

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Thomas' Leesfield Church of England Primary School

Vision

Inspired by St Paul's teaching 'You are all one in Christ' (Galations 3:28)

We aspire for everyone in our school family to be accepted and be accepting, welcoming all. To be a community that treats others equally, with respect and kindness. To be aspirational, having hope and celebrating the value and purpose of our unique abilities. To love learning and to embrace new experiences and challenges with courage and creativity, as we become the best version of ourselves. We want to promote peace. To love and serve our diverse local and global community, making a difference for others.

St Thomas' Leesfield 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

- School leaders are deeply responsive to the needs of the locality. Their commitment to instilling a sense of belonging has secured a compassionate and inclusive school. As a result, pupils and adults flourish.
- The school's bespoke curriculum is meaningful and relevant. Pupils engage with learning and extra-curricular opportunities with resilience and enthusiasm, striving to become the best version of themselves.
- Leaders create opportunities for pupils to serve others and have their voices heard. Rooted in an active culture of justice and responsibility, pupils act for the greater good of their community.
- Collective worship enables pupils and adults to understand the significance of the vision and values in daily life. It is a welcoming and meaningful time that inspires positive change, enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum is sequential and engaging. Pupils explore beliefs and values in depth. As a result, they have a secure understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews, appreciating their diversity and complexity.

Development Points

- Strengthen the work of governors so they can fully assess how the Christian vision enables pupils and adults to flourish. This is to ensure that the impact of the vision is well understood and informs strategic decision making.
- Further embed the shared understanding of spirituality across the curriculum so pupils and adults are confident in expressing their spiritual growth.



Inspection Findings

At St Thomas' Leesfield, leaders have developed a Christian vision rooted in the needs of their diverse locality. Its message of accepting the unique qualities of each individual is deeply woven throughout school life. Through this inclusive approach, pupils and adults are welcomed, celebrated, and inspired to flourish as the best version of themselves. The school's core Christian values favourably influence pupils' attitudes, relationships, and aspirations. Their voices are heard and acted upon, evidenced by the active role of the school council and ethos committee. The vision is a lived reality not only for pupils, but for staff as well. Adults are valued and supported to flourish, professionally and personally, within a culture that promotes belonging and mutual respect. Governors demonstrate a strong commitment to the school's Christian foundation and its ongoing development. They fulfil their responsibilities with discernment, balancing support with appropriate challenge through reflective questioning and constructive dialogue. However, governors' strategic monitoring of the vision's impact on RE and collective worship is limited. This means they are not able to assess what is supporting the flourishing of adults and pupils in these areas as well as they could.

Leaders have shaped an ambitious curriculum that meaningfully serves its community. Topics are designed to celebrate community identity whilst also broadening pupils' horizons through exposure to diverse cultures and perspectives. Books and resources are carefully selected to reflect our multi-cultural society. As a result, pupils see beyond their immediate environment and background, building curiosity, understanding, and empathy for those with different life experiences. Classrooms and shared spaces are intentionally designed to be calm, purposeful, and welcoming. They reflect the school's ethos of inclusion, enabling pupils to feel safe and ready to learn. Adaptations for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are carefully implemented, ensuring equitable access to learning. Importantly, expectations remain high for all, with support never compromising ambition. Pupils are empowered to succeed, and the belief in their potential enables them to flourish. Parents rightly value the school's highly personalised approach, recognising the depth of care and attention given to their children's individual needs. Teachers provide meaningful experiences that allow pupils to explore and express themselves spiritually. While many pupils and adults engage positively with these opportunities, they are still developing their understanding of spirituality. This means the depth of impact is not always fully expressed or understood.

Collective worship is a joyful and reflective experience for pupils and adults. It is carefully planned around the Christian calendar and is sequenced to help pupils understand the overarching story of the Bible. Worship is confidently led, drawing on interactive storytelling and inclusive methods that enable pupils and adults to flourish. Pupils and adults are invited to reflect on worship and consider how they can be the best version of themselves. Reflection time is not confined to the school hall. Pupils and adults reflect throughout the week, linking the vision and values to their daily life, learning, and experience. Small groups explore the meaning of lyrics with an adult and share these insights with the wider community, to enhance collective understanding. This gives an extra dimension to singing. It is powerful and uplifting, creating a shared spiritual expression. Behaviour is exemplary, reflecting the respect and value placed on this special time together. As a result, collective worship is experienced not as routine, but as a source of inspiration, transformation, and renewal for all involved. The school maintains a strong, mutually supportive relationship with the local church. Leaders have worked diligently to nurture this bond, especially whilst the church has been without a permanent vicar. Church members are familiar figures in school, helping with reading and clubs. Pupils feel at home in the church and speak warmly of their visits, reinforcing a strong connection.

