

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bishopswood St John's Church of England First Academy

Vision

'God is like the Good Shepherd. He knows us, leads us, protects us and keeps us from harm.'

Love, Protect, Succeed

We seek within a Christian environment to provide a happy, caring school that loves and protects children whilst enabling them to flourish on their journey of life, just like the Good Shepherd protecting his sheep. We aim to ensure children reach their full potential and foster in them a respect for themselves and others on body, mind and spirit.

'I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.' John 10:14

Bishopswood St John's Church of England First Academy 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

- The school's deeply embedded and shared Christian vision is lived out daily. It drives leaders' actions, enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- The purposely designed curriculum encourages pupils to raise and consider deep, thought-provoking questions. As a result, pupils are inquisitive and creative learners.
- Collective worship is uplifting and a special time for the school community to come together. This gives worthwhile opportunities for pupils and adults to grow spiritually.
- Shaped by the Christian vision, leaders ensure a strong culture of inclusion is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils are loved and accepted as unique children of God. Consequently, they are supported to thrive.
- Driven by the parable of the good shepherd, pupils have a strong sense of belonging. This inspires pupils and adults to show compassion for others.

Development Points

- Extend routinely planned opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum. This is to enrich the spiritual flourishing of pupils.
- Establish a strategic approach to monitor religious education (RE). This is to secure an effective curriculum that meets pupils' needs, providing them with a firm foundation in the subject.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

St John's School has a deeply embedded Christian vision, inspired by the example of the good shepherd. Rooted in the belief that each person is a unique child of God, the vision shapes strategic decision making. It fosters a strong culture of nurture where people are known, valued and cared for. The Gospel values of perseverance, courage, friendship, trust, compassion and respect are consistently evident across school life. Pupils and adults live these values through daily relationships and actions. This creates exemplary behaviour and a caring, respectful community where pupils and parents feel safe and supported. A productive partnership with the academy trust strengthens the school's capacity to thrive. The trust's commitment to ensuring 'no child is left behind' closely aligns with the school's vision. This strengthens leaders' resolve to remove barriers and respond thoughtfully to individual needs. Close partnerships with the diocese are highly valued, equipping leaders to sustain and further develop the school's Christian character. Strong links with the local parish church enrich the Christian identity and daily life. Consequently, pupils and adults flourish within a loving, nurturing community.

Vision and Curriculum

The curriculum is carefully planned to meet pupils' needs and broaden their understanding of the world. Big questions across subjects inspire curiosity and encourage deeper thinking. A wide range of sporting and enrichment opportunities extends learning beyond the classroom. These experiences enable pupils to discover strengths and develop their talents. Residential visits build confidence, independence and teamwork, while providing time for outdoor worship and prayer. Staff make excellent use of the school grounds, including the forest school and the peaceful place. These experiences deepen pupils' sense of wonder and appreciation of God's creation. An enrichment day inspired pupils to establish a gardening club, promoting stewardship of the environment. The peaceful place encourages reflection, helping pupils process emotions and find moments of stillness. Spiritual development arises naturally in some subject areas. However, opportunities are not planned consistently across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils and staff do not readily recognise spirituality within everyday experiences. This limits their understanding of how spirituality can shape life and support personal flourishing.

Worship and Spirituality

Pupils and adults value coming together for collective worship. Varied approaches support individual spiritual journeys and encourage active participation. Careful planning and an inclusive approach help people make thoughtful connections with their own lives. Worship explores local, national and global issues through a Christian perspective. This develops empathy, responsibility and a deeper understanding of spiritual growth. Weekly worship, led by church representatives, reinforces the school's Christian values. This strengthens the partnership between the school and the parish church. The welcoming manner enables pupils and adults to engage in personally significant ways. Skilful questioning challenges thinking and encourages considered contributions from different age groups. The Young Disciples play a significant role in planning and leading worship. Their leadership provides positive role models and inspires others to live out the school's values. Prayer spaces enrich worship and encourage families to participate alongside their children. Well-planned activities enhance engagement with prayer and opportunities for stillness. Prayer bags extend these experiences into the home. Parents value this time to pray, talk and make worthwhile connections together. Consequently, collective worship strengthens spiritual development and deepens relationships across the school community.

Religious Education

The newly developed RE curriculum reflects the school's Christian vision. It is carefully sequenced, giving appropriate prominence to Christianity alongside the study of other religions and worldviews. Bible texts form the foundation for understanding the Christian faith. RE lessons explore profound questions that connect faith with everyday life. Thoughtfully planned questioning develops pupils' critical thinking as they make links



between religious teachings and their own experiences. This enables them to ask increasingly searching questions about belief and faith. The curriculum facilitates learning about different beliefs, encourages respect, openness and appreciation of diverse perspectives. Visits, including to a gurdwara, and encounters with people of different faiths, deepen understanding of lived belief and practice. Currently, there is a lack of a long-term overview to monitor the subject. This limits leaders' ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the new RE curriculum.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The Christian vision inspires pupils to care for others and the wider world. From an early age, regular opportunities nurture kindness and generosity. Age-appropriate news resources deepen understanding of injustice and global responsibility. This helps pupils respond compassionately to issues affecting society. An initiative that provides wells demonstrates the school's action by providing drinking water for a village in Zimbabwe. During a recent heatwave, pupils recognised the importance of reliable access to clean water. Opportunities to explore justice encourage pupils to develop informed views and considered responses. This inspired some pupils to organise a Christmas toy collection for children experiencing hardship. Pupils also support a local foodbank, helping families and individuals facing disadvantage. Staff model generosity by raising money for charities through fundraising events and personal challenges. Their example encourages pupils to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Consequently, pupils develop a strong sense of social responsibility and confidently take action.

Vision and School Culture

St John's vision creates a strong culture of love, acceptance and belonging. This fosters a welcoming and inclusive community. Pupils and adults consistently show compassion, encouragement and respect for one another. Carefully tailored teaching and effective classroom support enable pupils to flourish academically and emotionally. A bespoke start to the day helps pupils with emotional needs begin learning calmly and confidently. The 'good shepherd ethos' ensures pupils, families and staff feel known, valued and cared for. Individualised plans build emotional resilience and help families feel listened to and that their needs are recognised. Forest school sessions boosts self-esteem and help pupils recognise that their voice matters. Leaders prioritise staff wellbeing through thoughtful policies and pastoral care. The trust's support for positive mental health further strengthens this provision. Staff feel valued and maintain a healthy work-life balance. Pupils willingly serve and encourage one another, demonstrating the school's Christian values through their actions. Consequently, the vision enables the school community to flourish with confidence, dignity and hope.

Information

Address	Whiteoaks Drive, Bishops Wood, Staffordshire ST19 9AH		
Date	30 June 2026	URN	145380
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	66
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT	Penk Valley Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Trevor Sutcliffe		
Headteacher	Emma Challiner		
Chair of Governors	Chris Mellins		
Inspector	Anne Collins		