

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

<b>Portbury St Mary's Church of England VA Primary School</b>	
Address	Church Road, Portbury, Bristol, BS20 7TR
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	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
<p>Love your neighbour as yourself' Luke 10:27</p> <p>We aspire to be a kind and creative learning community where we support and challenge each other to be the best we can be.</p> <p>Our vision is based on elements of the parable of the Good Samaritan</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inspirational leadership of the headteacher, the multi-academy trust (MAT) and diocese have created a community of compassionate care and encouragement. However, the extent leaders focus on the impact of the vision on all aspects of the school is less embedded.</li> <li>• The school is developing a definition of spirituality. As a result, the way it intentionally enriches the curriculum and daily life are not yet explicitly planned.</li> <li>• Whilst pupils have a good understanding of inclusion and equality, the way the curriculum raises issues of inequality and injustice is underdeveloped. Consequently, pupils do not feel motivated by the vision to make a tangible difference to social action projects.</li> <li>• Collective worship has a good impact. This is evident from the increasing roles played by pupils who feel their views matter to staff.</li> <li>• Religious education (RE) is very well-led and reflects the school's vision enabling all to flourish. As a result, pupils enjoy the subject and recognise its prominent role at the heart of school life.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the robustness of leaders' evidence based self-evaluation of St Mary's as a Church school. This is to further enhance school improvement leading to opportunities for all to flourish.</li> <li>• Ensure a shared understanding of spirituality within the school. Extend provision for spiritual enrichment to enable meaningful moments for pupils to develop spirituality.</li> <li>• Raise the profile of global issues of inequality and injustice in the curriculum. This is so that pupils feel motivated to act as agents of change and social action projects become embedded.</li> </ul>



## Inspection findings

St Mary's Christian vision is deeply rooted in its historic partnership with the local church community and the mutual care shown. The vision based on the parable of the Good Samaritan is very well understood. The school's links within The Lighthouse Schools Partnership MAT have a significant impact. A newly formed beneficial partnership with its federated school extends the sense of community. However, the formation of a new local governing committee has taken an extended period of time. This has resulted in a delay to the formation of the previously well-established ethos committee. Consequently, the school recognises that the monitoring and evaluating of the impact of the vision is currently underdeveloped. The dynamic headteacher has raised the impact of the vision. She has led training for governors and headteachers for the MAT and diocese. This has raised governors' understanding of their monitoring role. Leaders have the highest aspirations for their pupils. Priority is given to increasing the central role of collective worship and quality of RE. Up to date, continuing professional development is provided for all staff. In this way, they feel highly valued as individuals and as a team. The partnership with the local church is a constant strength and support to the school. This is evident in the way members of the church community support the school services held in the church each week. Many events are provided jointly with the school or for the wider community. Examples of these events are the Bluebell café and the weekly open church providing pastoral team work. The school's partnerships with its parents and families are exceptionally strong providing mutual benefits for all involved.

The school's creative curriculum is an expression of its vision enabling all to flourish. Teaching is inspiring, engaging and fully focussed on meeting the needs of all pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and value their time at school. The headteacher and staff make bold decisions with the curriculum. As a result, the potential of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged including those with additional needs is transformed. The curriculum is enriched by special weeks which focus on themes such as compassion, light and Easter. Extra-curricular activities including theatre visits, tobogganing and archery have a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Staff and pupils are developing a shared understanding of spiritual development. However, as yet, this is limited because opportunities within the curriculum for developing spirituality are not explicitly recognised and planned.

The school's aspirational vision motivates and encourages pupils to learn well. It enhances pupils' resilience and develops their understanding of courage when faced with difficulties in learning and life. The vision supports pupils in making good choices in life. An example is the exciting way pupils learn about moral dilemmas such as that faced in the Bible story of Jonah and the whale. St Mary's is a very welcoming, warm and caring community. The long established buddy system between the oldest and youngest pupils has a powerful impact in creating supportive relationships. Strategies for supporting the mental health and wellbeing of adults and pupils are very effective. Healthy relationships are promoted very well by the school's relationships education curriculum which reflects the vision. The support the school provided to the village during the pandemic shone like a beacon of hope. Consequently, the strong sense of community grows even deeper.

Difference and diversity are welcomed and celebrated in this inclusive, accepting community. Opportunities within the curriculum to develop an understanding of inequality and diversity have a positive impact. These include themes such as Black History Month and Fairtrade. This has resulted in pupils taking action to support Ukraine and fundraise for charities such as Water Aid. Themes in worship promote a developing understanding of the wider world. However, opportunities to develop a depth of understanding of disadvantage and deprivation



in the curriculum are limited.. Consequently, the way pupils feel motivated to challenge injustice and inequality through social action projects is underdeveloped.

Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and central to daily life at St Mary's. It reflects the school's vision by motivating and inspiring pupils to be compassionate and caring like the Good Samaritan. Worship themes root the school's values in biblical stories as well as the life and teachings of Jesus. Weekly worship held in church in the presence of families and local residents enhances the strong sense of community. This sets the celebration of pupils' achievement in a Christian context. A wide range of Christian festivals are celebrated in church usually led by clergy. These events deepen pupils' understanding of the Church year. The local Open the Book team enhances worship considerably by visiting school to lead worship. Anglican practice is embedded by formal greetings and responses led by pupils. An understanding of the Christian teaching of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is developed effectively during worship. Times of quiet and prayer in worship contrast very well with joyous active singing. In this way, worship effectively promotes spiritual development. Pupils work as part of the ethos committee enriches the spiritual life of the school. These pupils are beginning to plan, lead and evaluate worship independently. They are proactive in raising the impact of reflective spaces inside the building as well as in the school grounds.

RE is an engaging and inspiring subject at St Mary's. Pupils understand that it reflects the school's vision promoting respect and diversity. The well-balanced curriculum enhances pupils learning in RE. Subject leaders support staff planning through collaborative and insightful work. They use training from the diocese very effectively to embed schemes of work throughout the school. As a result, very effective systems have been established for teachers to understand and implement pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils enjoy RE because the well-balanced curriculum is challenging and motivating. A variety of creative and innovative approaches are used such dance, music and artwork which increases enjoyment of the subject. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity as a living and diverse faith. They recognise its relevance to their lives and develop a good understanding and respect for people from a range of faiths. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and think deeply about their beliefs and those of others. Consequently RE makes a substantial contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good
	<p>Teaching and learning in RE is good due to the school's engaging curriculum. Strategies for identifying strengths and areas for development are very effective. As a result, pupils including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) respond well and make good progress. This is due to a concerted approach by staff enabling all pupils including those deemed to be disadvantaged, to flourish academically in RE.</p>		
Information			
School	Portbury St Mary's Church of England VA Primary School	Inspection date	14 June 2023
URN	143283	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Bath & Wells	Pupils on roll	94
MAT/Federation	Lighthouse Schools Partnership		
Executive Headteacher	Amy Townsend		
Chair of Governors	Cath Campbell and Jessica Vallentine/Adele Haysom		
Inspector	Daphne Spitzer	No.	37