

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

St Mary's Church of England Academy, Burton Latimer			
Address	High Street, Burton Latimer, Kettering, NN15 5RL		
Date of inspection	4 December 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as voluntary controlled Peterborough Diocese Education Trust
Diocese	Peterborough	URN	146566

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgement</b>	The impact of collective worship	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

### School context

St Mary's is a primary academy with 308 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The headteacher was appointed in October 2018 when St Mary's joined Peterborough Diocese Education Trust (PDET).

### The school's Christian vision

Dream, believe, achieve.

Our vision, underpinned by Christian values enables each child to flourish within a creative curriculum in order to develop confidence and curiosity through high expectations. It widens horizons and raises aspirations within a Christian community, which celebrates and respects everyone's uniqueness.

### Key findings

- The academy's Christian vision unites and inspires the whole community to believe that together they can achieve more.
- Driven by the Christian vision, pastoral support for vulnerable pupils and their families equips them with resilience to cope well and perseverance in overcoming barriers to learning.
- The school has made good progress since the last inspection in the areas identified for improvement. However, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Christian vision, collective worship and religious education (RE) has lacked rigour over time.
- RE and collective worship contribute significantly in supporting pupils to see life as a spiritual journey. Currently, the school lacks a shared understanding of spiritual development to promote progressively deeper experiences across the whole curriculum.

### Areas for development

- Establish a rigorous cycle of monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Christian vision on all areas of the academy's life, including academic achievement for all pupils. Include governors and leaders in order to secure the long-term success of the school as a Church school.
- Put in place a shared understanding of spiritual development. Identify progressively deeper experiences across the curriculum for pupils to explore and articulate spiritual and ethical issues.
- Refine systems of assessment in RE to more accurately record pupil's progress and attainment across the school to fully inform future planning and the delivery of challenging lessons.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### **Inspection findings**

With support from Peterborough Diocese, the inspirational headteacher has worked with governors, staff, pupils and parents to renew the academy's Christian vision. The whole community has embraced the vision, which has heralded a significant deepening of the Christian ethos within the academy. For example, members of the senior leadership team describe being empowered by the vision's theological underpinning that, 'everything is possible for one who believes', Mark 9:23. This informs their decision making which is aimed at developing high aspirations and support for every pupil, to enable them to achieve their full potential. Pupils in turn, are inspired by the vision and recognise the way it helps them in their academic work and their life beyond school. 'The vision helps you to believe in yourself and to understand the importance of perseverance in life to achieve your dreams,' said a Year 4 pupil. Since the last denominational inspection governor monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Christian distinctiveness on all areas of school life has lacked rigour and challenge. As a consequence, it has not led to sustained improvement in academic outcomes particularly for vulnerable groups of pupils.

For the past three years pupil attainment and progress has been below the national average in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2. Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher and with sustained support from PDET, academic outcomes are improving. The academy's provision for its vulnerable pupils is now focusing on limiting barriers to inclusion. This is proving more effective in meeting their needs and consequently gaps in progress and attainment are closing. Pupils clearly value learning and participate fully in questioning, listening and responding creatively across the new curriculum. The academy is aware that it currently lacks a shared and focused understanding of spirituality to add depth and further creative expression to its Christian vision. Effective experiences for pupils to explore their spirituality are evident in collective worship and RE when pupils offer thoughtful and carefully considered points of view. Progressively deeper experiences within the curriculum are not routinely identified in planning and so further opportunities for spiritual development are missed.

The school vision inspires pupils to believe in themselves and aspire to be the unique person that God wants them to be. Each class is named after one of the academy's twelve supporting Christian values and pupils readily articulate how these inform their choices. An older pupil used the biblical account of Adam and Eve to explain that, 'Life is about learning by the mistakes you make.' The academy extends pupils' horizons through a wide range of visitors, including a Mayan archaeologist, a local shoemaker and email links with a Guatemalan school. Pupils display a genuine desire to help others achieve their dreams. For example, they raised money to support a Paralympian with their training. A pupil in Year 5 initiated a social action project involving the local church and homeless charities to help the rough sleepers in Kettering. Pupils are developing an understanding of the impact humans are having on the natural world. To show their concern about the pollution of the world's seas and oceans caused by plastic, the school council created a piece of artwork from recycled bottle tops. This also prompted a pupil to write to Greenpeace about their concern for the environment.

The academy and the church have a strong and mutually beneficial relationship. In 2018, this was used by Peterborough diocese as an exemplar of the effective way that schools and churches can work together to enable pupils to flourish. The academy is fully involved in the monthly family Sunday service at St Mary's Church. Good practice is epitomised in the Worship-on-Wednesdays club for families, regular 'prayer spaces' and the weekly prayer club run by the church. This link with the church strongly supports the Christian vision and ethos of the school, enabling pupils to appreciate the relevance of faith in contemporary society.

The academy has in place effective systems for the early identification of issues linked to mental health and wellbeing for pupils and adults. Staff feel valued and appreciate the care and pastoral support they experience in being part of the St Mary's 'family' rooted in the academy's Christian ethos. Driven by the Christian vision, the learning mentor and family worker skilfully support vulnerable members of the school community to overcome barriers, enabling them to flourish.

Pupils and staff see collective worship as a special time together, and as an opportunity to prepare for the busyness of the day ahead. The strong link with St Mary's Church actively supports the academy's worship, prayer and spiritual life. Pupils' understanding of the Christian concept of the Trinity is good. Prayer and reflection are key features of collective worship and occur naturally in the daily life of the academy. Reflection

areas linked to the values are evident in every classroom symbolising God's presence and enabling pupils to pray or be still at any time. One younger pupil explained that 'I like to pray because I like to know that God is there.' Pupils have regular experiences in planning, leading and evaluating class led collective worship to the whole school, which contributes positively to their appreciation of worship and their spiritual development.

The subject leader leads RE effectively and lessons are planned to enable pupils to engage with religious texts and develop their theological ideas. For example, Year 3 pupils created their own blessing using a biblical text known as 'the grace' (2 Corinthians 13:14) as a model. This required them to link the Trinity, the academy vision and values, and their own understanding of the purpose of prayer. Through their study of a range of religions and worldviews, pupils appreciate how these relate to the diverse society found in modern Britain. Pupils feel able to discuss their views and are willing to listen to each other respectfully. Given the quality of RE provision, assessment in RE does not accurately reflect pupil's progress and attainment. Leaders are passionate in their desire to see the academy's Christian vision fulfilled and it is clearly the driving force behind recent improvements in practice and performance.

Headteacher	Erica Holt
Inspector's name and number	Dr Janet Northing 792