

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

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Dilwyn			
<b>Address</b>	Dilwyn, Herefordshire HR4 8HR		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	01 October 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Free school inspected as VC
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Hereford</b>	<b>URN</b>	<b>I39241</b>

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Requires Improvement</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>Additional Judgement</b>		
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

### School context

St Mary's is a primary school with 63 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below national averages. Numbers have climbed significantly since the last inspection.

### The school's Christian vision

School leaders and governors are currently reviewing their vision statement to more accurately reflect their vision in action. This is to treat all children (and adults) as unique children of God, wonderfully made, dearly loved and precious in his sight. Psalm 139.

### Key findings

- Relationships between the pupils, their families and the wider community are very strong, underpinned by the school's caring, Christian outreach and the desire to live, love and learn together in harmony.
- The school lives out its belief that we are all children of God, wonderfully made, dearly loved and precious in his sight. However, although the vast majority of pupils know they are treated as unique and special individuals, the vision statement to reflect this has not been finalised, but is under review.
- Worship is a strength of the school, which is enjoyed by all members of the school family. Strong links with the Church and regular support from Church leaders is effectively supporting the spiritual life of the school. Leaders are currently exploring more ways of facilitating regular prayer and reflection, daily.
- Pupils are inspired to develop as leaders in many contexts. Although they regularly and actively support worship they are not yet enabled to plan and lead worship, on a regular basis.
- Religious education (RE) is an important subject in the school. Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths and cultures through monthly themes. These approaches have only recently been introduced and have not had time to be embedded.

### Areas for development

- Complete the review of the school's vision with all groups, so that the agreed statement is understood and clearly identifies and proclaims your purpose as a school. Ensure it reflects the belief that we are all unique children of God, acknowledging its biblical roots and your Church foundation.
- Build on the times of prayer and reflection in worship and extend these, throughout the school day, to enable pupils to develop their spirituality and understanding of how special they are in the eyes of God.
- Harness the pupils' enthusiasm, to grow as leaders in worship to support the spiritual life of the school.

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**

There is a close symbiotic partnership between St Mary's and the pupils, families and the community it serves. One of its core strengths is the way it provides loving support, through its community outreach. The community appreciates this and has actively reciprocated, through financial support and rising numbers on roll. There is a waiting list of families who want their children to join this nurturing, caring school. In addition, the school is the heart and central hub of the village. The headteacher and his team are passionate in their belief that, 'we are all children of God, wonderfully made, dearly loved and precious in his sight.' The school's mission statement 'living, loving and learning together', is founded in the Christian values of faith hope and love. As a result, there is an expectation that everyone is kind, loving, forgiving and trusting, through the strong relationships fostered. These underpin daily life creating a school that welcomes all regardless of faith, background, culture or need. School leaders and governors are currently reviewing their vision statement, to create a child-friendly version that can be consistently understood and shared. Also, to more closely articulate the Christian love and care shown to each unique individual, daily. Pupils know they are special, but are not consistent in the way they articulate this. They treat each other as they would want to be treated, reflecting Jesus' teaching through their relationships. Also, they are growing confidently, because the school is supporting them to be 'the best they can be'. Their maturity and enthusiasm is harnessed through a range of leadership roles, such as house captains and the school council. These enable them to develop as aspiring young citizens of the future. They are keen to follow the guidance of Jesus in the way they want to help and support others less fortunate than themselves. Consequently, they raise funds for many charities and are motivated to care about the world they live in. They benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum, that is enriched by many clubs and extra-curricular activities. 'Our studies help us learn about the world we live in. By learning, loving and living together we are taught rules for life. We care for our chickens and our butterfly garden is very special.'

Parents are very positive about the school and the flexible way it adapts to the needs of their children. A significant number are grateful for the way their children are responding in the 'small, nurturing family ethos'. Many appreciate the strong links with the Church and enjoy the special services offered throughout the year. Others, acknowledge it is the school that is 'getting me inside the Church'. The vicar of St Mary's and the Baptist minister, from another local church, regularly support the spiritual life of the school family, through worship. Staff know their pupils and their families and work as a team, living out the values that are enabling all to flourish.

Although the school family is predominantly White British, pupils are taught to celebrate and respect diversity. They have experienced visits to mosques and other places of worship and visitors from a range of faiths. In addition, they are developing links with a school in Birmingham, where pupils come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. RE is an important subject in the school curriculum. It follows the guidance from the Hereford Agreed Syllabus. Pupils enjoy sharing their opinions and ideas. Themed questions and approaches have been recently introduced, such as 'Who is your neighbour?' These are not yet embedded, but are having a positive influence on learning outcomes. As a result, the majority of pupils enjoy RE and the range of experiences offered by the school. Through these they are beginning to build their understanding of global religions and cultures.

Many pupils enter the school displaying skills below national expectations. The individual approaches offered by the school provide targeted support that is effective in building confident, successful learners. Systems are in place to monitor progress. Pupils with additional needs are sometimes withdrawn or supported within classrooms, by a team of skilled teaching assistants. Consequently, pupils of all abilities are very clear that, 'our teachers know us well and help us learn through their kindness and care.' They feel safe and happy and want to attend school. As a result, attendance is high. Most are keen to learn and display positive attitudes in lessons. They make accelerated progress, which ensures that by the time they leave school their learning outcomes are in line or above national standards. Behaviour is of a very high standard, reflecting the Christian guidance to live, love and learn together in harmony.

Worship is a strength of the school. Church leaders, pupils and staff enjoy worshipping together, sharing Bible stories to help them apply the teachings of Jesus through their life choices. The passionate Christian witness of school and Church leaders brings them together as a praising community, through the strong links which exist. Consequently, members of the wider community attend special services, regardless of their background and faith. Singing is often inspiring and songs, such as 'The Fruits of the Spirit' help them to engage with and remember biblical teaching. Worship is well planned and effective in reinforcing Christian teaching and Anglican tradition. Worship includes a time of prayer or reflection, which the pupils enjoy and engage with respectfully. The foundation governors, including the minister talk to pupils about their worship experiences, to ensure quality. These discussions record pupils' enjoyment of worship and their desire to lead worship on a regular basis.

Currently, pupils enjoy supporting worship by reading prayers and choosing hymns. They have also responded well to taking the lead in the end of year leavers' service at church. Consequently, the vicar of St Mary's is exploring ways of harnessing the positive attitudes of pupils to worship, to extend their prayer lives and leadership roles.

School leaders, staff and governors are fully committed to this unique Church school. They work diligently to ensure it is effective in extending loving Christian care to the community it serves.

Headteacher	Peter Kyles
Inspector's name and number	Marianne Phillips 586