

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Martin's Church of England VC Primary School, Folkestone	
Address	Horn Street, Folkestone, CT20 3JJ
School vision	
<p>FAITH AND ENDEAVOUR – Living and learning together</p> <p>Inspired by St Martin we endeavour to make a difference through compassionate actions so every member of our community and our natural world flourishes. We value, love and nurture every individual's gifts and talents by investing and empowering them through rich learning opportunities to reach their full potential following Jesus' example.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driven by a secure understanding of the school community, the Christian vision motivates a deep compassion and love for each one. This creates an environment where everyone is accepted and valued for who they are, generating a warm and nurturing school setting. The vision shapes a curriculum that is exciting, fun and imaginative. A range of rich learning opportunities celebrate the unique gifts and talents of all. As a result, pupils flourish in their learning and are developing as confident individuals. As an expression of its vision, to live and learn together, St Martin's has created a number of effective partnerships. This has successfully supported the strategic development of the school. The impact of collective worship on the school community is profound. It is integral to the exploration of the school's Christian vision. There is clear evidence of this on pupil's compassionate behaviour towards each other and care for the natural world. Religious education (RE) has been developed effectively through a progressive and reflective scheme, which promotes good pupil engagement. Pupils reflect deeply on the topics of learning supporting their spiritual development. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensively map occasions for spiritual development in all subject areas. This is so that planning across the curriculum, beyond collective worship and RE, routinely incorporates specific opportunities for spiritual development. Sustain RE leadership capacity through an ongoing partnership with the diocese and St Martin's federated school. This is to ensure that the school continues to build on current good practice. Enrich the worshipping life of the school by extending the locations for collective worship into the outdoor environment. This is to foster a greater sense of awe and wonder in creation and support the spiritual flourishing of all. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Leaders, inspired by the distinctive and biblically rooted Christian vision, ensure that St Martin's functions as a harmonious and inclusive learning community. Relevant to the school community, pupils are inspired by stories of St Martin and the Good Samaritan. These generate a deep sense of</p>	

Christian service and motivate a profound compassion and love for all. Tangible in all decision making, the vision has underpinned positive relationships amongst the whole school community. Governors have a secure understanding of the school and their monitoring is challenging. As such, it guarantees that decisions are made that enable the unique needs of all pupils and staff to be met. A focus on 'feeling well, to do well' supports the nurturing provision of each one. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is at the heart of enabling all to thrive. A partnership with St Martin's federated school is mutually supportive so that all live and learn together. The link fosters the school's strategic development.

The vision encourages an exciting, fun and imaginative curriculum. Celebrating the unique talents and gifts of pupils, the curriculum design provides multiple rich learning events. These experiences include themes linked to the local area, such as learning about the Hythe Military Canal or a beach study. Each of these activities energise and enthuse pupils in their school life. Wider pursuits, that include musical performance at a nearby theatre, enable pupils to gain a high sense of self-worth. In turn, this develops their own unique gifts and talents. Although these are significant points of spiritual development, opportunities for spiritual growth across all curriculum subjects are not formally identified. The school demonstrates the value that it places on everyone through its provision for those with SEND. A special nurture curriculum and access to a wide range of support for pupils is a hallmark of this school.

Worship is highly valued and provides an exceptional start to each day. It builds a strong sense of community, focused on the vision and values, that includes love, wisdom and hope. Bible stories, presented in an engaging way, inspire pupils to follow Jesus' teaching. This impacts on a school that is infused with loving and kind relationships. Pupils are affirmed in the importance of living the St Martin's way. Times of stillness, personal reflection and big questions inspire the spiritual growth of all. Activities beyond worship enable pupils to continue to reflect on the themes. For example, pupils wrote inscriptions linked to kindness on stones, which they then placed around a cross. Pupils are supported further in their spiritual development through prayer stations in each classroom. They appreciate these areas as places to hand over their worries, to find a place of calm or to be grateful. Artefacts help pupil thinking. For example, one pupil noted that when holding a rock, it helped them reflect that God's love surrounds them. Celebration worships are a time to unite as a community, to cherish and to celebrate the worth of each one. At present, worship is mainly held inside the school building. This limits some opportunities for deeper spiritual growth and occasions to embrace a sense of awe and wonder in creation. A few local churches regularly lead worship. Pupils enjoy the variety of activities that these bring and think intensely about the spiritual significance of the themes. The parish church is also inspiring the development of a spiritual garden.

The vision, to live and learn together, promotes a high level of interdependence. All share in creating an environment where everyone is responsible for the happiness of others. Pupils and staff speak with confidence about the legacy that St Martin left for them, to live lives of compassion. Their thoughts are imbued with humility, reflecting that the best acts of kindness were done, expecting nothing in return. At the same time, they recognise that their lives will be enriched by helping others. These deeply held views have a profound impact in creating a happy and harmonious community where well-being is high. Older pupils relish their role as buddies to younger pupils. Others embrace wider roles in the school as reading ambassadors or pupil voice, for example. This investment in pupils' leadership roles creates a shared ownership and pride in their school. Concern for parents and carers is lovingly demonstrated at every opportunity. Staff feel equally nurtured at St Martin's. All speak highly of the care and love extended to them personally and professionally. This in turn encourages them to be strong role models for pupils.

Inspired by the story of the Good Samaritan, pupils have a thorough understanding of compassion and service. At times, this has been motivated by a visitor to an act of worship. However, on

multiple occasions pupils have taken the initiative themselves to do something for those in the community and beyond. This may be through fund raising, such as doing a sponsored walk or a sale of handmade bookmarks and bracelets. Equally significant, however, are the acts of service that they perform for the benefit of others. This might be in singing to the elderly or voluntarily clearing up apparatus at the end of playtimes. Pupils also have a high sense of responsibility for caring for our planet. As such, a sense of justice and having a part in making a better world permeates the whole school.

RE is well organised and learning is progressive through the school. Diocesan training has encouraged the delivery of an enquiry-based curriculum, where pupils learn both from and about religion. Staff readily seek the support of each other in developing themes. Grounded in the vision for valuing all, pupils engage with enthusiasm in a range of activities, including art and drama. The classroom provides a safe place for them to discuss and express their opinions. As a result, they demonstrate deep thinking, and write inspirational spiritual reflections. They are also confident to pose meaningful questions of their own about different faiths and world views. The RE lead has been very effectively supported in her role by the headteacher. Ongoing partnerships with the diocese and the federated school are enabling St Martin's to continue to build on current good practice within RE.

St Martin's is a school that is totally infused by its Christian vision. This generates a community that serves all with great care and love, creating an exceptional place of learning.

The inspection findings indicate that St Martin's Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	17 October 2023	URN	118675
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	203
Diocese	Canterbury		
MAT/Federation	The federation of St Martin's and Seabrook Church of England Primary Schools		
Executive headteacher	Liz Carter		
Chair	Anita Ellerby		
Inspector	Elizabeth Pettersen	No.	557