

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Horton St Michael's Church of England First School

Vision

Horton St Michael's Church of England First School is a loving community, where everyone is celebrated and treated with dignity and respect. We aim to use our God given talents to be creative and curious learners about the world we share, enabling us to become people of hope who make a positive and lasting impact on society. We learn to love and value our beautiful school and its surroundings as a part of God's creation and recognise our role as stewards in this. Genesis 1:31 "God saw all that he had made, and it was good."

Horton St Michael's Church of England First 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.

Notable Strengths

- The Christian vision is expressed throughout school life. It drives leaders' decision making to enable pupils and adults flourish.
- Shaped by the vision, the curriculum inspires pupils to grow in wisdom, curiosity and spirituality. As a result, pupils confidently connect learning with their values, relationships and everyday decisions.
- The well-planned, creative religious education (RE) curriculum covers a range of faiths, beliefs and practices. Consequently, pupils deepen their understanding of religions and worldviews.
- Collective worship extends beyond the school building into outdoor spaces. This offers deeply enriching experiences that support spiritual growth.
- Pupils understand the importance of justice in creating a world based on Jesus' teaching. They identify and respond to injustice, knowing that they can make a positive difference for others.

Development Points

- Deepen pupils' understanding of the biblical narrative so they confidently explain how its teachings shape their values, choices and actions. This is so pupils recognise how scripture informs worship, Christian values and daily living.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision at Horton St Michael's is clearly articulated and shapes the strategic decisions of leaders. Rooted in Genesis, it reflects the school's rural setting and inspires pupils and adults to be responsible stewards of God's creation. Leaders, governors and staff consistently explain how the vision influences priorities and school improvement. Developed collaboratively with stakeholders, the vision is lived authentically throughout daily life. Governors use the vision to both support and challenge leaders, ensuring decisions promote the flourishing of the school. They make courageous leadership decisions, ensuring pupils' needs remain at the heart of strategic planning. Parent and pupil feedback, alongside regular governor, trust and diocesan engagement, provides evidence of the vision's impact and informs future development. Strong partnerships with the trust and diocese provide effective challenge, professional development and shared expertise. Together, these relationships strengthen the school's distinctive Christian identity and enable pupils and adults to thrive.

Vision and Curriculum

The Christian vision shapes a broad and ambitious curriculum that extends pupils beyond the world they already know. Outdoor learning is central to this vision, connecting pupils with God's creation through meaningful experiences. Forest School and outdoor lessons deepen engagement with the natural world and respond to individual learning needs. Pupils understand their responsibility to care for creation and value the natural world as part of God's gift. Visits, theme days and residential experiences widen horizons, inspiring curiosity, confidence and resilience. Opportunities for spirituality are carefully woven throughout the curriculum, enriching learning and personal development. Therefore, pupils flourish academically, spiritually and personally. Close collaboration across the trust strengthens curriculum planning through shared expertise and professional dialogue. Staff grow in confidence, enriching experiences for learners. Collaborative days with other trust schools enable pupils to learn alongside more peers, broadening friendships, confidence and aspirations. Pupils deemed to have special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from this ambition. Staff know pupils well, enabling teaching and support to be carefully tailored. Consequently, pupils thrive and enjoy school life.

Worship and Spirituality

Invitational collective worship is a valued time for pupils and adults to gather as a community. Worship is thoughtfully planned and firmly rooted in biblical texts. However, leaders have only recently introduced this structured approach to deepen pupils' understanding of the biblical narrative. Consequently, pupils are beginning to explain how scripture shapes their values, choices and actions. Worship regularly explores biblical narratives and their relevance to daily life. However, leaders recognise pupils need a deeper understanding of scripture links to Christian worship, values and daily life. Carefully chosen resources and staff expertise connect worship with local, national and global issues. Sharing 'the Peace' in French helps pupils recognise Christianity as a global faith expressed through many languages and cultures. This broadens pupils' perspectives and encourages thoughtful reflection. Inclusive practice, including signing the Lord's Prayer and songs, enables meaningful participation. Pupils use signing beyond worship when communicating with children at the nearby special school. This deepens their understanding of inclusion, dignity and Christian service. Worship in the school forest strengthens pupils' appreciation of God as Creator and their responsibility to care for creation. The natural environment offers stillness, reflection and a deep appreciation of God's world. These sacred moments nurture the spiritual journeys of pupils and adults.

Vision and School Culture



A culture where every person is known, valued and deeply cared for is firmly rooted in the Christian vision and values. Relationships are characterised by love, compassion and mutual respect. As a result, pupils and adults experience a strong sense of belonging. Wellbeing is a significant strength because leaders prioritise positive mental health for pupils and staff. Thoughtfully planned provision helps individuals feel safe, listened to and confident to seek help. Staff benefit from wellbeing training, access to counselling and strategies that promote a healthy work-life balance. Consequently, staff feel appreciated, resilient and equipped to grow personally and professionally. The school has created a holistic environment where individual gifts and talents are recognised and nurtured. Staff and parents appreciate the way individuals are encouraged to flourish. Close collaboration across the trust provides professional support, shared expertise and opportunities for development. Pupils benefit from a curriculum tailored to the school's rural context and local needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are cherished and valued. They access a full range of experiences within school life. Staff know their needs well and adapt teaching and provision to enable them to thrive. For example, water safety education equips pupils with the knowledge and confidence to stay safe beside the nearby lake. Pupils naturally demonstrate kindness, empathy and respect in their daily interactions. Mixed-age friendships foster responsibility, inclusion and genuine care for one another. A welcoming, inclusive and deeply caring culture permeates the school. Parents rightly recognise and value this. They value staff's unwavering commitment to securing the best outcomes for pupils.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The vision of stewarding God's creation inspires a culture of justice, dignity and responsibility. Pupils understand that everyone is valued and can contribute to positive change. Learning about poverty develops compassion and a commitment to serve others. Donations of toys and clothing to a partner school in Kenya enable pupils to make a tangible difference. Social media updates help pupils see the lasting impact of their generosity. Afternoon teas and visits to a local care home demonstrate the vision in action by addressing loneliness within the rural community. Consequently, pupils recognise that their actions can transform lives locally and internationally. Partnerships with food charities, including packing food boxes, deepen pupils' understanding of service and human dignity. The curriculum introduces inspirational figures who challenged injustice and inequality. Consequently, pupils confidently challenge prejudice and explain why Christians are called to seek justice and uphold human dignity.

Religious Education

RE is strongly led, reflecting and enhancing the school's Christian distinctiveness. Trust and diocesan training give staff confidence and develop subject expertise. Leaders have designed a creative and well-sequenced curriculum that builds knowledge and understanding over time. It enables pupils to explore Christianity alongside religious and non-religious worldviews. Comparing Nativity traditions across different countries helps pupils recognise Christianity as a diverse, living world faith. Carefully planned questioning develops critical thinking and encourages pupils to explore profound questions of belief, meaning and purpose. Pupils confidently consider different viewpoints, justify their ideas and respectfully challenge the thinking of others. Learning about leprosy encourages pupils to reconsider assumptions, developing empathy and a deeper understanding of human dignity. Enrichment opportunities, including Faith Days and educational visits, bring learning to life and deepen understanding. This means pupils enjoy RE, reflect thoughtfully on their own beliefs and appreciate the beliefs of others.

Information

Address	Camrose Hill Rudyard, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 8RU		
Date	10 July 2026	URN	146126
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	60
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT	Staffordshire University Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	James Capper		
Headteacher	Rebecca Walker		
Chair of Governors	Karen Mann		
Inspector	Anne Collins		