Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Giles Church of England Primary & Nursery School

Vision

'Let us run the race before us and never give up.' Hebrews 12:1

St Giles Church of England Primary and Nursery 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 biblically rooted Christian vision is deeply embedded. This has a profound and positive impact on pupils and adults.
- A culture of wellbeing and care for one another powerfully and tangibly enhances lives and relationships. Individuals are known and valued as the unique person they are within a loving school family.
- Provision for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils and their families is underpinned by the vision. As a result, they receive support tailored to their needs so that they overcome challenges and thrive.
- Reciprocal partnerships with the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust (DDAT), the Matlock and Dales Primary Partnership, the diocese and the church are highly fruitful. They support the school in living out its vision. As a result, St Giles is a school not insular, but outward-looking, seeking to support others on their 'race'.
- Inspired by the vision, pupils strive for justice. They understand what this means and the impact they have when they act on situations they see as unjust.

Development Points

- Enable meaningful opportunities for spiritual reflection in both the curriculum and more widely. This is to strengthen pupils' spiritual flourishing.
- Ensure more rigorous processes and systems are in place in religious education (RE) by which pupil progress is monitored. This is so that individual pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Extend the recording of the impact of collective worship on pupils. This is so that they can readily express how worship makes a difference to their lives, supporting their spiritual flourishing.

Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership Rooted in the Bible, St Giles' Christian vision is known and lived out. It underpins positive relationships and a strongly nurturing environment. The words of the vision are the natural language of pupils and adults. They talk about everyone being on a journey and the need for perseverance. This value, along with kindness and compassion, enables people to succeed and overcome challenges. This ensures that the vision is both understood and lived, woven seamlessly across the life of the school. There is a deep-rooted, compassionate and aspirational culture where people flourish. This is because the impact of the vision is effectively evaluated and monitored by leaders. They review ways in which pupils succeed both academically and in the wider life of the school. Carefully planned actions that enhance opportunities for pupils and staff result from this. The range of partnerships the school engages in are a strength. Each one is reciprocal. This mutual challenge and support enable St Giles to be an outward-facing community that flourishes and lives out its vision. Governors know the school well. They are highly invested in ensuring a hopeful future for adults and pupils.
Vision and Curriculum The school's planned and wider curriculum are shaped by the vision. Consequently, pupils are nurtured, enabling them to persevere, overcome challenges and grow in confidence. The vision is lived out in their learning because they are empowered to succeed, whatever their starting points. A range of activities beyond the classroom contributes to this. Taking part in forest school or learning a new skill being examples. This supports their flourishing as they develop resilience and determination. The curriculum successfully provides for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those considered vulnerable. They thrive because staff skillfully and with great compassion provide targeted care. Engaging in carefully chosen support enables these pupils to attend school despite personal challenges for some. This means they are in school and ready to learn. A recently introduced language to express spirituality is beginning to support pupils' spiritual development. However, opportunities for meaningful reflection are not embedded. This limits their spiritual awareness.
Worship and Spirituality Adults and pupils value time to be together during worship. It enables them to deepen their sense of belonging. A strong partnership with St Giles' Church strengthens worship. The vicar is a valued member of the school community. She leads worship and supports its planning. School services are held in church. This, together with the work of the vicar, provides a natural link for families with their local church. Bible stories are brought to life through 'Open the Book' worship. These enactments help pupils to remember and understand the stories, supporting their spiritual flourishing. Staff know their pupils well and provide sensitive support, enabling those with SEND and the most vulnerable the opportunity to engage. Challenges are given, reflecting on the theme of worship, for individuals to respond with follow-up activities in classrooms. This means that worship provides an ongoing source of spiritual nourishment. The impact of class worship on pupils is recorded. As a result, they clearly express the difference the big questions they explore make to their lives. However, this recording does not extend to other forms of worship. This limits their spiritual flourishing.
Religious Education RE is a subject with a high profile. Valued support from the diocese and DDAT enhances the way the subject leader drives developments. New initiatives are shared with staff. This includes developing the curriculum collaboratively. As a result, it is relevant, diverse and appropriately challenging for pupils. SEND and vulnerable pupils access learning in RE because adaptations are made to meet their needs. As a result, they flourish. A range of religions and worldviews are explored. Pupils show knowledge of these at an age-appropriate level. They acknowledge the importance of learning in RE because it helps them to 'understand people better.' Pupils are enthusiastic to learn, and they do so with obvious enjoyment. This ensures that they understand the importance of living respectfully with others.

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Pupils gain secure knowledge and skills that strengthen their written and verbal responses in RE. Teaching is consistently of a high quality. Adults teach with confidence and accuracy, supported by focused professional development. As a result, learners make age-appropriate progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding. They know when they have achieved their targets for individual pieces of work. However, they do not know what they need to do to improve. This is because formal monitoring and assessment are not in place. Staff support, challenge and encourage one another in their teaching of RE. This ensures that pupils have access to high-level resources and expertise to support their learning.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The vision, along with the value of kindness, shapes a culture of justice and responsibility. Pupils know that sometimes the 'race' of life is difficult for some people and that there are challenges to overcome. They have a strong sense of justice and express this as something being unfair and needing to 'make it fair again.' Learners show a concern for local and global injustice. It is this that fuels their determination to help. Raising awareness of the needs of the local community resulted in 'Kindness Christmas Countdown'. As part of this, small gifts were distributed around the locality. Pupils know the difference this made to recipients. Showing care for the environment results in litter picking activities and making bird feeders. This is because there is an understanding that the small part individuals play will contribute to something much greater. Pupils also show responsibility through school-wide duties such as being part of the eco or worship teams. As a result, they develop skills and talents that support them in their own personal development.

Vision and School Culture

In this highly inclusive school, people are treated with dignity and equity. Pupils and their families experience Christian love, based on the example of Jesus. This is lived out in the lives of leaders and staff. Staff work with parents to ensure that their children flourish. Parents especially appreciate ways in which staff nurture and consistently 'go the extra mile', providing individualised support for pupils. This is because leaders are committed to no pupil being 'left behind.' Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing is a constant theme, characterising the school's ethos. Those who face challenging circumstances are supported and enabled to move forward. Leaders emphasise the importance of caring for and supporting those who need help. This results in adults and pupils knowing there is always someone to listen to them and offer support. Building strong relationships is key, so that when challenges occur there is a depth of respect and understanding between people. The staff team offers support to one another. This approach is highly valued and contributes significantly to their wellbeing.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	Starkholmes Road, Matlock, DE4 3DD		
Date	28 April 2026	URN	141674
Type of school	Primary and Nursery	No. of pupils	93
Diocese	Derby		
MAT/Federation	Derby Diocesan Academy Trust Matlock and Dales Primary Partnership		
MAT Chair	Sarah Charles		
Executive Headteacher Head of School	Ben O'Connell Bethany Simpson		
Chair of Governors	Wayne Bexton		
Inspector	Jane Lewis		