

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Meltham Church of England VC Primary School

#### Vision

*From little sparkles to shining stars, We Stand Out, Break Out and Shout Out, Growing the confidence to make a difference.* The journey from little sparkles to shining stars reflects the path through school which we plan for children at Meltham CE Primary. Our vision is rooted in the story of King David, a journey from inauspicious beginnings to become one of the greatest kings in the Christian Bible. David cherished a love of learning; he had rich learning experiences, and so learned to live a full life, doing things differently to make things better.

Meltham Church of England VC 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.

#### Strengths

- Pupils embody the school vision to ‘stand out and shout out’. They demonstrate confidence and exceptional understanding when expressing their views about world issues and are quick to recognise injustice. They spontaneously debate matters close to their hearts, advocating for the world, both locally and globally.
- The diverse and challenging curriculum reflects the school’s Christian vision. It enables pupils to transform from ‘little sparkles to shining stars, growing the confidence to make a difference’. As a result, it develops the whole child ready for life beyond primary school.
- Pupils are keen to celebrate their achievements and the success of others, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This creates a culture of dignity and respect where everyone is valued and encouraged, and pupils thrive.
- The effective leadership of religious education (RE) creates a well-balanced curriculum. It enables pupils to explore a range of challenging philosophical and religious ideas, promoting respect for diversity.

#### Development Points

- Extend the understanding of the Christian vision, exemplified through the life of King David. This is to bring the vision to life, enabling pupils to know that they can grow from ‘little sparkles’.
- Enhance systems to facilitate routine and rigorous evaluation of the impact of the vision on the daily life of the school. This is to strengthen the school’s Christian foundation.
- Evaluate collective worship in order to identify which elements inspire and engage pupils. This is to ensure that pupils have every opportunity to grow spiritually.



## Inspection Findings

Meltham Church of England VC Primary School is a vibrant, welcoming community. Pupils and adults understand and talk of 'drivers', which are encapsulated in the long-established phrase 'we stand out, breakout, shout out'. This enables pupils to flourish by becoming confident, articulate learners. More recently, these drivers have become a key element in a Christian vision for the school. The vision is rooted in the biblical story of King David, who rose from humble shepherd to great king. The work to embed the vision is in its early stages. Leaders recognise that the Christian vision gives additional purpose in reconnecting decisions and actions to the school's Church foundation. Leadership is tenacious in holding to this vision. Despite funding pressures they have kept the 'breakout' broad curriculum with its focus on outdoor learning. Any necessary development of core subjects is balanced with consideration of the wider 'shout out' creative curriculum. Therefore, pupils thrive. Governors are well-informed and committed to the school. They regularly monitor provision through reports from leaders and visits. Governors are supportive and place great emphasis on considering staff wellbeing when making decisions. Adults benefit from this care and from continued professional development, which enables them to progress in their careers. Hence, staff feel valued, which adds to their personal flourishing.

A strength of this school is the way pupils are taught and encouraged to recognise injustice. It leads pupils to live out the vision by 'growing the confidence to make a difference'. Within class pupils hold regular debates, led by a monitor, who selects the big question from their peers' suggestions. Pupils spontaneously debate issues that are vitally important to them, such as the natural world, or equality. They display passionate dismay that some people do not choose to recycle. These opportunities to explore wider issues lay strong foundations for them to become caring citizens. They advocate for those without a voice and for the natural world. They take responsibility for themselves and others, which produces considerable personal growth. Pupils regularly collect litter but were disappointed and angry when it returned so designed posters to display locally. Although the eco-committee and pupil council lead much of this work, many other pupils are involved, knowing that they create positive change.

Pupils also thrive here because Christian values such as forgiveness, courage and friendship underpin how they interact with each other. Staff want all pupils to believe that they can become a shining star, just as they are. Parents value the way this approach, rooted in the vision, also supports those with SEND to succeed. They praise the way the school develops the whole child. Pupils know how to manage their own behaviour by regulating their emotions. They chart their emotions daily using increasingly complex vocabulary as they progress through school, which promotes emotional development. They also practise happy breathing, which pupils clearly find helpful for their mental health. Understanding themselves and others, encourages pupils to accept and care for their peers, especially those that are most vulnerable. As a result, behaviour is good, and when pupils need support this is provided by dedicated staff in specialised spaces. Parents appreciate the staff's commitment to every child and how well they know each one individually. They recognise that pupils blossom due to this individualised care and attention. It promotes a culture of dignity where adults and pupils treat others with respect.

The daily act of collective worship is a planned time for pupils to gather and explore their spirituality. There are moments of stillness and reflection, such as on entering, when pupils listen to a wide range of music. Pupils join in singing hymns, and more modern songs, and many choose to say the school prayer. Links with the local church enhance worship, with pupils particularly enthused by the Bible stories that they share. Pupils are also inspired by hearing about the natural world from the eco-committee, and they enjoy class assemblies. Reflection books encourage pupils to think more about what they experience in worship, which enhances their spiritual growth.



Pupils explore the work of famous figures, including Christians, who make a difference in the world by advocating for others. Leaders' plans for worship include important times in the Church calendar. A lack of effective evaluation of the impact of worship, limits leaders' understanding of how it supports pupils' spiritual development. Therefore, pupils' engagement in collective worship can vary.

The curriculum is particularly effective in developing pupils' spirituality. Subjects are deliberately planned to reflect the vision. Leaders know that pupils benefit personally, socially and spiritually from their weekly visit to the forest and termly 'welly days'. Pupils thrive in the rich environment, growing spiritually by noticing and interacting with nature, and gaining confidence and independence. The whole curriculum has planned opportunities for awe and wonder threaded through it. Leaders also 'give staff permission' to stop and use relevant moments within subjects to promote spirituality. Teachers regularly encourage pupils to contemplate and debate, which enhances learning. All these experiences enrich a diverse and challenging curriculum, readying pupils for their next educational adventure. The school tracks how well its pupils succeed at high school, taking satisfaction in their achievements. Former pupils, such as a male ballet dancer, visit to further enhance the curriculum, encouraging aspiration.

Highly effective leadership in RE has created a curriculum which is diverse and challenging. The subject has been carefully constructed using a Christian resource to strengthen the syllabus content. Pupils therefore flourish as they explore a wide range of religious and philosophical ideas. They enjoy RE and relish learning about the lives and beliefs of others. They are keen to reflect on how this learning develops their own ideas, opinions and, for some, their own faith. RE is continually refreshed because teachers benefit from training from the diocese, which provides valuable support to the school. Governors take an active role in monitoring the subject, as they do all aspects of the school. This leads to ongoing development, to the benefit of pupils, in line with the Christian vision.

## Information

Address	Holmfirth Road, Meltham, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, HD9 4DA		
Date	14 January 2025	URN	107718
Type of school	Maintained voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	409
Diocese	Leeds		
Headteacher	Phil Gibbins		
Chair of Governors	Kevin Stephenson		
Inspector	Melanie Barratt		