides a clear basis for decisions that enable pupils and adults to thrive.

Vision and Curriculum

There are specially selected opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum. Approaches and resources are chosen and adapted to reflect the school's context, needs and Christian vision. Trust guidance helps teachers to promote spiritual development across subjects, using questions that encourage pupils to explore Christian beliefs and other biblical teaching. Staff training has strengthened adults' understanding of spirituality and how to explore this through different subjects. Pupils recognise this dimension of their learning, although more readily in some subjects than others. They identify experiences in science for example, that prompt reflection, questioning and a sense of wonder. Curriculum experiences also encourage them to explore questions about themselves, others and the world. Pupils use classroom reflection areas to pause, reflect and consider Christian values that are relevant to them. They participate in a broad range of extra-curricular activities that complement their curriculum experiences. For pupils with additional needs, barriers to learning are identified and provision adapted to improve their access to learning. Leaders use classroom visits and pupil voice to evaluate the effectiveness of spiritual development. This is helping leaders strengthen pupils' experiences where needed.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is valued and meaningful to the school community. Biblical teaching is thoughtfully connected to pupils' experiences, enabling them to consider its relevance to their own lives. Opportunities for prayer and reflection give pupils and adults space to explore faith and spirituality. Relationships with Anglican, Methodist and other local Christian communities are strong, with regular engagement. This enables pupils and adults to experience different traditions and expressions of faith. Pupils therefore encounter Christianity through people who live out their faith in different ways. They visit a range of local churches, while clergy are regular and familiar members of the school community. For some, this has supported a deeper connection with Christian faith. Consequently, worship and the school's church partnerships make a significant contribution to spiritual flourishing.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils recognise their responsibility towards others and identify some ways in which they can make a positive difference. They contribute to school life through varied roles, including play leaders and digital leaders. The charity team is broadening its role as Agents for Change. Pupils understand

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injustice as unfairness and recognise their responsibility to respond. Work with a local charity, for example, has increased their awareness of autism and why some people may need different support. When discussing injustice, pupils identify homelessness, bullying and inequality as examples that require a response. Some recognise that change can involve challenging injustice, including writing to those with influence. However, their responses remain predominantly focused on meeting immediate need. Their understanding of the underlying causes of injustice is less developed.

Religious Education

Through RE, pupils develop secure knowledge and sophisticated understanding of religion and belief. They recall specific learning about Christianity, other religions and worldviews, using appropriate religious vocabulary. For example, pupils connect Hindu festivals and stories with their understanding of different expressions of God within Hindu belief. Visits to places of worship further deepen pupils' understanding by enabling them to encounter different religions and worldviews in lived contexts. Younger pupils confidently recall and sequence Bible stories. Older pupils engage with increasingly challenging questions and recognise that matters of belief do not always have one answer. They understand that religious ideas can be interpreted differently, including literally or metaphorically. Pupils listen carefully to different viewpoints and recognise that understanding another perspective does not require them to change their own. This progression enables pupils to discuss religion and belief with depth, confidence and respect.

Teaching and assessment in RE enable pupils to build their knowledge and understanding progressively. The curriculum is carefully sequenced so that learning builds from year to year. Teachers use questioning to deepen pupils' thinking. Assessment identifies gaps and misconceptions, enabling teachers to revisit learning where necessary. It also informs appropriate support and challenge, helping pupils to progress from their individual starting points. Religious vocabulary has a high profile, helping pupils to express understanding accurately. Leaders regularly scrutinise work and seek pupils' views to evaluate the quality and impact of teaching. Professional development and wider RE network meetings strengthen teachers' subject knowledge and confidence. This provides additional expertise when teachers need guidance to develop their practice. Consequently, pupils, including those requiring additional support, achieve well in RE.

Vision and School Culture

Pupils and adults experience a strong sense of belonging within this close-knit school community. Individuals are known well, enabling care to respond sensitively to particular needs and circumstances. Pupils with additional needs participate meaningfully in school life because barriers to their inclusion are understood and addressed. This reflects a culture in which individuals are valued. Pupils facing additional challenges are supported to participate in the wider life and learning of the school. Adults experiencing personal or professional challenge are similarly treated with care, dignity and compassion. They experience a community in which colleagues notice when others need help and respond accordingly. Relationships across the school community are warm and supportive, contributing positively to wellbeing. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care their children receive and the community to which they belong. One aptly described the school as 'small but mighty'. The school's small size strengthens its ability to know individuals and nurture their God-given potential. Consequently, pupils and adults feel valued, cared for and able to flourish.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	School Road, Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5PQ		
Date	23 September 2026	URN	141529
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	209
Diocese	Rochester		
MAT	Aquinas Church of England Education Trust		
MAT Chair	Giles Lambert		
Headteacher	Laura Williams		
Chair of Governors	Sinead Copperwheat		
Inspector	Anthony Cosans		

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