

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Botolph's Church of England Primary School

Vision

Inspired by Jesus, helping children to become the best they can be.

As Jesus fed the five thousand, so we feed our diverse community; serving them practically and spiritually striving to meet their individual needs. We work to foster a strong sense of belonging, empowering everyone to have faith in themselves and others. By following the example of Peter stepping out of the boat, our staff and pupils will overcome challenges, develop resilience, and grow to be the best they can be. We strive to expand opportunities and widen horizons for all.

Strengths

- The school's Christian vision and linked Bible stories inspires a community that lives to see pupils and adults thrive. This results in a strong sense of belonging and desire to see personal and collaborative success within the school and beyond.
- Inspired by the vision, the curriculum offers an exceptional range of experiences that expand opportunities and widen horizons. This allows pupils to develop academically. It also enables them to develop as individuals empowered to embrace challenges and become the best that they can be.
- Collective worship effectively promotes a deep understanding of the school's vision and values reflected in behaviour and attitudes across St Botolph's. Close links with the local church foster a depth of worship shared by all in the school community.
- A mutually beneficial partnership with the Aletheia Academies Trust (AAT) actively supports and develops St Botolph's as a Church school. This fosters professional development of staff and their wellbeing and nurtures the range of opportunities available to pupils.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum is planned to meet the needs of pupils. They have a growing understanding of world faiths and worldviews, enriched through firsthand learning experiences.

Development Points

- Develop governor systems of monitoring, particularly within RE and collective worship. This is so that the impact of the Christian vision on the life of St Botolph's is effectively evaluated.
- Enable planning for spiritual development to be incorporated regularly across the curriculum. In this way pupils will have increasingly deeper opportunities to explore and articulate their spiritual understanding.
- Continue to draw on the school and Trust expertise to improve the quality of assessment in RE. This is so that staff are equipped to support the progress of all pupils effectively.



Inspection Findings

The vision, values and linked Bible stories form a secure foundation that roots and energises the life of St Botolph's. It guides the strategic direction of the school to enable pupils and staff to become the best they can be. Inspired by the story of the feeding of the 5000 the school demonstrates service for its community. This is in practical ways as well as in providing a range of academic opportunities. Reference to the story of Peter getting out of the boat is a part of daily conversation. It motivates staff and pupils to take risks in their learning and develop resilience. A constant drive to meet the individual needs of this diverse community results in the creation of a welcoming environment. High-quality artwork frequently features images of pupils. This exemplifies the school's focus on a strong sense of belonging and the value placed on the uniqueness of each one. The work of the AAT supports and nurtures the development of St Botolph's. Their vision statement aligns closely with that of the school. This ensures that they have unity in purpose and mutually support the work of each other. In this way a strong team, that creates transformational opportunities for pupils and staff alike, is formed. Governors are committed to the work of the school and conduct monitoring activities. At present this does not evaluate the vision, thus opportunities to develop St Botolph's as a Church school are missed.

The vision underpins the creation of an engaging curriculum that inspires and enthuses pupils. Demonstrating a motivation to meet individual needs the curriculum actively involves pupils within their learning. For example, themes linked to an investigation enable pupils to explore wonder and curiosity in the world. Individual programmes for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensure that their needs are met effectively. To expand opportunities and widen horizons the school embraces a range of exciting and inspiring trips and excursions. This includes a train trip to London to see 'the Lion King' and visits to the beach. The Trust also offers a range of activities for pupils, in the realm of sport, singing and public speaking, for example. In this way pupils are enabled to be the best that they can be. The on-site forest school fosters experiences to enjoy outdoor activities and shared learning. It also nurtures a growing spirituality as they celebrate the beauty of the natural world. The school has embraced 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors' as a vehicle for exploring spirituality across the curriculum. There are some planned opportunities for this and numerous occasions to encounter awe and wonder spontaneously.

