

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bulwell St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery School

Vision

Creating & inspiring a community where everyone recognises their self-worth as a unique child of God. Here we aim to develop a love of learning that enthuses and ignites hope for the future.

As the Angel Gabriel said to St. Mary:

“Nothing is impossible with God.” Luke 1: 37

Bulwell St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery 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

- The school's Christian vision underpins a deeply embedded culture of care. This enhances the work of the school as staff work to remove barriers for pupils.
- Pupils and adults are supported through difficult times, with positive mental health being actively promoted by school leaders. This is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- Collective worship allows time for pupils and adults to pause and reflect. This is enhancing the spiritual life of the school.
- The curriculum is adapted with care to enable pupils with special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND) to flourish. Staff work collaboratively to remove barriers to learning, ensuring that pupils maintain their dignity and worth.
- The religious education curriculum (RE) is broad, balanced and inclusive, providing valuable opportunities for critical thinking. This is encouraging pupils to explore different worldviews with respect and curiosity.

Development Points

- Work with staff on developing assessment practices and identifying misconceptions in RE. This is so pupils can deepen their knowledge and understanding of religions and worldviews.
- Give pupils opportunities to lead on initiatives that they feel passionate about. This is so that pupils can make a positive difference in their communities.



Inspection Findings

Rooted in its Christian vision, the school successfully nurtures a community where pupils and adults flourish as unique children of God. The school is guided by the belief that each pupil has immense worth. There is a deep desire to raise aspirations for pupils, remove barriers and ignite hope for a prosperous future. In this way, staff are committed to knowing their pupils well and responding to individual needs. This is having a positive impact on outcomes and pupils' sense of belonging. The school's values offer a strong foundation for purposeful living. Pupils care for themselves, others, their work and their community. Pupils celebrate each other's differences, behaving in a respectful way towards their peers. This fosters a sense of togetherness where concerns around bullying are rare, and pupils feel safe at school. Christian values such as friendship, respect and forgiveness, guide behaviour and support leaders in their decision-making. Parents are rightly positive about the spiritual life of the school, particularly valuing the sense of inclusion and joy they experience. In these ways, the school's Christian vision is shaping an environment where pupils and adults can flourish.

Collective worship is enhancing the spiritual life of the school. It is an opportunity to reflect on the joys and wonders of life whilst also proving space to consider life's difficulties. These moments in worship encourage children to think deeply about life, show empathy, and grow in hope. Worship is thoughtfully planned to ensure a rich exposure to the example of Jesus as presented in the Bible. Pupils impressively discuss what this example might mean for their own lives. Collective worship is further strengthened by the school's partnership with St Mary the Virgin & All Souls' Church. Clergy regularly deliver collective worship in school, and the church hosts special celebrations for staff, pupils and their families. This is enriching and diversifying the worship experience at St Mary's. The introduction of worship leaders is impactful in ensuring that pupils have a voice in what worship looks like in school. This is in the early stages of development, but pupils are already proud of their contribution. They are growing in confidence, leading prayer both in classrooms and during whole school worship.

The school creates a culture where the worth and dignity of individuals are recognised and nurtured. In this way, the Christian vision fosters a safe environment where pupils and adults are cared for with compassion and respect. The strong emphasis on taking care of others enhances the school's work around wellbeing. Pupils' needs are carefully monitored through regular wellbeing assessments with targeted interventions put in place to support pupils who need it. The curriculum is thoughtfully diversified so that all pupils can see themselves reflected in what they learn, helping them feel motivated and included. Teachers are approachable and responsive, creating trusting relationships where all feel listened to and taken care of. Relationships with families are carefully nurtured, supporting improved attendance and engagement. Staff wellbeing is also prioritised, with leaders providing mental health support and fostering a workplace culture of empathy and encouragement. Through this holistic approach, the Christian vision is lived out in practical and meaningful ways that benefit both pupils and adults.

The RE curriculum successfully allows pupils to explore a broad range of religious traditions and worldviews. The subject is led well, ensuring staff are equipped to deliver a new and challenging curriculum. Staff meetings sometimes include RE updates and training. Careful planning ensures that lessons are balanced, offering time for critical thinking and thoughtful reflection. The teaching of RE successfully allows pupils to grow spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Pupils are excited to share their learning and can retell biblical stories they have learnt about. They are proud of their whole class RE big books and remember lessons fondly. RE is preparing pupils for life in modern Britain as they learn about diverse examples of lived faith. Pupils also rightly understand that Christianity is a global faith, which takes many forms and can be expressed in different ways.



The RE curriculum has been thoughtfully developed and reflects the school's intention to ensure that RE is meaningful and engaging for all pupils. Its implementation is already having a noticeable impact, with pupils engaging enthusiastically in lessons and producing creative and reflective work, as seen in the big books. Pupils demonstrate growing confidence in using subject-specific vocabulary and are beginning to explore complex concepts with increasing curiosity. Misconceptions are not always consistently identified or addressed, and this restricts deeper understanding. Even so, while some aspects of understanding are still developing, pupils are increasingly making connections across their learning. Assessment enables teachers to identify pupils who require additional support to meet expected standards. However, current assessment practices do not effectively distinguish those pupils who are exceeding expectations. RE is firmly established as a subject of value within the curriculum. Although not always captured through written tasks, pupils are supported to think critically and reflect meaningfully.

The school's inclusive curriculum reflects a deep commitment to nurturing the whole child, with spirituality woven meaningfully throughout learning. Pupils are thoughtfully encouraged to take a moment in their learning to recognise big thoughts and feelings they might have. Reflection spaces in classrooms act as a space for pupils to think, pray or at times, self-regulate. High priority is given to SEND, with governors regularly reviewing provision to ensure dignity, respect, and equity are upheld for pupils. Governors ask themselves at the end of each meeting, what impact have they had for every pupil at St Mary's. This is another example of the school's desire to see each person's self-worth and remove barriers, building hope for the future. Leaders at Transform Trust are also supporting school leaders in this vision. This commitment is bearing fruit, with clear improvements evident across the school. Suspensions have decreased significantly, indicating that the right support is in place for the right child. Vulnerable pupils are loved and supported to make progress at this school. They are a part of a nurturing community of learners but are also included in all areas of school life, accessing a broad curriculum.

The school promotes justice and responsibility through active involvement in both school and the local community. Pupils enjoy taking part in Community Action Week, cleaning the local church, planting, and litter picking. They are also encouraged to engage with local projects and have a voice in the community. One example is pupils winning an art competition in the Bulwell Arts Festival, showcasing their creativity and commitment to community life. These experiences help pupils develop a sense of belonging and an understanding of caring for others and the wider world. Currently, most charitable and social action projects are initiated by staff. While this provides a valuable foundation, it limits pupil voice and leadership. The school is beginning to create more opportunities for pupils to lead and influence change. For instance, when a pupil raised concerns about a lack of diversity in a classroom video, staff listened and took meaningful action, involving stakeholders in the response. This demonstrates the school's growing commitment to inclusion, equity, and pupil voice.

Information

Address	Bulwell St Mary's C of E Primary and Nursery School, Ragdale Road, Bulwell, Nottingham, NG6 8GQ		
Date	13/06/2025	URN	143015
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	232
Diocese and Methodist District	Southwell and Nottingham		
MAT/Federation	Transform Trust		
Headteacher	Julia Burge		
Chair of Governors	Karen Slack		
Inspector	Kirsty Lacey		