

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mark's Church of England Primary School, Brierley Hill	
Address	High Street, Pensnett, DY5 4DZ
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent

School's vision
Our Christian vision is Loving, Growing and Succeeding Together. We put our hope in God, where every day counts and seeds are sown in fertile soil. We lay up a foundation for the future so we can enjoy life which is life indeed. This we do together, with love.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Mark's has a deep understanding of Christian education. This has led to the implementation of an empowering and transformational curriculum where all can love, grow and succeed together. • Leaders are compassionate and prioritise wellbeing. As a result, seemingly insurmountable barriers to learning and wellbeing are removed, enabling all to flourish. • Deeply reflective learning opportunities provide rich experiences for pupils and adults to grow spiritually. Spiritual development is integral to the life of the school both within and beyond the curriculum. • Collective worship has a transformational impact on pupils and adults. Spiritual experiences are readily expressed and shared through a common language. Opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship however are not yet fully established. • Religious education (RE) is exceptionally well led. The cohesive curriculum provides immersive experiences that profoundly impact on pupils' own religious beliefs whilst embracing and celebrating difference.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For leaders to share their excellent practice of deeply Christian leadership to enrich provision within the wider church school family. • Extend opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship, thus deepening their understanding and practice of prayer and worship.

Inspection findings

St Mark's is a beacon of light. A school with a big heart on a big journey, relentless in their service to God and their community. Leaders are compassionate and lead with integrity. Through their deeply rooted Christian vision, they have created a culture of love where all can thrive. Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of their effectiveness as a church school is robust and offers a clear pathway to improvement. They listen and respond to their pupils and families, authentically living their vision of succeeding together with love.

Staff and governors are passionate about St Mark's. They describe it as a family that supports and guides each other for the greater good. This has built a resilient school community where staff routinely go above and beyond for others.

All pupils flourish educationally and spiritually. This is because the innovative and aspirational curriculum is driven by the vision for all to grow and succeed together. Learning is empowering and transformational, enabling pupils to see a bright future for themselves on the horizon. Leaders prioritise resources for wellbeing and ensure that pupils have the support that they need in order to grow and learn. The highly skilled pastoral team are relentless in their drive to ensure all pupils are enabled to overcome challenging barriers. As a result, all pupils, including those most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their learning needs met. Spiritual development is an intentional thread throughout the curriculum. Spiritual growth is enhanced through a shared understanding and common language. Pupils reflect on how important it is to love themselves and appreciate their gifts. This helps them through difficult times and builds their resilience.

Pupils at St Mark's respect and appreciate difference and live well together. They understand that some pupils have specific needs and that by showing kindness, this can help them feel included. They know to resolve conflict peacefully and appreciate that school is a safe place where they can share worries with any adult. Pupils know they can make mistakes and this will help them learn. Staff at St Mark's are highly appreciated for their dedication to ensure all pupils flourish both academically and spiritually. There is no judgement only respect and compassion. This enables families to reach out to the school in times of need. Leaders ensure all pupils are financially able to access breakfast club, school clubs and trips. Each child is seen as an individual and accepted for who they are; they learn how to just be themselves.

Diversity within the community is increasing. Leaders embrace this as an opportunity to welcome and celebrate the growing range of cultures, faiths and beliefs within the school. Everyone is valued. Leaders intend to share this message beyond the school through the development of a community hub.

Through their focus on charity, St Mark's has reduced isolation of families in the community by providing a free playgroup. Families are supported and can access the services they need much earlier. During Harvest celebration, pupils worked with their local foodbank to raise awareness of food poverty within their community. Pupils were so motivated, they collected enough food for 95 meals. To underpin this work, the school runs a well-attended breakfast club accessible to all. This ensures no pupil is hungry and has a good start to their day. Pupils understand that there is injustice in the world and are motivated to take action and affect change.

Collective worship is highly valued by all. It is a time to come together and share a sense of belonging. The school's Christian vision is central to worship and is explored with integrity. Leaders have taken time to develop a structure and rhythm for worship that meets the needs

of the school, making it inclusive of all faiths and none. For some pupils and staff, experiences have been deeply transformational. Pupils have developed a secure and extensive knowledge of the Bible. Leaders skilfully weave messages from the parables Jesus told into meaningful learning which inspire behaviour rooted in values. Pupils enjoy worship and love to sing. The words from the school song guide pupils through difficult times and bring hope that better times will come. They describe worship as a special time to learn about themselves and how to be the best they can be. Pupils and staff are deeply reflective and can share thoughtful and respectful responses to challenging concepts. This is because spiritual development is so well understood and deeply embedded in the life of the school. Pupils routinely deliver and evaluate worship but do not yet consistently plan and lead whole school worship. The local church enhances provision by leading prayer and worship in church, providing practical support and welcoming families.

High quality RE is achieved through passionate and effective leadership. All staff receive high quality professional development led by the diocese and the RE lead. Lessons are engaging and thought provoking. Driven by the vision to lay a foundation for the future, the curriculum is cohesive and challenging. Pupils explore their own beliefs and those of others and are comfortable in those differences. All opinions are valued at St Mark's so pupils feel safe to discuss difficult issues and ask probing questions. Pupils enjoy learning about Christianity and other religions. They understand why this is so important in a multi-cultural society. As a result, pupils are able to appreciate and talk respectfully about major religions and worldviews. Monitoring and evaluation of learning by leaders, including governors, is robust. Barriers to progress are routinely identified and addressed. This ensures that learning is highly valued, well-resourced and accessible to all.

St Mark's lives and breathes its deeply Christian vision with integrity and grace.

The school is on a journey of hope and aspiration, shining a light towards a bright future. Leaders are courageous in their decisions, driven by deeply rooted Christian values. They have created a culture of human flourishing where everyone matters and is loved and valued for who they are.

Information			
School	St Mark's Church of England Primary School, Brierley Hill	Inspection date	4 May 2023
URN	103836	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Worcester	Pupils on roll	356
Headteacher	Keith Rondeau		
Chair of Governors	Jane Price		
Inspector	Charlotte Taylor	No.	2117