

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

### Benhall St Mary's Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

At Benhall we want to inspire and empower pupils to unlock their fullest potential, fostering academic, social and personal growth. Our intent is clear. Be the best you can be. This powerful statement embodies our commitment to having high aspirations for the pupils of Benhall St Mary. This was inspired by the verse, 'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.' – Matthew 5:16

Our ethos is underpinned by our core values: Kindness, Respect, Friendship, Resilience and Forgiveness.

Benhall St Mary's 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.

#### Notable Strengths

- The school's Christian vision, which aligns closely with that of All Saints Schools Trust, underpins a strong culture of inclusion and aspiration. Leaders at all levels are determined that pupils and adults in the school community can flourish and 'be the best they can be.'
- Motivated by the school's core values, dedicated leaders have prioritised help for those in need. Pastoral support, academic interventions and compassionate approaches to wellbeing enable pupils, including those considered vulnerable, to thrive.
- The strong partnership between the school and the local church provides an engaging and varied programme of collective worship. This has a very positive impact on personal spirituality.
- The school curriculum is shaped by its Christian vision and values. It seeks to engage and stimulate, broadening pupils' experiences. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and are given many opportunities to let their light shine.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum is well-sequenced and appropriately challenging. Well-balanced content is effectively shared with pupils to engage them in their learning.

#### Development Points

- Strengthen the school's understanding of how spirituality is developed throughout the curriculum and enrichment programme. This is so opportunities for pupils to reflect deeply are enhanced.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

The school's Christian vision to 'let your light shine' provides a strong reference point for adults and pupils to live by. Leaders' commitment to the vision ensures it drives the strategic direction of the school. They are well supported in this work by the leaders of All Saints Schools Trust who regularly provide wise advice and encouragement. As a result, adults have consistently high aspirations for pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Carefully selected values of kindness, respect, friendship, resilience and forgiveness flow from the vision. A different value is thoughtfully highlighted each half term. It is discussed in worship and reflected upon by pupils in class. In this way, they are guided to treat each other with dignity and respect. School and trust leaders have ensured that staff are well supported through high quality, relevant professional development. The impact of this is that it builds staff knowledge and confidence, enabling them to flourish in their roles. Committed governors provide regular support for leaders and take pride in promoting the Christian ethos. They effectively evaluate the work of the school, including as a Church school.

### Vision and Curriculum

Outward-looking leaders have added a wide range of rich and interesting experiences into the curriculum to broaden pupils' horizons. Many of these are developed through strong partnerships with local organisations. For example, the link with Snape Maltings and the local music service enables pupils to access high quality music provision. Parents and carers rightly speak highly of the extracurricular sporting and artistic opportunities offered by the school. Residential trips and visits, such as those to major landmarks in London, also contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Although there are opportunities to explore spirituality within the curriculum, this is at an early stage of development. Consequently, adults and pupils do not currently share a consistent understanding. This means that some opportunities for spiritual growth and meaningful reflection are limited. Staff are well trained and equipped by the school and trust to support pupils who have SEND and those considered vulnerable. Adaptations and targeted interventions are sensitively planned, ensuring that the needs of individuals are met.

### Worship and Spirituality

Daily collective worship provides a valued opportunity for pupils and adults to unite as a school community. Through careful planning, leaders ensure the school's Christian vision and values are explored in a variety of ways. These include through storytelling, joyful singing, drama, reflection and prayer. Worship contributes to spiritual growth by reminding pupils and adults how they should view themselves and treat others. Strong links with local clergy mean that there are opportunities to worship in church, for example, at Christmas and Easter. Members of the junior ethos group take pride in the way they take a leading role in these services. These special occasions are well attended by families and strengthen the bond between church, home and school. Clergy and church members also lead worship in school on a regular basis, including the popular Open the Book sessions. In such ways, Bible stories are brought to life so pupils can reflect on their deeper meaning and grow spiritually. Leaders and governors ensure the evaluation of worship engages the views of pupils and adults. The school responds to suggestions for improvements, such as the introduction of a greater variety of songs.

### Religious Education

The RE curriculum is carefully designed to support pupils to learn about a range of religions and worldviews. Lessons in the subject promote an understanding of beliefs and how they affect the way others live. This is usually through big questions, such as 'Why do Christians believe they are a people on a mission?' The spiral curriculum allows pupils to revisit topics and develop their knowledge as they move through the school. Class floor books demonstrate the creative responses pupils can make in RE, for example through art, drama, storytelling and discussion. Clergy and church members support the teaching of key topics, such as baptism and incarnation. Exciting experiences promote a meaningful understanding of world faiths, for example visits to a



synagogue and Westminster Abbey. Staff benefit from professional development opportunities offered by the trust and the diocese. This strengthens staff subject knowledge and practice. Regular monitoring and evaluation of RE by governors and leaders means that there is a clear grasp of the impact of the curriculum.

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The school's Christian vision to 'let your light shine' encourages staff and pupils to demonstrate responsibility and consider the needs of others. Leaders actively seek out opportunities for pupils to do this. For example, older pupils took part in the London mini-marathon to raise funds for a carefully chosen charity. The school's link with a local Member of Parliament and a follow-up visit to the Houses of Parliament served to inform pupils about democracy. They also encounter a range of justice-related issues through the curriculum and collective worship. Topics, such as civil rights and plastic pollution, enable pupils to reflect and engage in thoughtful discussions. Recently introduced whole-school moots enable all pupils to share opinions about issues that matter to them. Pupils live out the school's vision of serving others through roles of responsibility, including eco warriors and classroom monitors. In such ways pupils make a positive contribution to school life.

#### Vision and School Culture

School and trust leaders have prioritised the development of a school culture that is caring and highly inclusive. They make strategic decisions to provide appropriate resources and staffing to manage the needs of pupils. For example, a well-equipped sensory room is available for those needing additional support. Furthermore, an emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) runs programmes to promote pupils' social and emotional development. Staff help pupils to manage their feelings, teaching them to develop self-control and coping strategies. True to the vision, pupil behaviour is respectful as a result of reflective and restorative approaches adopted throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate kindness and are responsible in the way they care for each other. This is exemplified in the way older pupils take seriously their role as buddies for those just starting school. The wellbeing and good mental health of staff is of great importance to leaders. As a result of the compassion and respect shown to them, staff feel empowered in their roles and listened to. Working in an environment of dignity and equity, they are positive role models to the pupils. This enables them to live well together.

## Information

Address	School Lane, Benhall, Saxmundham, Suffolk, IP171HE		
Date	27 April 2026	URN	149991
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	79
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich		
MAT	All Saints Schools Trust		
MAT Chair	Russell Ayling		
Headteacher	Paul Parslow-Williams (Executive headteacher) Daniel Millican (Head of school)		
Chair of Governors	Carolyn Glennon		
Inspector	Neil Henery		