

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Tipton St John Church of England Primary School

Vision

‘Believing and Achieving Together to be the Best We Can Be’. We aim to reflect God’s love, ‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.’ John 10:10. Through the values of HEART (hope, empathy, achievement, reflection, thankfulness) we can aspire to realise our vision of being the best we can be. With God’s love, and love for one another, encircling all of our values.

Tipton St John 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

- Tipton St John’s vision, lived out through its values, permeates throughout the school. Leaders and the wider staff team are relentless in their desire to ensure pupils and adults ‘Achieve and Believe Together.’ This enables them to be the best that they can be.
- The school’s vision shapes the curriculum, equipping pupils to flourish. Leaders take bold decisions to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils who are vulnerable and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This supports them to overcome significant barriers to learning.
- Through its vision, the school ensures that pupils and adults are treated with dignity in an inclusive and equitable culture. This enables pupils and adults to understand that they and their community are cherished as children of God, even in difficult times.
- Collective worship is central to life at the school and is a joyous occasion. This enriches the spiritual flourishing of both pupils and adults.

Development Points

- Ensure that newly established assessment procedures within religious education (RE) are fully embedded. This is so teachers can rigorously check, over time, that pupils are building on, and deepening, existing knowledge and understanding.
- Embed a shared understanding of spirituality across the curriculum. This is so that planned opportunities for spiritual development are threaded through each year group, enhancing spiritual flourishing.



Inspection Findings

Tipton St John is a vibrant, happy and inclusive school, where nurture enables pupils and adults to thrive and flourish. The strong Christian vision, driven with passion by leaders, underpins school life. A sense of 'togetherness' and 'love' is openly expressed and lived out through the HEART values of hope, empathy, achievement, reflection and thankfulness. Pupils and staff speak with conviction about how these values inspire them to be the best that they can be. With encouragement, pupils strive to believe in themselves in order to achieve their goals and live life to the full, as God intended. The HEART values are prominently displayed throughout the school. Recent examples of 'values in action' are noticed and proudly added by pupils and adults. This encourages pupils to live up to the values, enabling them to flourish. Tipton St John is a close-knit and supportive environment where God's love shines through. By believing and achieving together, lives are transformed.

The school's vision underpins the curriculum. There is an unwavering desire for all to succeed and to be the best that they can be. Leaders carefully monitor pupil progress, swiftly identifying barriers to learning. As a result, the curriculum is highly adaptive. This empowers pupils to believe in their capabilities, take risks in their learning and achieve well. Bold decisions are taken to ensure pupils deemed to be vulnerable, and those with SEND, flourish. For example, forest school and play therapy enable pupils who experience anxiety to return to school, transforming their lives. Beyond the curriculum, a rich variety of experiences expand horizons, encouraging pupils to develop new interests and live life to the full. For example, pupils speak with passion about a recent dance project and how this has ignited within them an interest in the performing arts. Opportunities to develop spiritually are explored throughout the curriculum, but this is not fully embedded. A shared language for spirituality encourages pupils to 'Stop! Pause! Play!'. This provides a framework within which to notice, be curious and reflect upon the highs, lows and ordinary times of life. Consequently, pupils are developing a strong sense of themselves and others and beginning to make connections with something bigger than themselves.

Collective worship is central to school life at Tipton St John. It is a joyful occasion and a powerful driver for the Christian vision and values of the school. Worship is carefully planned and led by staff, pupils, clergy and the wider community. Worship follows a familiar routine with pupils and adults invited to participate in song, prayer, liturgy and reflection. This inspires the spiritual flourishing and growth of pupils and adults, enabling a sense of thankfulness and connectivity. Pupils especially look forward to the Year 6 Ethos Team leading weekly class worship. They enthusiastically articulate the impact that this has on their daily lives. For example, it has inspired some to think about how they can support those in need within their community. Big questions such as 'What does heaven look like?' are confidently explored, with even the youngest of pupils eager to contribute. Pupils and adults alike cherish a weekly church service, which they describe as 'spiritual and moving'. The opportunity to experience stillness, participate in spontaneous prayer and 'feel God around you' significantly contributes to spiritual growth. Services for key Christian festivals are also celebrated within church, enabling the school and wider community to flourish together.

Tipton St John, strongly guided by its Christian vision, prides itself on its relational approach to school life. Christian love enfolds all members of the school community, creating a sense of belonging. Pupils, leaders, staff, parents and governors speak unequivocally about how they feel valued. This is because they are treated with respect and compassion. The well-being and mental health of staff is a priority for leaders, who acknowledge that 'happy staff result in happy children', enabling flourishing. This determination is extended to pupils too. God's love is reflected through personalised support, especially during difficult times. Throughout the school, at every level, pupils and



adults are encouraged to help one another. This enhances the belief that, together, everyone can achieve and be the very best that they can be.

The school's vision effectively creates a foundation on which positive relationships are built. Pupils learn to balance individual freedom and rights with responsibility towards others. This is borne out through the pupils' involvement in initiatives such as the Year 6 Devon and Torbay Civic Award. Pupils achieve the award by completing a range of activities, including citizenship projects and charitable work. Pupils have a good understanding of justice and how they can speak up and take action on issues of injustice. This is brought to life through well-established links with the Melanesian Mission UK and school communities in the Solomon Islands. For example, this meaningful, reciprocal partnership enables pupils to consider the global impact of climate change. In response, pupils have organised a litter pick and participated in a plastic pollution project. They proudly state that, 'If we all do something small we can make a difference.'

The leadership of RE is strong and it has a high profile across the school. The curriculum has recently been revised in accordance with the new locally agreed syllabus for RE. A range of religious and non-religious worldviews are taught, including Christianity, Islam and Humanism. Visitors of diverse faiths support learning by talking about their religion and their lived experience of it. For example, a local Hindu enlightened pupils about the challenge of local worship without a purpose built Hindu Temple. The curriculum is thoughtfully planned to ensure pupils access carefully sequenced learning which builds on prior knowledge, skills and concepts. As a consequence, pupils have a good understanding of a range of worldviews. They understand Christianity as a global faith. The revised curriculum is well-resourced with artefacts and supporting materials being used to enhance learning. Continuing professional development, led by the diocese, effectively equips staff to teach RE with appropriate knowledge, confidence and enthusiasm. Leaders, including governors, carefully monitor and evaluate the implementation of the RE curriculum. This supports the ongoing development of the subject.

The quality of teaching within RE is strong and, as a result, pupils make good progress. Through well planned lessons, pupils explore thought provoking questions and consider the impact of faith on life. Pupils are supported to share their views and, where relevant, to disagree agreeably. For example, older pupils examine stories relating to racism, including 'The Good Samaritan'. They identify dilemmas and justify their reasoning. Clear learning outcomes enable pupils and teachers to identify where learning has been successful and track progress within and between lessons. Regular retrieval activities support this further, enabling pupils to retain and build upon prior knowledge. However, newly implemented assessment procedures are not sufficiently embedded to monitor pupil progress over time. Pupils enjoy RE and talk enthusiastically about lessons. They articulate the importance of RE in helping them to understand the multi-faith world within which they live. This enables them to develop empathy for how others see the world.

Information

Address	Tipton St John, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 0AG		
Date	4 March 2025	URN	113438
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	90
Diocese/District	Exeter		
MAT/Federation	Otter Valley Federation		
Headteacher	Pete Button (Head of School) Amanda Fulford (Executive Headteacher)		
Chair of Governors	Sarah Walls		
Inspector	Jayne Peacock		