The school's vision of respect, kindness, and equality drives its exceptional pastoral care, which is central to its identity. Staff prioritise wellbeing and go to great lengths to ensure pupils and colleagues are safe and supported. This culture of care extends into the wider community.



Pupils and parents approach staff confidently for help, knowing they will be met with compassion and understanding. As a result, pupils grow in empathy, behave well, and act with a quiet confidence rooted in the school's values. Staff, too, feel deeply supported and benefit from strong pastoral care. The professional development of staff is valued and the school utilises its many partnerships to secure these opportunities. Staff benefit from this ongoing professional growth, which enhances teaching quality and supports improved outcomes for pupils. Leadership is marked by integrity, balancing high standards with genuine compassion. The result is a nurturing, equitable culture where lives are transformed.

Pupils, inspired by the vision's focus on making a difference, demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility and justice. This shapes how they treat others and the environment. Leaders create meaningful opportunities for service, encouraging pupils to act on the school's values. Pupils learn to recognise justice and injustice by engaging in real-life situations, such as supporting charities, challenging inequality, and standing up for others. These experiences help them see the impact of their choices and the importance of advocating for what is right. This is evident in a range of pupil-led initiatives. Pupils litter pick; donate clothing; care for the church grounds; and honour local history. Year 6 pupils raise funds for the church through business development projects, learning enterprise skills with purpose. Initiatives like 'walk-to-school week' and road safety campaigns build awareness and community spirit. Pupils understand that their voices matter. The school celebrates these efforts, reinforcing their value and inspiring further action. Pupils are beginning to explore how their sense of justice can extend beyond their local context.

The RE curriculum is thoughtfully structured and intentionally designed to both challenge and engage pupils. It provides opportunities for pupils to explore Christianity as well as a diverse range of religious and non-religious worldviews with curiosity and respect. This is evident in their growing appreciation of the complexity and diversity of global beliefs and practices. Enrichment through real-life experiences, including visits to St Thomas' Church, further nurtures pupils' empathy, compassion, and understanding of others. Subject content is carefully sequenced to ensure progression, with deliberate connections made across year groups and wider curriculum subjects. This thoughtful coherence enables pupils to make links in their learning and deepens retention of key knowledge. RE is well led, well resourced, and reflects the school's commitment to broadening perspectives while staying grounded in core Christian beliefs. By engaging well with the local authority and diocese, leaders ensure that the school stays up to date with current ideas about best practice in curriculum development. As a result, teachers feel confident in delivering a well-informed and inclusive curriculum that remains relevant and responsive to pupils' needs.

Assessment and pupil progress in RE are monitored with care and professionalism. Teachers make good use of diocesan training and support, which has strengthened their confidence in making secure judgements. Regular checks are used to assess conceptual understanding and identify misconceptions early. Adaptations are tailored to support and challenge pupils appropriately, ensuring high expectations are upheld. Class portfolios evidence pupils' learning, enabling the RE leader to evaluate the impact of teaching and offer next steps to staff. This ensures that learning is continuous, responsive, and progressively builds on prior knowledge, leading to a deeper understanding. The opportunity to revisit work in these class books helps pupils to make connections in their learning and supports a growing sense of achievement. Debates and the careful consideration of big questions, such as 'Why is Good Friday, good?' encourage the exploration of moral and ethical issues. As a result of these opportunities, pupils engage enthusiastically and make good progress.

Information

Address	St Thomas' Leesfield, Thomas Street, Lees, Lancashire OL4 5AT		
Date	19 June 2025	URN	105714
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	209
Diocese	Manchester		
Headteacher	James Whittaker		
Chair of Governors	Rebecca Ashton		
Inspector	Lisa Draper		