

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School

Vision

‘Let all that you do be done in love.’ 1 Corinthians 16:14

A Christian community where children are known by name and loved, which empowers them to learn and to grow in faith, knowledge and fellowship.

St Thomas of Canterbury 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 Christian vision is embedded in the life of the school. It teaches pupils and adults to value themselves and others, creating a caring and respectful community. This means the school is a place with love at its centre and where pupils and adults are known by name.
- Pupils have a strong sense of responsibility. They know they are valued and that their views matter. As a result, they willingly take on roles that improve the school and wider community. This helps pupils understand they can make a positive difference to the world.
- Collective worship, enhanced by a strong partnership with the local church, is integral to school life. It enables pupils and adults to reflect on the school’s Christian vision and values thereby contributing to their spiritual flourishing.
- Inclusivity is central to the life and work of the school. Pupils, including those who are deemed vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are nurtured compassionately. As a result, they thrive in a caring environment.
- Religious education (RE) is robustly planned to build on pupils’ knowledge of Christianity, different faiths and non-religious worldviews. This allows pupils to grow in their learning and appreciate a diverse range of perspectives.

Development Points

- Extend the shared understanding and language of spirituality across the curriculum. This is to ensure that opportunities are identified and used effectively to support pupils’ spiritual development.
- Building on pupils’ strong sense of responsibility, ensure that learning about justice and injustice is made more explicit and coherent. This is to support pupils in developing a clearer understanding of how issues of fairness and responsibility arise in different areas.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

St Thomas of Canterbury is a school where pupils are known by name and deeply valued. The Christian vision is lived out consistently by pupils and adults. This is reflected in relationships marked by love, care and respect. Seven carefully chosen character values strengthen the vision and underpin the school policies. Created through collaboration between staff, pupils, families and the local church, the vision unites this school. The shared values provide a clear sense of identity and purpose. Rooted in biblical teaching, the vision securely underpins decision-making. Governors ensure it shapes school life, guiding policies, priorities and practice. As a result, pupils and adults are treated with dignity, compassion and consistency. A strong example is the creation of a sensory cabin supporting pupils who have SEND. Governors allocate funding to ensure inclusion, dignity and appropriate support for pupils. Consequently, pupils thrive and feel safe, valued and understood. Staff take genuine delight in enabling pupils to achieve their goals. Leaders and governors work closely with the parish and local community. The vicar is a regular presence in school and pupils spend time in church for worship and reflection. As a result, pupils develop a strong sense of belonging and flourish within a caring Christian community.

Vision and Curriculum

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils and reflects the school's vision, supporting learning and growth. Christian values run through learning and strengthen the impact of the vision. For example, Year 6 pupils support Reception pupils, living out love through the gospel values of respect, responsibility and caring. This strengthens relationships and the sense of belonging across the school. The consistent application of the vision contributes to a calm, purposeful environment in which pupils and adults flourish. The school grounds and learning spaces are carefully planned to offer opportunities for reflection and spiritual development. However, not all pupils and adults recognise these moments as spiritual or have the language to describe them with confidence. Subject leaders are beginning to ensure that approaches to spirituality used in collective worship are reflected across the curriculum. Pupils with SEND benefit from personalised strategies that promote confidence and independence. Staff plan thoughtfully for vulnerable pupils and leaders provide calm spaces that enable those who need them to thrive. A broad range of extracurricular activities enrich the curriculum and support pupils' interests and self-esteem. Pupils value having a say in new activities, this helps them feel involved and that they belong. Leaders, including governors, monitor the curriculum effectively to evaluate the impact of the vision and to inform further development.

Worship and Spirituality

Carefully planned and evaluated collective worship embeds the Christian vision, enabling meaningful engagement and sustained spiritual flourishing. Daily worship takes place in a calm, purposeful setting where everyone is welcome to join in. Pupils understand that participation, including prayer, is a personal choice. Leaders intentionally plan an alternative worship for pupils who find the main gathering difficult, ensuring everyone can take part. As a result, pupils feel safe, respected and able to develop their understanding of worship without anxiety. Collective worship offers adults and pupils opportunities for spiritual exploration that they both recognise and can articulate. However, this practice is not consistently seen across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils' confidence in recognising and engaging with spirituality is stronger in collective worship. A strong partnership with the local church enriches worship through Eucharistic services and confirmation preparation. Pupils and adults describe this as 'very special'. Classroom-based worship further supports less confident pupils to participate fully, strengthening belonging and spiritual flourishing across the community.

Vision and School Culture

St Thomas of Canterbury is a loving community where pupils and adults are known, valued and cared for. The Christian vision shapes the school's culture and practice and is evident in the way staff are supported by school leaders. Supported by the diocese, leaders ensure that new staff understand the vision and the responsibilities



of working in a Church school. Staff encourage positive mental health and wellbeing through words and actions, influencing pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils recognise that they are loved and guided by values that shape positive behaviour. Inspired by the vision, staff engage confidently in professional learning, knowing that time, support and wellbeing are prioritised. As a result, staff are well equipped to care for pupils and families with compassion. Pupils feel safe and loved. Families feel supported and the vision is lived out so that pupils and adults can flourish.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils are inspired by the Christian vision to serve others through leadership groups such as CATS (Children Able to Speak). Pupils in this group advocate for their peers and influence change. Regular fundraising activities help pupils develop compassion and empathy and they understand justice as fairness, which is a school value. Leaders use big questions and shared language to identify injustice; however, this is not applied consistently in all contexts. As a result, pupils do not always recognise injustice or understand their responsibility in challenging it. The impact of this work is monitored through pupil voice involving staff, pupils and governors. Strong partnerships with the local church and diocese further reinforce the school's identity as a distinctively Christian community.

Religious Education

RE is a key part of what pupils learn in school. Leaders prioritise its status and quality, ensuring it is well resourced and carefully planned. The curriculum is well structured, progressive and relevant and is thoughtfully adapted to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. Staff are well supported by an experienced subject leader, alongside the effective contribution of local clergy and the diocese. High-quality professional development is prioritised, including opportunities to meet, collaborate and moderate the subject with peers. This builds staff confidence and shared understanding, leading to more consistent and effective teaching. Recent changes have strengthened the curriculum's focus on understanding faith, big questions about life and how people live together. Pupils can clearly articulate which area of learning they are studying and make meaningful connections between different religious beliefs and world faiths. They understand Christianity is a global religion and recognise diversity of belief and interpretation within Christianity and across world religions. Staff are confident and secure in their subject knowledge. As a result, pupils develop a strong understanding of RE, confidence in their learning and respect for a range of beliefs and worldviews. Pupils enjoy RE and speak positively about learning. They make meaningful links between belief and practice and develop a growing understanding of themselves and others.

Pupils make good progress in RE because leaders' monitoring of teaching and assessment secures good teaching. Assessment is carefully planned through a clear and consistent schedule. Feedback informs next steps in learning, helps pupils understand their progress and shapes professional development. As a result, staff confidence is strong and outcomes in RE have improved. The school is rightly proud of the proportion of pupils working at a high level in the subject. This is evident in the depth of pupils' knowledge and the quality of questions they ask. Leaders share key findings with governors who provide effective challenge and support. RE makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development and plays an important role in enabling the whole school community to flourish.

Information

Address	Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9BX		
Date	16 January 2026	URN	115179
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	509
Diocese	Chelmsford		
Headteacher	Dean Moran		
Chair of Governors	Mark North		
Inspector	Kaye Healy		