The school community is drawn together during the daily collective worship. It is a venue where the vision and values are shared and celebrated. This impacts on a school that demonstrates love and kindness throughout the school day. Pupil 'leading lights' embrace the shared leadership of worship with confidence, taking great pleasure in communicating God's love with others through their work. Regular times of reflection, often inspired by 'big questions', result in purposeful conversation about the themes. This supports pupil spiritual growth in worship. They speak with pride about receiving awards during the celebration worship. At this time pupils also embrace the success of others as their own achievement. This demonstrates their place and value in a unified and nurturing school. Themes are developed to embrace all in this culturally diverse environment, creating a strong sense of belonging. Singing is a joyful experience, uniting the school in a shared activity. The local church has a strong bond with St Botolph's with worship regularly led by clergy. A weekly Eucharist is celebrated and engages parents, securing and strengthening the school community. The inclusive nature of worship has resulted in the creation of 'spiritual boxes'. This enables those who are unable to fully participate in worship to have their own times of meaningful reflection.

The linked Bible stories drive and motivate a school that cares for the wellbeing of staff and pupils. In multiple ways the school creates an environment where pupils and staff are empowered to have faith in themselves and others. Staff consistently model kindly behaviour. In this way, pupils are inspired to look out for each other, having a deep understanding of the importance of reciprocal kindness. They know how to manage their feelings and where to go for support. 'Worry Monsters', placed in specific points through the school, provide pupils with



avenues to offload their concerns. Dedicated reflection areas enable pupils to find times of peace and calm when needed. Specially trained staff also work to support pupils at various times. A 'Rainbow Room' for use at lunchtime, provides a point of tranquillity. As a result, a safe and secure environment is generated that is at the root of transforming the lives of pupils. Staff feel supported and nurtured within this environment. The Trust conducts staff wellbeing training and there is a staff counsellor available. This is particularly important during times of difficulty helping to form a harmonious working environment.

The vision inspires staff and pupils at St Botolph's to serve each other and the wider community. This begins at the start of the school day with everyone offered a bagel to eat. This ensures that all have nourishment and are ready to learn. The school actively seeks to support families, providing school uniform or food parcels as the need arises. This enables pupils and families to feel welcomed and a treasured part of the school community. Pupils embrace opportunities to share leadership of the school, through their roles of reading helpers, prefects or as school councillors, for example. They are confident that their collaboration with adults makes the school a happy place. Pupils recognise the importance of supporting those in need. As a result, each class sponsors a charitable cause that is relevant and special to them.

RE is led with enthusiasm. The school works hard to create a well-balanced RE curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. It is planned to encourage questions and engage pupils in discussion. Deeper thinking questions expand their thoughts further. Pupils enjoy their learning in RE, particularly relishing the more creative activities. Collaborative working is used very effectively in classes to foster learning. Pupils know that the class is a safe place to discuss their ideas, to agree and disagree well. Recognising the cultural diversity of the school, the RE lead organises celebration days focused on special events within different faiths. This draws the community together, ensuring that pupils feel valued. Visits to places of worship, including a gurdwara and mosque, enrich learning experiences for pupils. Retrieval questions at the start of each lesson assist the assessment of pupil understanding in their learning. The school is working closely with other schools in the Trust to review its assessment system for RE. It is an ongoing process enabling the school to track the progress of all pupils effectively. The subject lead has developed a best practice group for RE within the Trust. This facilitates effective sharing of resources, monitoring activities and ideas to continue to develop RE. As a result, staff are confident and knowledgeable in teaching RE and the overall quality of teaching is good.

Information

Address	Dover Road, Northfleet, Kent. DA11 9PL		
Date	8 October 2024	URN	141579
Type of school	Academy (inspected as Voluntary Aided)	No. of pupils	420
Diocese	Rochester		
MAT	Aletheia Academies Trust		
Acting Headteacher	Alice Martin		
Chair of Governors	David Rosenthal		
Inspector	Elizabeth Pettersen		