

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools

St John's Middle School

(SIAMS) Report

Vision

Our vision is to be a school where every individual in our community is valued and enabled to flourish as a child of God; where education impacts upon the whole-person, and care and concern for others is key. We seek to be a truly inclusive community where all can 'Give of their Best', achieve their full God-given potential, be good citizens and respect difference in our growing global world.

Strengths

- St John's biblically rooted Christian vision provides a reference point for what is happening in the school's life, learning and direction. Commanding wide ownership, pupils and adults make compelling reference to its far-reaching influence, which enables them to succeed.
- This is an inclusive school, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The vision and values inspire a culture that promotes and nurtures each person as a known, loved and respected individual.
- Collective worship is inspirational and forms a bedrock for each day. It is a space where people are comfortable to share deepest feelings and reflection.
- Relationships across the school are based on trust and respect. Pupils understand the value of their community and their connections with others.
- Effective religious education (RE) strengthens pupils' understanding of world religions. The curriculum is engaging, well-planned and creative.

Development Points

- Develop further opportunities for pupils to be conscious advocates for justice, cultivating their skills to influence social change.
- Embed the school's shared understanding and language around spirituality. This is to strengthen leaders' evaluation of the impact of spiritual development in worship and the wider curriculum.



Inspection Findings

Through the deeply considered and embedded Christian vision, a sense of welcome and nurture permeates St John's Middle School. The vision is central to leaders' belief that pupils and adults should encounter 'life in all its fullness.' The inspirational leadership team is driven by a sincere commitment and empathy towards members of the school community. These dedicated leaders are committed to the flourishing of everyone and there is now a great sense of hope and aspiration across the school. Vision-driven investment in staffing has equipped adults with expertise aligned to the needs of the school. Governors know the school well and are committed to its success. Self-evaluation as a distinctive church school is rigorous and used to actively serve and support its community. Parents recognise how the vision and associated Christian values enable individuals to thrive holistically. The vision has had a transformational impact on many lives. This is because there is a focus on Christian values which give clear and consistent guidance. Leaders work closely with Worcester Diocese to support staff training needs. The vision of the Spire Learning Trust resonates with that of the school. The trust blends in-house expertise with external partnerships so that support is effective.

The vision underpins a highly inclusive school environment. A love of learning is the basis for the rich curriculum in school. Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They ensure that lessons are adapted to meet the needs of the learners, particularly those who are more vulnerable. Although academic achievement is important at St John's, there is an emphasis on the holistic growth of each individual child. Creative and practical subjects are prioritised to help pupils recognise and develop their diverse talents. This fosters a sense of achievement and success. Support is allocated so that pupils are fully included in the life of the school, including extra-curricular activities and trips. Leaders make decisions based on pupil interests. For example, cooking and board games clubs, enriching the school curriculum. A wide range of interventions and alternative provision, on and off site, are in place. Highly effective on-site provision includes a safe space known as the Launch Pad. The special educational needs and disability coordinator (SENDCO) monitors and reviews the impact of all interventions. She and her team are determined to enable every pupil to access a fulfilling future in line with the vision. Positive relationships between staff, pupils, and parents are crucial to inclusion at St John's. High attendance and positive parental survey results reflect strong engagement.

Daily collective worship is central to school life. It is successfully planned on a half termly rotation of Christian values and themes. These are relevant, inspirational and precisely linked to the vision. Pupils and adults are encouraged to stop and think, which enables them to reflect on their own beliefs. Joyful singing significantly enhances the experience. A range of leaders, including the local vicar, deliver collective worship. Stories of Jesus are known by pupils, and they aim to behave like the Good Samaritan. The school successfully uses the 'windows, mirrors, doors' approach to supporting pupils' development of personal spirituality. Some pupils explain enthusiastically that it helps them to build their relationship with God. Pupil 'worship leaders' are proud of their responsibility within the school. They make worship engaging through active participation, such as lighting candles and leading the school prayer. There are clear and intentional opportunities for spiritual experiences across the curriculum. The wider impact of these encounters on the spiritual development of pupils is not, however, captured through formal monitoring and evaluation by subject leaders. This would help assess effectiveness and guide improvements.



This is an inclusive school, where everyone is treated with due dignity and respect. Behaviour in and around the school is exceptional. Pupils facing challenging personal circumstances are helped to develop relational strategies, so they can successfully regulate emotions and behaviours. The good mental health of everyone is a constant focus for leaders, with staff members trained as mental health first aiders. Staff have engaged with initiatives allowing St John's to appropriately become, a 'trauma informed school'. They are eager to go 'above and beyond' to ensure pupils are able to thrive. This means that pupils enjoy coming to school and they feel safe and happy. Children are praised and celebrated as individuals through frequent communication between staff and parents. In this way, the school is living its vision and building connections with families. Staff also feel valued and encouraged at St John's. They are supported both professionally and during times of personal challenge.

This community lives and works together as a team. Staff and pupils talk about the importance of looking after and serving others. In this way it helps everyone to 'flourish in God's world'. Relationships across the school are built on trust and respect. For example, leaders evaluate the professional practice of staff with care and humility. During social times, older pupils lead structured play with younger pupils, demonstrating a clear sense of responsibility. This trust between staff and pupils encourages leadership skills and strengthens the community spirit. Pupils are proud of the ways in which they support local charities. They talk with passion about the importance of helping others and are considerate in their support for those in need. For example, they donate food at harvest time. The links with local charities, including the Basement Project, reflect the school's commitment to serving its wider community. However, they do not always understand how they can make an impact on unfairness and injustice in the wider world. Pupils care for God's creation and the world. They participate in litter picking within their local area, raising money for compelling causes including a local hospice. However, the school does not inspire pupils to take responsibility or become conscious advocates for change. So pupils are not confident in seeking opportunities to address the issues they observe.

In line with the vision, RE is a core subject through precedence, policy and provision. Teachers are well supported by leadership. Regular lesson observation, feedback, support with lesson planning, and termly professional development are provided. These inputs are helping to improve standards of teaching and learning. RE is based upon the locally agreed syllabus and additional resources for teaching about Christianity in depth. The subject is well led with the curriculum lead supporting at local hub meetings. It covers a range of religions as well as Christianity and this broadens pupils' horizons. Staff delivering this subject are well trained. Lessons include much debate and reflection based on big questions such as 'should Christians be greener than others?' Pupils of all faiths and none discuss their thoughts in a safe environment of respect and enjoy their learning.

Information

Address	Watt Close, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 7DH		
Date	14 November 2024	URN	139286
Type of school	Middle School	No. of pupils	678
Diocese/District	Worcester		
MAT/Federation	The Spire Learning Trust		
Headteacher	Alison Elwell		
Chair of Governors	Elizabeth Fleming		
Inspector	Gemma Hathaway		