

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Astley St Stephen's Church of England Primary School

Vision

At St Stephen's we are inspired by the biblical teaching and example of Jesus Christ being, 'The Light of the World.' John 8:12

Our school is welcoming and inclusive. We strive to celebrate and nurture everyone to their full potential. We, both children and adults, desire to be **good role models** who inspire others through **a love of learning** and are motivated to make a positive impact on each other's lives. We want this impact to go beyond school, into our community and into the world. To be 'lights in the darkness' for, the 'light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.' John 1:5

Strengths

- St Stephen's Christian vision is highly effective in meeting the needs of the community. The school is a light that shines in the darkness for many. It enables both pupils and adults to shine and thrive.
- Relationships across school reflect the vision, where adults and pupils are good role models inspiring each other through a love of learning.
- There are well planned, invitational opportunities for the whole school community to come together for celebration, reflection, and prayer. As a result, collective worship contributes significantly to both adults and pupils flourishing spiritually.
- Governors demonstrate a clear understanding of the Christian vision. They value and recognise that all decisions are based on and supported by the vision.
- A close relationship with the church affirms a keen sense of community. It supports Christianity as a living faith and enhances the work of the school.

Development Points

- Determine and embed a shared understanding of the language of spirituality. This is to strengthen leaders' evaluation of provision for spiritual development throughout the curriculum.
- Develop a consistent approach to assessment in religious education (RE). This is to help pupils know what they need to do to improve and to encourage each pupil to fulfil their learning potential.



Inspection Findings

St Stephen's Christian vision and related values underpin all aspects of the daily life of the school. Governors, staff, pupils, families, and representatives from the church were involved in reviewing the vision to give it clarity. This has enabled it to be relevant and lived out. Leaders understand the needs of the local community. They harness the power of the Christian vision, enabling the school to be the 'light that shines in the darkness'. St Stephen's is welcoming and inclusive, embracing all members of the community. As a result, families are supported, and pupils are cared for. They thrive in their educational and personal development. Governors show great commitment and talk about the vision enabling pupils and adults to flourish. The vision permeates through every decision they make. The school uniform policy was discussed with compassion in a recent meeting. The school's effectiveness as a Church school is discussed in every governing body meeting. Parents are more involved in school life. They attend collective worship regularly showing the impact of the Christian vision on them flourishing.

The curriculum at St Stephen's is designed to ensure every pupil can 'live life in all its fullness'. The school offers stimulating and awe-inspiring learning experiences with Christian values at its heart. Pupils' experience of visits helps them to appreciate rich curricular links. To instil the love of learning the English curriculum has been renewed to include more inspiring texts for pupils. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their reading. They are inspired to buy their own copies of books used in school. Maths fun days have been planned with opportunities to dress up. As a result, the Christian vision of the school is being lived out and pupils have a love of learning. Staff recognise the opportunities for spiritual development throughout the curriculum and that more cohesive work is needed to develop a shared language around this. The Christian vision ensures pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good support in all areas of the curriculum. The school has appointed a full-time pastoral support worker to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning. This role has made a huge difference to several families. It has allowed pupils to access school even if they are struggling. Parents value all this support for their children and appreciate they are encouraged to reach their potential. A well-planned extra-curricular programme ensures all pupils are included and valued. It gives them the opportunity to shine in non-academic areas such as sports club art or singing.

Collective worship is at the heart of the community of St Stephen's. There are well planned, invitational opportunities for the wider community to come together allowing both adults and children to flourish spiritually. Staff, pupils, and the wider community value this opportunity to celebrate, reflect, pray and to focus on the vision and values. Pupils say that what they learn in worship can help them to be a better person. Parents appreciate learning about the school's values and actively reinforce them at home. The take home card with the value discussed in Tuesday worship supports them with this. Collective worship is evaluated regularly and adapted accordingly. School has a close relationship with the church, strengthened by them using the school to worship on Sunday. Representatives from the church regularly join school worship. They value the partnership they have with the school and are working on several projects including 'Open the Book' and developing open space worship in the school grounds. These are bringing more opportunities for church and school to develop their spiritual life together.

Positive relationships across the whole school and the ethos are driven by the vision. This has resulted in a community where everyone is respected and valued. Older pupils aspire to be a senior pupil. This means being recognised as showing the school values consistently. They can identify that everyone is capable of living the school values. They want to be the light for others and know that if they have made a



mistake, there is light in the darkness. Teachers are their role models; they also recognise they can be good role models. An example of this is the buddy system between Year 6 and Reception pupils. Parents appreciate these older children acknowledging their children outside school even when they have started high school. Staff know they are valued and supported by an inspirational leadership team. Wellbeing of staff is given a high priority. Staff, and pupils, have access to a counsellor and provision is in place for this to be accessed discreetly. Workloads are shared by a close team. Parents speak passionately about the school. They feel well supported in times of difficulty.

The Christian vision about being the 'light' means that pupils are empowered to advocate for those in need and for things that matter to them. There has been a focus on supporting local charities. A project the school supports involves them investing in global enterprise. Pupils in Key Stage 2 select which enterprises to support around the world. The school council, ethos team, senior pupils and house captains meet regularly with staff and governors to ensure all pupils have a voice. Pupils are actively encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and others through team building opportunities. These include den building in the early years and residential trips in Years 4 and 6. To reinforce responsibility in the community the older children attend Crucial Crew, learning how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils gaining confidence in what they can do for their community and globally is strong.

RE is well resourced and has a high profile within the school. The school adopted the new Manchester Diocese RE Syllabus in September 2023. Both staff and the governing body have evaluated the new syllabus ensuring it supports the school context and prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. The design of the RE curriculum has resulted in a broad and balanced offer for pupils. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews. They appreciate diversity of religions within the local area. The RE curriculum enables pupils to engage with challenging questions and a chance to reflect on their own beliefs. A wide variety of learning activities provides for the needs of all pupils.

Teaching in RE is no less than good. All teaching staff deliver RE lessons. Their knowledge and understanding is supported by the RE lead ensuring teaching is accurate. RE support and training from the diocese is accessed by staff. In the transition to implementing the new syllabus, staff have ensured that the curriculum has effectively addressed gaps in pupils' learning. Marking is effective and pupils respond to personalised feedback. However, assessment in RE is not consistent meaning pupils are not aware of their achievements in this subject. Vulnerable and SEND pupils are supported effectively to access RE at their own levels. RE books show clear progression.

Information

Address	Manchester Road, Tyldesley, M29 7BT, United Kingdom		
Date	5 November 2024	URN	106482
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	211
Diocese/District	Manchester		
Headteacher	Jillian Southern		
Chair of Governors	Janet Pollard		
Inspector	Helen Kelly		