

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

### Lower Heath Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16)

Lower Heath Church of England 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

- The Christian vision and the associated values give the school its firm foundation. Consequently, it unites the school community in its ambitions, enabling pupils and adults to ‘let their lights shine’.
- The thoughtful design and implementation of the curriculum allows pupils time to learn how to reflect inwardly. Therefore, they are gaining a strong awareness of their own spiritual needs and development.
- Collective worship enhances the life of the school and the understanding of the Christian vision and values. It is welcoming, inclusive and thought-provoking. Consequently, it positively impacts the thoughts and actions of pupils and adults within the community.
- Leaders ensure that this is a place where people feel valued. Consistent modelling from teachers and pupils’ strong knowledge of the Christian values mean that respect and love resonate throughout the school. As a result, pupil’s behaviour is exemplary.
- Opportunities are well planned for pupils to explore their concerns for the world. They are encouraged to have a strong voice and to use it. Therefore, they have a secure sense of responsibility towards each other and to the wider community.

#### Development Points

- Embed the new religious education (RE) curriculum in order to deepen learning. This is to promote the exploration and understanding of the global diversity of faith.
- Create more opportunities where members of the school community can benefit from self-directed stillness and reflection. This is to enhance and deepen spiritual experience and knowledge.



## Inspection Findings

Pupils and adults 'let their light shine brightly' at Lower Heath Church of England Primary School. Inspired by their Christian vision, ambitions are high for this community. The associated Christian values enhance the understanding of the vision. This means that love, respect, faith, thankfulness and fellowship are at the heart of school life. Work with the trust promotes training and school to school support. This strengthens staff knowledge and skills, enabling them to do their best for their pupils. Through the vision, pupils and adults are encouraged to discover their talents and use them to improve their own and others' lives. Leaders ensure the vision drives the policies and actions of the school, meaning that it is lived every day. The frequent evaluation of its impact means that it continues to challenge and to push the school community forward. As a result, this is a school where pupils and adults thrive.

Led by the vision, leaders have crafted an inspirational and aspirational curriculum. Staff believe that all pupils should reach their full potential, including the vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They bring learning to life by creating meaningful experiences such as history days and celebrating festivals from around the world. The school is blessed with beautiful surroundings and these are used to enhance learning. Pupils grow flowers and vegetables as well as regularly exploring the school forest. This gives them an appreciation of creation and a desire to protect it. Extra-curricular activities in a range of subjects such as drama, cookery and coding enrich school life. Staff bring the outside world in to school by using a wealth of resources and visitors. Excursions outside the village further pupils' knowledge of life beyond their locality. The partnership with a school in Wolverhampton widens their knowledge of life in a contrasting place. There is a strong focus on developing spirituality. Pupils and staff learn and use a range of contemplative practices. The spiritual garden is well used to enrich this practice during lesson times. For example, pupils are led by teachers to sit in stillness and appreciate the beauty around them. This means pupils have a strong awareness of their own spiritual needs and how they can be met. However, there is a lack of opportunity for spontaneous reflection during free time and this limits spiritual growth.

Collective worship is the cornerstone of school life. It is welcoming and leaders take care to support differing needs. Rituals such as lighting candles and using special prayers help pupils to recognise worship as an important time. Prayer, stillness, artwork, songs and stories all help to allow those present to participate. Therefore, worship brings the community together, furthers knowledge of the Christian vision and values and develops spiritual understanding. The use of consistent language helps pupils to consider big questions and to try to find answers. Consequently, they develop the skills and curiosity to find their place in the world. The strong partnership with the church helps to deepen the experience. Although logistics are difficult, the school visits the church for Christian festivals and other celebrations. Local clergy lead worship regularly, both in school and at the church. This strengthens pupils' understanding of the importance of worship for Christians.

Leaders and staff find many different ways to instil a sense of responsibility in pupils. Within school, pupils are encouraged to take on roles such as leading playtime activities and looking after the younger ones. The 'children in charge day' empowers them to believe they can improve life for their school community. As a result of this, pupils independently run lunch time clubs in areas such as maths, reading, loom bands and Makaton. During lessons, they explore issues such as conservation and climate change. Texts are carefully chosen to help pupils understand that the smallest action can have a big effect. Classes lead on termly 'courageous advocacy' projects in order to make a



difference in their community. This helps them develop an increasing awareness of justice. Therefore, they are keen to initiate actions and campaigns such as promoting recycling and conservation.

Leaders, staff and pupils understand the importance of RE as an academic subject. The new RE curriculum has been developed in partnership with the diocese to cater for the needs of this community. Staff are trained and resources purchased to ensure an effective delivery. Carefully planned lessons secure a growing understanding of faiths and worldviews. Visits to places of worship bring learning to life and reinforce knowledge and understanding. However, the study of faith on a global level is less developed. This limits pupils' understanding of diversity of ways people of faith live out their beliefs. The curriculum examines the importance of sacred texts and their relevance to believers' lives. Bible stories are studied to promote an understanding of their deeper meaning and the messages they contain. There are opportunities to consider moral and ethical issues through the exploration of searching questions. In-depth discussions are planned to develop pupils' thinking skills.

The Christian vision creates a culture where everyone matters. Pupils and adults feel they are valued members of the community, showing care and support for each other. Therefore, school is a safe and loving place to be. The modelling of the Christian values by teachers instils an atmosphere of love and kindness which is mirrored by pupils. Therefore, they treat each other with utmost respect and thoughtfulness, leading to exemplary behaviour. The trust and school ensure there are measures in place to help in times of struggle. This assures staff and families that help is there when needed. Pupil 'movement mentors' and 'healthy habits monitors' provide playtime challenges to improve fitness and organise the daily mile run. This helps pupils have autonomy over their own health and wellbeing. Giving adults and pupils a strong voice adds to their sense of worth. Lower Heath is a haven of care, kindness, peace and wonder. A place where people shine.

## Information

Address	Lower Heath, Prees, Whitchurch, SY13 2BT		
Date	8 May 2025	URN	146897
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	91
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT/Federation	The Marches Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Helen Reynolds		
Chair of Governors	Sarah Allwood		
Chair or Trust	Alex Fry		
Inspector	Lesley Montgomery		