Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St James' Church of England Primary School

Vision

To be a happy and healthy place to achieve and believe. This will help to make sure all our children flourish in their time at our school and beyond.

St James' 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

- Leaders, including governors, are inspired by the vision to 'achieve and believe' when shaping a curriculum that reflects the school's local context and meets pupils' needs. Opportunities for reflection throughout the school day help pupils to understand their feelings, consider others' perspectives and connect learning to their own experiences.
- Through the vision, leaders recognise and nurture individual talents, creating an encouraging culture where staff feel valued and supported. Opportunities for professional growth enable staff to develop their potential and flourish in their roles.
- Planned opportunities for spiritual development are interwoven throughout the curriculum, enabling pupils to reflect and connect deeply and spiritually within St James' and across the Sphere Federation.
- Daily collective worship follows a clear, consistent structure, enabling pupils to explore Christian teachings, reflect on spiritual questions and make connections with their own lives and community.
- Religious education (RE) is treated as a core priority, supported by a well-planned curriculum, high-quality resources, and regular professional development for staff. As a result, pupils have well-developed knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews.

Development Points

- Strengthen planned opportunities that promote an active culture of justice and responsibility. This is to broaden pupils' understanding of how they can make a positive difference.

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Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Rooted in teachings from the Bible, the school actively lives out its vision to 'achieve and believe' through carefully chosen Christian values. These values shape leaders' decisions and foster an inclusive culture where pupils are supported to flourish. Leaders demonstrate compassion through bold decisions. For example, funding is allocated to resource a sensory room that enables pupils who have complex needs to get the tailored support that they need. Governors regularly monitor and evaluate how effectively the Christian vision shapes provision and enables all pupils to flourish. Through their scrutiny of leaders' decisions and the impact of resources, they provide support and challenge that helps strengthen the school's distinctive Christian character. This demonstrates how the vision influences strategic decisions and prioritises pupils' wellbeing and achievement. The Sphere Federation strengthens leadership and helps the school maintain its distinctive Christian foundation. Partnerships with the diocese and local church complement this work, enriching school life and sustaining high aspirations. Pupils' views influence decisions and shape the school's direction, demonstrating that their voices are valued. Staff feel cared for and valued, with opportunities for professional and spiritual development. High quality training equips them to meet pupils' individual needs and put the Christian vision into practice.

Vision and Curriculum

The school's vision to 'achieve and believe' shapes a curriculum that motivates pupils to persevere, show compassion and become responsible citizens. Staff skilfully use approaches such as 'feelings first' to help pupils understand their emotions, focus in lessons and learn successfully. Enrichment opportunities, including visits to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and singing at Sheffield Arena, broaden pupils' experiences and raise their aspirations. Spiritual development is woven throughout the curriculum, encouraging pupils to ask questions, reflect on their experiences and consider different perspectives. For example, exploring questions about creation encourages pupils to consider the origins of the world and different explanations. Pupils develop their own ideas about life and existence, confidently sharing their thoughts and listening respectfully to others. Opportunities to learn alongside pupils from other schools within the Sphere Federation broaden these experiences. Sharing ideas and encountering different perspectives helps pupils to reflect beyond their immediate school community and deepen their understanding of the world around them.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is central to daily school life, bringing the community together to share faith, reflect and celebrate. Worship nurtures spiritual development. Through biblical stories, pupils consider how Jesus' teachings and Christian values guide their choices and relationships. A rich range of experiences gives pupils and adults opportunities to reflect on meaningful questions, consider different perspectives and deepen their understanding of themselves and the world. For example, the story of David and Goliath helps pupils understand perseverance and consider how they can overcome challenges in their own lives. A consistent daily pattern gives pupils regular opportunities to ask questions, reflect on their experiences and consider what matters to them. Class-based 'Reflect and Connect' sessions provide quieter opportunities for pupils to think and express their ideas. Partnerships with local clergy enrich worship and strengthen links with the church. Through their involvement in school worship, clergy help pupils explore Christian teachings and deepen their understanding of faith, God and their place in the world. The presentation of the St James shell at important points in pupils' school journey celebrates their progress and strengthens their sense of belonging.

Vision and School Culture

At St James', the Christian values shape a culture where pupils feel a sense of belonging and are supported. Skilled staff work together to provide tailored support for pupils facing additional challenges, helping them to understand and manage their emotions. This enables pupils to feel settled, build confidence and participate more fully in school life. Year 6 buddies help Reception pupils settle into school, while restorative conversations encourage pupils to resolve disagreements, understand others' feelings and rebuild relationships. Through these experiences, pupils learn to treat others with kindness and fairness, showing honesty and courage in their daily interactions. Leaders also invest in staff wellbeing and professional growth. New teachers receive tailored guidance and mentoring, while staff are supported to manage workload and maintain their wellbeing. Opportunities to develop their skills empower staff to flourish in their roles. This reflects the school's commitment to being a 'happy and healthy place' where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

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Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The Christian vision motivates leaders to develop a culture where pupils take responsibility, promote fairness and make a positive difference to others. Leadership opportunities, including the junior leadership team and Year 6 buddy scheme, enable pupils to influence school life and support others. Through discussions about fairness and shared decision-making, pupils learn to consider different views and take responsibility for their choices. Financial education helps pupils to understand how to manage money responsibly. Presentations to local highway officials enable pupils to raise concerns and influence decisions within their community. Pupils support Warm Space lunches for the local community, learning how practical acts of care can help others. These experiences develop pupils' understanding of responsibility and justice within school and the local community. However, opportunities for pupils to explore wider issues of injustice and consider how they might contribute to positive change are less developed. Leaders recognise the importance of broadening pupils' understanding of these issues and are beginning to consider how pupils can respond through meaningful action beyond their school community.

Religious Education

RE is a core academic priority, reflecting its importance within the school's Church of England identity. Shared leadership across the Sphere Federation provides a consistent curriculum, supported by clear guidance and carefully selected resources. Regular opportunities to revisit learning help pupils to build a secure knowledge of a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils can explain differences within the same religion, recognising that beliefs and practices vary. Thoughtfully planned topics enable pupils to explore the range of religions represented within their school community. Connections to other schools within the Sphere Federation bring this learning to life. For example, classes meeting each other online allows pupils to encounter religious beliefs and practices in different contexts. Studying Christianity encourages pupils to deepen their understanding of beliefs and how these influence people's lives. Exploring questions of meaning and purpose helps pupils to develop their own ideas, debate different perspectives and reflect on how their learning relates to their own beliefs.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	Hallfield Lane, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS22 6JS		
Date	19 October 2026	URN	107995
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	170
Diocese	Leeds		
Federation	Sphere Federation		
Headteacher	David Roundtree (Executive Headteacher) Natalie Beaston (Head of School)		
Chair of Governors	Rachel Cooper		
Inspector	Abigail Clay		