

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Christopher's Church of England Primary School

Vision

Guided by Faith, a Journey of Strength, a Foundation of Pride

At our school, we believe in helping and supporting each other, just as St. Christopher carried others on their journey. With determination and kindness, we grow into confident, independent learners. We show respect and equity, making sure everyone is valued and included. Through positivity and determination, we prepare for life's challenges, knowing that together, learning, kindness, and courage help show a brighter future for all.

"With faith, we soar on wings of strength and rise to every challenge" Ref. Isaiah 40:31

St Christopher's 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 community is committed to its new Christian vision of supporting one another to enable pupils to flourish. The strong culture of inclusion has a positive impact on pupils, families and staff, enabling them to be valued for who they are.
- The mental health and wellbeing of staff is a priority for school leaders. This means that adults in school can flourish as professionals. As a result, they provide caring and excellent role models to pupils.
- The alignment of the vision of the school with that of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT) has enhanced opportunities for pupils and staff to flourish.
- Worship is a significant and central part of school life. It is very well supported by members of the local church. This enriches the spiritual life of the school.
- There is a strong culture of justice and responsibility within the school. The outworking of this is a deep sense of care for others.

Development Points

- Embed recent changes to the religious education (RE) curriculum. This is to deepen pupils' understanding of the diversity within world faiths, including Christianity.
- Agree a shared understanding of spirituality. This is to ensure that opportunities for spiritual development are identified and used across the curriculum.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The school's Christian vision has been thoughtfully revised to ensure it is relevant to the needs of the community. The inclusion of different groups of people to contribute to the creation of the vision has brought the school closer together. The biblical encouragement to rise to every challenge acts as an inspiration to governors, staff and pupils. The vision aligns closely to that of DEMAT. As a result, school and trust leaders are highly committed to all pupils succeeding. Core values, such as positivity and determination, are promoted to help live out the vision. A different value, such as friendship, is highlighted each half term, including during collective worship. Pupils are motivated to achieve a values award that makes the vision a living reality for them. They develop confidence and self-esteem through such recognition. True to the vision, school and trust leaders prioritise the professional development of staff. As a result, they flourish in their roles.

Vision and Curriculum

The school has adopted an ambitious curriculum that matches the needs of the pupils and the school's context. Reflecting the vision, staff have high aspirations for pupils. The school has developed an extensive extra-curricular programme, which includes music and sport. As a result, pupils can follow and develop their interests in order to flourish and succeed. The trust partnership has enabled pupils to join those from other schools to experience memorable events. For example, older pupils are inspired by a visit to Ely Cathedral for the trust's annual carol concert. Such experiences expose children to the wider world as well as deepening their sense of community. Leaders and staff intervene quickly to help those who are experiencing challenges and to support individuals. They thoughtfully tailor provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are vulnerable. Consequently, these pupils are enabled to thrive. There are many opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to reflect on their learning. Additionally, the school has begun to introduce ways to help them explore their own spiritual development. However, there is currently no shared language with which to act upon this more fully.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is a celebratory time for pupils and adults to unite as a school community. Leaders carefully plan worship so pupils can explore the school's vision in creative ways. These include singing, liturgy, prayer, reflection and Bible reading. This leads to high levels of engagement among pupils. The worship council takes pride in working alongside staff and clergy to lead acts of worship. This enhances their understanding of the importance of collective worship. Weekly class worship enables staff to adapt themes to the needs and interests of their class. This enables more pupils to have the opportunity for participation. Pupils talk to parents at home about what they learn and experience in collective worship. As a result, worship contributes positively to pupils' spiritual development. A strong partnership with the local church enriches collective worship. Church members regularly lead services, including at significant times in the church calendar, such as Christmas and Easter. The Open the Book team make Bible stories interesting and memorable. Parents value the invitation to attend weekly celebration worship and special occasions. Consistent with the vision, this enables families to be included and part of the wider community.

Religious Education

The school's new RE curriculum is carefully designed to study a range of religions and worldviews. School leaders have adopted the trust's scheme of work as it aligns more closely with the rest of the curriculum. This leads to pupils making meaningful links in their learning across subjects. RE lessons promote an understanding of beliefs and how they affect the way others live. This is often through big questions, such as 'Should a worldview always stay the same?' Pupils are given a variety of ways to record their responses in RE. For example, they can upload videos of themselves talking about their work. In line with the school's vision, this



enables less confident writers to contribute fully in lessons. Enrichment activities, supported by teams from the local church, broaden the RE curriculum. These include interactive days for pupils to learn about Easter, Christmas and Pentecost. Trust and school leaders support staff to deliver the new units of work. This builds their confidence to teach the subject effectively. The introduction of the new curriculum has led to greater consideration being given to diversity within religions, including Christianity. However, the ways in which this is reflected in pupils' understanding is not fully embedded. School and trust leaders have rightly identified the development of RE as a school improvement priority.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Inspired by the vision to develop confident, independent learners, the school promotes opportunities for pupil leadership. These include play leaders and prefects who take pride in their roles. Pupils demonstrate responsibility for the welfare of others. For example, worship council members work with the church to provide items for a local foodbank. Parents rightly recognise the way older pupils support those lower down the school, for example at sports day. This results in a strong sense of connection and belonging. Pupils encounter a range of justice-related issues through the curriculum and collective worship. For example, topics such as migration and civil rights enable pupils to reflect and have thoughtful discussions. Leaders are mindful of the school's key role in the life of the community. This has led to the setting up of pre-school provision. In this way the value of inclusion is being lived out in a wider context.

Vision and School Culture

The Christian vision underpins how members of the school community are expected to interact with each other. The school's behaviour policy has high expectations of pupils. It is consistently applied by staff. Consequently, it supports pupils to treat others with respect and understanding. Compassionate school leaders are role models in the way they welcome those who are new to the school. For example, home visits and planned events enable staff to get to know pupils and families at the start of their school journey. This ensures that the educational and emotional needs of pupils are responded to effectively in school. Good mental health is a priority and strategies are included in the curriculum to promote wellbeing. School and trust leaders provide regular professional development training for staff. They offer opportunities for subject leaders to share their expertise with other schools in the trust. Teachers in the early stages of their career are mentored well. As a result, staff are valued and empowered in their roles. Driven by the vision, the school offers caring support to those facing challenging circumstances. The partnership between the school and the local church further contributes to this. For example, the school liaises with the church to provide practical help for families struggling financially.

Information

Address	Bellflower Crescent, Red Lodge, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP288XQ		
Date	23 September 2025	URN	142025
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	358
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Helen Jackson		
Headteacher	Chloe Brown		
Chair of Governors	Hannah Sammons		
Inspector	Neil Henery		