

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John's Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Vision

Shining Bright Together As One Family

'In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father who is in heaven.' (Matthew 5:16)

Our desire at St. John's is for every person to shine their own light brightly, whether it be through academic ability, sport, music, art or anything else. Everyone is important and everyone is a unique masterpiece in the eyes of God. We also feel it is important to know that we are never truly alone. At St John's, we stand together with each other, supporting and helping, celebrating and comforting. We are one school, church and community family, doing life together.

St John's Church of England Aided 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

- Driven by their vision, St John's Church of England Primary School shines as a beacon of hope and peace. It is a place where the school community flourishes.
- In response to the school's Christian vision, pupils and adults are surrounded with secure and loving relationships. Over time, these help them to know something of what it means to be a child of God.
- School leaders, including governors, make bold decisions, ensuring pupils and adults thrive as a result.
- Opportunities for worship are inspirational in that they support pupils and adults to develop spiritually and equip them for a life well lived.
- As a result of a carefully planned religious education (RE) curriculum, pupils, including those deemed vulnerable, make good progress.

Development Points

- Develop the new themes and approaches to the RE curriculum. This is in order that pupils gain a broader perspective of the subject.
- Embed the language to support spiritual development. This is to enable pupils to grow spiritually through enhanced curriculum opportunities.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision has a positive impact across St John's School on a daily basis. It can be found in the Christian love shown to pupils, families and the wider community. Decision making is driven by the school's vision and is ambitious and purposeful. Leaders undertake effective monitoring of the vision. This gives them a clear focus in enabling pupils and adults to thrive. Governors invest significantly and strategically. They ensure that their decisions are guided by the vision and reflect the school's Christian foundation. Staff are supported to be the best they can be through professional development and positive relationships. Partnerships with the diocese and local community groups enhance the life and work of the school.

Vision and Curriculum

St John's offers an engaging curriculum that allows pupils to develop academically, socially and spiritually. Leaders evaluate the impact of the curriculum carefully. This ensures that it is effective in meeting pupils' needs, including those deemed vulnerable. For example, pupils requiring additional support are identified quickly and provided with appropriate help to aid success. In this way, pupils are enabled to flourish. They have access to a broad range of opportunities to explore their interests through an engaging extra-curricular offer. These activities nurture pupils' gifts and talents and assist them to draw on rich experiences. The recently developed shared language for spirituality enables pupils to make some key links. However, this is not fully embedded. Therefore, currently there are limited opportunities for spiritual growth across the curriculum.

Worship and Spirituality

The daily collective worship welcomes pupils and adults to connect with God. Music and song provide uplifting moments. Pupils are clear that worship offers more than this. It is a support that they can turn to independently when needed. It enables them to reflect when worshipping as a school community or when alone. Worship is accessible and welcoming. It is highly valued by pupils and adults. There are many aspects to worship at this school but each has been carefully planned to provide a rich, inspirational and unifying experience. Pupils and adults benefit from regular access to a school based chaplain. As a result, opportunities to explore faith extend from the school into the wider community. Mutually beneficial church partnerships support pupils in their spiritual journey after they have left St John's. For example, the after school worship run by the local clergy inspires adults and pupils to grow their faith further in the local church. Hence, the trusting relationships built during their time at school enables pupils to explore their ideas about spirituality in a safe space.

Vision and School Culture

In line with the vision, the school encourages positive relationships that result in pupils and adults living well together. Courageous and free-flowing support brings dignity and aspiration. Leaders ensure that staff are well cared for in order that they may serve others. Importantly, pupils know that they are of worth and expect to be treated well. They understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, physically and mentally, and recognise when they need help to do this. At St John's, leaders think about the plan that God has for each and every one of its members. Therefore, pupils are known as individuals and provision is tailored to meet their needs. Leaders show commitment in the support given to pupils and staff. As a result, they feel valued and are encouraged to be the best that they can be.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The school's Christian vision is one rooted in kindness. Leaders are clear about its purpose to build secure, loving and trusting relationships that enable pupils and adults to flourish. Staff explicitly teach and effectively model forgiveness and compassion. In turn, pupils demonstrate a secure sense of responsibility to themselves and to others. They resolve conflict maturely, acknowledging that this takes commitment and perseverance, as well as the unpicking of 'big feelings'. They confidently extend this understanding to their wider community, shining a



sense of hope when there are challenging situations. This is further supported by well-established partnerships with community organisations. These enable pupils to make ethical choices and gain a greater sense of how small voices matter. This is skilfully developed as pupils mature. Consequently, pupils are keen to ensure that people are treated fairly in their school community and beyond.

Religious Education

The RE curriculum is well planned and sequenced so that increasingly complex knowledge and skills are built over time. The curriculum is diverse and includes thought-provoking ideas that pupils navigate confidently. Through training, staff develop their subject knowledge. This is further enhanced by a detailed curriculum that sets out what is to be taught and when. RE is prioritised by school leaders who ensure that it is led and delivered well. New approaches have been recently introduced to help pupils gain a broader understanding of the subject. However, this is in the early stages and currently has a limited impact in deepening pupils' experience of RE. Leaders have made bold decisions about curriculum content in response to the local context. Therefore, pupils are well equipped for their RE journey, drawing on key vocabulary and a breadth of ideas.

Due to the quality of teaching and a carefully considered curriculum, pupils progress well in the subject. Key knowledge is made explicit and pupils are appropriately supported to make links between ideas. They do this with increasing independence as they move through the school. Effective assessment systems are in place so leaders are clear of the impact of the curriculum on pupil progress. Pupils have a mature understanding of the diversity across and within different religions and can confidently explain a variety of practices. Lessons are adapted to meet specific needs, supporting pupils' learning. Pupils value the subject and are respectful and engaged.

Information

Address	Jubilee Road, Shildon, DL42EQ		
Date	27 November 2025	URN	114285
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	209
Diocese	Durham		
Headteacher	Nicola Pallister		
Chair of Governors	Andy Harris		
Inspector	Vikki Wilson		