

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>St Nicholas Church of England Primary School</b>	
Address	Mill Lane, Cottesmore, Oakham LE15 7DL

<b>School vision</b>
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<p>Together, we strive to be the best we can be! To enable everyone to achieve their true potential in a happy and safe environment. “Do not fear, only believe.” Mark 5:36</p>
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<b>School strengths</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shared and well embedded Christian vision drives school’s actions. This ensures pupils flourish, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and/or who are vulnerable.</li> <li>• Collective worship is invitational and inclusive. It inspires adults and pupils to live out the vision. Bible verses, singing, reflection and prayer contribute to spiritual development.</li> <li>• School leaders, including governors and the Rutland Learning Trust (RLT), steer a school culture where everyone is treated well. This means that adults and pupils feel happy and nurtured.</li> <li>• Religious Education (RE) is well planned. Pupils enjoy learning about world faiths, including Christianity, and make good progress as a result.</li> <li>• Wider learning opportunities enrich pupils’ experiences. They develop new skills in line with the vision not to fear but believe in themselves.</li> </ul> |
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<b>Areas for development</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower pupils so that they can initiate projects which make a positive difference to their community and the wider world.</li> <li>• Embed pupils’ understanding of spirituality. This is so they can articulate how moments of awe, wonder, reflection and prayer impact on their lives and the lives of others.</li> </ul> |
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<b>Inspection findings</b>
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<p>The Christian vision is firmly established at the heart of this dynamic school. The school and Rutland Learning Trust work tirelessly to create a positive culture which flows from the vision. This empowers everyone not to fear when undertaking new challenges, adding richness to pupils’ experiences. The vision has been evaluated and refined to ensure it represents the community. Staff know each pupil and their unique talents, nurturing them to achieve their full potential. This enables them to provide specific support to pupils including to groups who may need additional help. Leaders are tenacious in their approach to breaking down barriers to success and accessing the support pupils need. They carefully create learning experiences through the well-considered curriculum. These planned activities promote a culture where everyone is treasured and given enhancing opportunities that broaden minds and develop lifelong skills. Pupils are brave in trying new activities and so benefit from all that the school has to offer.</p>
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<p>Joyful singing and times for reflection in collective worship bring the school together. These shared moments encourage everyone to live out the Christian values they encounter within the Bible stories they hear. This inspires pupils to be the best person that they can be. They draw upon the values to guide their daily lives and make wise choices as a result. Prayer is thoughtfully used and leads to moments of stillness, ably led by pupils or adults. Pupils are encouraged to write personal prayers, based on the termly Christian value. They share these in collective worship which leads to prayer time being inclusive and invitational. Parents value joining in with termly worship at the church and weekly celebration in school. It affirms them as genuine partners who believe the vision helps their children to feel proud of themselves and their school. A variety of worship styles are planned by clergy and</p>
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school leaders. This means pupils experience and explore praise in different forms, contributing to their spiritual growth.

Leaders work with charities, the Rutland Learning Trust and local schools to provide exciting opportunities outside the curriculum, such as forest school. This builds pupils' confidence, social skills, and a sense of spirituality within the natural world. Pupils speak highly of these experiences and how it encourages their self-belief. They have the chance to live out the vision by being brave and trying new things. The rich and varied curriculum enables pupils to reflect and grow spiritually. However, a shared language is not in place for adults and pupils to articulate their experiences of these spiritual moments.

There is an ongoing drive for improvement, grounded in the vision, shared by all adults. Leaders make decisions based on how best to serve the needs of the community. Governors, alongside the trust and diocese, work diligently through a monitoring program. This enables them to understand the work of the school and deploy resources appropriately. Bold choices, such as increasing staffing to meet pupil needs, are made in accordance with the vision to act fearlessly. Parents recognise the work of the school and appreciate its nurturing approach. In this encouraging and highly supportive environment, they see their children thrive.

Relationships at all levels are strong. Staff value the encouragement they receive from leaders, and this inspires them to live out the vision. They progress in their careers because of the support they receive. This impacts positively on their wellbeing and, feeling valued as a result, are effusive about the encouragement that they are given. The words of the vision to 'not fear but to believe' are a comfort to them, as to pupils, during times of challenge. Emboldened by the vision, staff make choices with pupils at the centre. They are skilled at adapting the curriculum, learning environment and support to meet pupils' needs. Mistakes are seen as part of learning and improving, and this gives pupils confidence to endeavour in all aspects of life. This echoes the culture which permeates the school and encourages everyone to be resilient. Pupils demonstrate how they are feeling using an 'emotion register'. This enables staff to offer timely help and support them. They thrive in an inclusive and calm classroom environment. This was enhanced as a result of a recent school redecoration. Sustainable procedures, such as effective pupil transitions, have been introduced to ensure that all, including the most vulnerable, flourish.

Informed by the Christian vision, clear plans develop pupils' understanding of their place in the world. St Nicholas' curriculum offers opportunities for them to explore injustice and be encouraged to make a difference in the world. Pupils learn how they can support others through active involvement in projects. Examples of Christian stewardship are evident. Vegetables are grown in the allotment in Year 1, providing the produce for pupils to cook and share soup as part of a community meal. Supporting charities such as Water Aid encourage a strong moral purpose. Pupils regularly undertake social action projects that help in their local environment. This empowers them to know they can make a positive difference. The culture of compassion and responsibility helps pupils to stand up for causes they are passionate about. Pupils have an element of choice in some activities. However, these are often adult driven. As a result, pupils are less equipped to act independently to make changes both in their locality and on a global scale.

Strong leadership of RE means it is given a high priority. Leaders ensure that the carefully planned curriculum is well-sequenced and progressive. Pupils learn in creative ways through drama, art and music and are excited about RE. As a result, they understand the rich diversity of a range of world faiths and world views. Pupils talk confidently about a range of religions because building on prior knowledge deepens their understanding as they progress through the school. Leaders use careful assessment to identify and address gaps in knowledge. Opportunities for pupils to share what they learn from RE are highly enriching, and impact on their progress in a powerful way. Big questions are



used to promote thinking skills, and this makes sure pupils are inquisitive about their own beliefs and place in the world. Leaders support teachers to improve their knowledge of the subject, enabling them to be confident about what they teach. As a result of well-chosen teaching resources, pupils have a good understanding of important Christian ideas. Regular training from the Diocese of Peterborough ensures that leaders keep up to date with their knowledge and skills.

Through its vision and practice, St Nicholas Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
School	St Nicholas Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	1/2/24
URN	141452	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese	Peterborough	Pupils on roll	136
MAT/Federation	The Rutland Learning Trust		
Headteacher	Daniel Alfieri		
Chair of Governors	Richard Weston		
Inspector	George Trafford	No.	c.23/24