

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

Church Hill Church of England Junior School	
Address	Church Hill Road, Thurmaston, Leicester, LE4 8DE

### School vision

'Let your light shine.' (Matthew 5:16)  
 You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

### School strengths

- Leaders understand their community well and have a fully embedded Christian vision and associated values. These values underpin every aspect of school life, transforming the lives of the school and beyond, enabling all to flourish.
- The school is a haven of Christian love and care. The wellbeing of all is prioritised and 'letting your light shine' is encouraged for all members of the community. The sense of family ensures wellbeing is at the heart of everything the school does.
- Collective worship, the 'get together', is invitational and inclusive, offering everyone the opportunity to engage with integrity. It is driven by the Christian vision and values and always reflects on Christian teaching.
- Pupils reflect on issues of justice and action in line with Christian values. This enables them to be agents for change in the local community and the wider world.
- Religious education (RE) lessons are a safe place for pupils to explore their own and others' beliefs. Pupils have a good understanding of the Christian faith, and a range of world faiths and worldviews.

### Areas for development

- Embed the school's understanding of spirituality into the wider curriculum. This will enable the deeper meaning of spirituality to become more widely understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Engage pupils in developing more prayer spaces so that additional opportunities for prayer and reflection are available.

### Inspection findings

At Church Hill, leaders ensure the Christian vision is at the heart of all policies and practice. This creates a culture in which all can thrive. The vision embraces all religions and the image of light resonates with all members of this multi-cultural school. Strong links to Christian values enable pupils to reflect on how to let their light shine. Pupils articulate the vision and speak of how it reflects both the beliefs of Christians and their own beliefs. Governors have a close relationship with the school, acting as critical friends. They support the staff and ensure staff and leaders wellbeing, as



well as asking challenging questions to improve practice. There are strong links with the local church and foundation governors are very active within the school. Staff, parents, governors and pupils all talk about letting their own light shine, showing the vision impacts on the whole community. Consequently, practice continually improves and all are able to flourish.

Leaders ensure collective worship, the 'get together', is an expression of the Christian vision and values. It invites pupils of all faiths and none to reflect on the application of these values on their own lives. Discussions with pupils show that they understand the Christian nature of collective worship. Collective worship themes are taken back to classrooms as pictures, allowing classes to reflect on these themes. Pupils are therefore able to talk confidently about the application of these values in both school and home life. Homework links to the current Christian value and encourages each family to consider the value together. Governor monitoring has strengthened class get togethers and these are now planned centrally to ensure they are meaningful. Each act of collective worship ends with a reflection which relates to the school definition of spirituality. Consequently, staff and pupils are able to articulate what is meant by spirituality in terms of developing self, others, beauty and beyond. Consequently, staff and pupils are able to articulate what is meant by spirituality at Church Hill.

Pupils value prayer as an essential part of their lives and regularly write prayers for the class prayer boxes. These prayers are shared within classes, the school and in the local church. Prayer bags, containing a prayer bear, go home with a different pupil each week. All pupils add to the prayer book which travels with the prayer bear. Pupils from all world faiths and none are comfortable to contribute, bringing in elements of their own beliefs.

Pupils flourish at Church Hill because they are treated with care and respect. Relationships between all members of the community are strong. The community pulls together at times of need, seen in the support provided during recent times of adversity. Pupils learn respect for each other no matter their background, cultural heritage, or beliefs. They confidently articulate how they do well at school because they are encouraged to use their talents. The behaviour policy, underpinned by the school vision and values, encourages pupils to take responsibility for their actions. All are treated with fairness and encouraged to make the right choices in order to let their light shine. Staff listen carefully to pupils at times of disagreement and act with forgiveness. Pupils know that it is important to be kind to all. This is evidenced by actions such as litter picking in the local community and the friendship bench at playtimes.

Mental health and wellbeing of staff, students and families is prioritised in both policy and practice. The commitment to staff and pupil wellbeing means that the school is seen as a place of safety for all. The school offers a strong sense of community and togetherness. Families are known well and supported beyond school at times of need. This is exemplified by the way in which leaders make time for everyone. There is a focus on pupil wellbeing and understanding emotions through initiatives such as 'who's driving you?' The work of the pastoral team enables students to grow in self-confidence and to find space to explore their feelings. Supporting the vulnerable is a priority for the school, and pastoral care is offered to all who need it. Leaders express this as the need to allow pupils to 'regulate before we educate'.

Driven by the vision, leaders are passionate about ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of justice in the world. Pupils are confident in taking responsibility for the world around them and challenge when they see something is not right. An example of this is writing to the local member of Parliament about climate change. They see that they have a role in making the world a better place and consider what actions they can take to help. Pupils and staff are encouraged to shine as a light to do good in the local community and the world. This has included actions prompted by individuals such as collecting for earthquake relief and for Ukraine.

The Christian vision underpins the school curriculum. The vision and its associated values are woven into curriculum plans, and opportunities to develop these values are identified. Each curriculum area has related books and vocabulary which connect with the school values to ensure there are strong links. Whilst spirituality is very present in collective worship it is still developing across the wider curriculum.

Those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged are well supported. The school is committed to inclusion through tailoring the curriculum to each pupil's needs. This means that those who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities or who are disadvantaged are able to thrive. This includes adapted drop off times and personalising the curriculum to meet the needs of the individual. Bespoke provision supports differing needs, and is rightly appreciated by parents. The school vision drives this, enabling everyone's light to shine and pupils to flourish.

Leaders ensure that the teaching of RE is effective. It is seen as a core subject and is well resourced. Continuing professional development for the staff is prioritised to ensure that the curriculum is effectively taught. The spiral curriculum enables pupils to revisit faiths and worldviews to deepen their understanding. As a result, they are knowledgeable about the Christian faith and a range of faiths and worldviews. Pupils are confident to talk about learning in RE. These lessons are a safe place for them to explore their own and others' beliefs. Pupils articulate that RE helps them 'develop your soul and inner self'. This demonstrates that the RE curriculum is also developing their sense of spirituality.

The inspection findings indicate that Church Hill Church of England Junior School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	19 June 2024	URN	138930
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	288
Diocese	Leicester		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Diane Brown		
Chair	Steve Hardy		
Inspector	Megan Davis	No.	2212