



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Walthamstow	
Address	Brooke Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 9HJ

School vision
<p>'I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain with me and I with you then you will bear much fruit. Love one another as I have loved you'. Transforming ourselves, Transforming others, Transforming our community.</p> <p>St. Mary's biblical vision is based on John 15: 2: 'Love each other as I have loved you.' We believe in educating for life by encouraging the whole development of each and every child as a person made in God's image, unique, special and deeply loved by their maker.</p>
School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspiring, bold and courageous school leaders, embody the school's Christian vision. Their expertise and thoughtfulness have resulted in the vision being lived out in remarkable ways. This positively impacts St Mary's School and the community it serves. • A strong emphasis on character development is central to the work of the school. Highly innovative support for pupils' personal growth is paramount to all school activity. As a result, the school is a joyful place to be and pupils are confident to manage challenges. • Inspired by the vision, spiritual flourishing enhances the richness of pupil experience. The significant provision for this, through the curriculum, collective worship and the high-quality delivery of religious education (RE), strengthens spirituality. • There is a strong active culture of justice and responsibility. Extraordinary acts of courageous advocacy, promoting social justice, have a transformational impact within the local community. This has fostered a highly compassionate and loving outworking of the vision that drives partnerships and enriches provision. • Driven by the vision, staff are given rich opportunities to ensure their professional development. By prioritising relationships, staff are empowered through expert mentoring and coaching. This enriches the work of the school so that everyone can flourish.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with the school's vision and plans, continue to develop growth partnerships, to further share the school's high quality practice as a Church school. This is so the school can continue to impact the lives of those in other Church schools positively.
Inspection findings
<p>Underpinned by the Christian vision, love is transformative within the life of St Mary's School. It drives the actions of dedicated leaders and governors, positively impacting pupils and staff. The school's theological understanding of the vision to 'bear fruit', co-created with stakeholders, is clearly articulated and modelled. This results in flourishing. The school is relentlessly committed to</p>

providing opportunities for staff and pupils to achieve their potential. Governors have strong oversight and are fully engaged in the monitoring and evaluation of school activities. Working closely with the trust and its schools, leaders' expectations and mutual expertise, strengthens provision. Professional development and personal growth opportunities have increased staff confidence and are central to the school's success. This is achieved by fostering relationships, equipping through expert coaching and providing access to relevant training. Values of faith, equity, caring, truth, wisdom, forgiveness and respect are evident across school life, strengthening character development. The impact is that pupils have a deep sense of empathy that spurs them into selfless actions. They are nurtured, supported and empowered to thrive.

The school has forged powerful and transformative partnerships, within the trust, to support itself and other Church schools. This has, in turn, cultivated staff skills and abilities, increasing their impact. Plans for further extending beneficial partnerships have been devised in conjunction with the trust.

St Mary's is a warm, inclusive community where intellectual curiosity and resilience are developed. Barriers to learning are successfully removed and pupils are encouraged to flourish academically. The vision underpins the provision for special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) pupils and those who are disadvantaged. This commitment is achieved through comprehensive, individualised support and careful resourcing. Within the broad curriculum there is a rich understanding of inclusivity and diversity. A partnership with a school in Kenya provides an opportunity to learn from those in a less economically developed country. The world map with the Lord's Prayer in many languages highlights how the school promotes global awareness. 'Saturday plus', for disadvantaged pupils, and 'Saturday achievement school', are examples of the breadth of additional educational support. The school is characterised by opportunities to develop spiritually. This is central to the curriculum and is further supported by reflective spirituality days and spiritual walks. Spaces around school encourage pupils to ponder big questions and reflect. Awe and wonder are evident in the hospitable school environment, providing an inspiring and exciting place to learn. Pupils and adults are encouraged to care for themselves and to develop spiritually, in a way that is meaningful to them. Pupils describe their own spirituality and respect those whose beliefs differ from their own. The multi-faith prayer room is used to meet the needs of all faiths. It provides opportunity for prayer and reflection. Wise resourcing has resulted in outdoor activities at break time that are structured and broad ranging. These include reflection activities, games, sports and quiet spaces. The vision drives the ambitious curriculum, emphasising character development, to deepen outcomes and enrich pupil experience.

Collective worship is celebratory, joyful and enhances spiritual flourishing. Leaders ensure that it is well-planned and highly inclusive. It is value-driven and led by clergy, trust leaders and teaching staff. Careful thought has been given to engaging pupils in discussion and reflection during daily worship, to facilitate spiritual growth. Moments of stillness and prayer are regular parts of worship, as well as Bible stories and singing. Church services, attended by the school, further strengthen the worship life. The collective worship council are role models for other pupils in their support of the worship life in school. Their involvement has positively shaped pupil experience. Regular monitoring of worship by leaders and the trust helps to ensure provision positively contributes to the spiritual growth of the school.

Leaders ensure that the school is a compassionate place of sanctuary for pupils and staff. Inclusion is achieved through robust pastoral care and understanding differences by building relationships. Pupils are confident and know that their voice is valued in the school community. The school's podcast celebrates pupil achievements and promotes flourishing. Staff are nurtured and their wellbeing is prioritised by expert leaders who coach and mentor. This is achieved through a careful tending of professional relationships and directed support, to help them thrive. The school has

devised its own comprehensive programme for developing leaders and, as a result, staff feel well-supported. Additionally, national programmes for leadership development are successfully undertaken and provide the opportunity for professional flourishing.

Inspired by its vision, the school cultivates a powerful culture of social justice. Pupils have a clear sense of responsibility and compassion towards others. Their awareness spurs them to take action to stand up and become courageous advocates for justice. 'Young Transformers' is an impressive programme of study, underpinned by the Christian vision to develop character. It is a unique part of pupil learning experience, raising awareness and placing service at the heart of learning. Pupils are highly motivated to work to be confident agents of change locally, nationally and internationally. 'We cannot walk alone', a school project, educates the whole school about the plight of refugees. In turn, pupils' compassionate actions have resulted in living out the gospel command of caring for the marginalised. The school has worked tirelessly to champion and support those who have been displaced. This has been achieved through trailblazing practical help towards resourcing those in need. Further acts of pupil kindness include writing letters of support to the elderly in care homes. As a result, the school has made a difference in developing community cohesion. For such reasons, one parent justifiably said of the school 'It is truly a remarkable place'.

RE is rightly given a high priority across the school. This is evident in rigorous planning and resourcing. The curriculum is well structured, with various carefully planned activities offering breadth and challenge. It provides pupils with a deep understanding of religions and worldviews, including global Christianity. 'Godly Play' in early years foundation stage is well used to learn about world religions through visual aids and storytelling. Professional development and training provided by the diocese, enhances the provision of RE. Highly competent teaching results in lessons where pupils make rapid progress. Regular teacher assessments and helpful feedback, inform learning. Teachers are ambitious for pupils to do well. Pupil knowledge, recall and grasp of sophisticated concepts is evidence of their engagement. Pupils' enjoyment of RE is evident in the quality of their work, high attainment and enthusiastic learning behaviour. Opportunity for reflection deepens pupil understanding. Frequent visitors, discussion and debates, make learning active and engaging.

The inspection findings indicate that St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Walthamstow, is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	25 April 2024	URN	144238
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	563
Diocese	Chelmsford		
MAT/Federation	Genesis Education Trust		
Headteacher	Joe Pitchford		
Chair	Ade Ademola		
Inspector	Claire Gibson	No.	2227