

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Pilsley Church of England Primary School

Vision

Based on The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32)

From tiny seeds, great things grow. In our loving Christian community, every child is nurtured and valued. Like the mustard seed, each has God-given potential; through His love, we encourage growth in character, faith, and a love of learning, enabling them to flourish and make a positive difference.

Pilsley 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 Christian vision is a living reality at this school, driving their decision making. As a result, pupils and adults flourish.
- Strong relationships between the school and the local parish churches provide rich experiences and extend pupils' understanding of Christianity.
- A deeply supportive ethos permeates the school. This is clearly reflected in the positive, respectful relationships demonstrated across the community.
- Religious education (RE) is led effectively, providing a structured and balanced curriculum that supports high quality teaching and learning. Subsequently, pupils have opportunities for deep, reflective enquiry.
- Assessment in RE is creative and thoughtfully considered, allowing pupils to express their understanding in diverse ways. As a result, pupils are engaged and develop more secure understanding.

Development Points

- Strengthen governors' evaluation of the vision's impact on school practice. This will enable more systematic and informed strategic planning for school development.
- Thread spiritual opportunities across the whole curriculum. This is to enable pupils to engage in meaningful reflection and develop a mature understanding of themselves and others.
- Equip pupils to respond actively to injustice. This is to support pupils to recognise their own responsibility and ability to bring about positive change.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Rooted in the parable of the mustard seed, the school's vision underpins its strategic direction. Leaders ensure it is understood and relevant within this rural context. The vision and associated values are clear, relatable and shape the school's work. As a result, leaders and staff foster a welcoming, nurturing culture that enables individuals to flourish. They consistently reflect the Christian vision in daily life, shaping decision-making, relationships and behaviour. This creates a culture of respect, compassion and responsibility in which pupils and adults thrive. Pupils understand the link between the vision and values. Pupils explain that the mustard seed parable encourages everyone to value and respect each person as a child of God. Dignity, respect and care are evident throughout the community. Leaders and governors foster a caring, collaborative culture where staff feel appreciated and motivated. Governors provide strong support for staff, strengthening this culture of nurture. Leaders work closely with the Diocese of Derby to ensure Christian values shape everyday school life. Together, they identify priorities and draw on shared expertise to secure improvement. However, governors do not evaluate the vision's impact systematically. This limits their ability to drive further strategic development.

Vision and Curriculum

Through the Christian values of perseverance and achievement, leaders provide targeted support that enables pupils to thrive. Leaders and staff recognise pupils as individuals and promote positive attitudes towards learning. High expectations help pupils understand what they can achieve. For example, access to a sensory room supports emotional regulation and enables pupils to re-engage with learning. For some, this has a transformative impact. Strong pastoral support promotes calm, purposeful classrooms where learning flourishes. Regular outdoor experiences, including forest school and residential visits, build independence and wider life skills. Staff provide opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum. However, these are not consistently identified or planned. Consequently, opportunities are missed to deepen pupils' understanding of their own spiritual growth.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is central to the spiritual life of the school community. Grounded in Christian values, it creates a strong sense of belonging and shared purpose. Candles, images, texts and music contribute to a calm, reverent atmosphere. Pupils sing beautifully and engage thoughtfully in worship. Leaders make prayer an integral part of school life and ensure it remains invitational. Classroom prayer spaces support reflection and spiritual growth. Pupils value these spaces as an opportunity to pause and reflect. The praise team prepares worship spaces and leads responses and prayer. As a result, pupils develop confidence, leadership and responsibility while contributing to the school's spiritual life. For example, pupils introduced handheld crosses to support engagement, including for those with additional needs. This helps more pupils participate confidently and feel included within the worshipping community. Signing the Lord's Prayer promotes inclusion and strengthens understanding. It deepens pupils' understanding of faith by introducing different ways of engaging in worship. Strong partnerships with local clergy enrich worship and spiritual life. Weekly clergy-led worship and church services provide further opportunities to reflect on biblical stories and consider their relevance today.

Vision and School Culture

Pupils, staff and families treat one another with kindness and respect. The Christian vision drives leaders' commitment to help pupils grow and thrive. Leaders establish clear expectations for behaviour, and the school community consistently lives them out. Staff equip pupils to resolve conflict in respectful, restorative ways.



Pupils recognise when others are struggling and respond with compassion and care. Consequently, relationships demonstrate dignity, forgiveness and mutual support. A strong culture of care shapes daily life across the school community. Older pupils support younger ones, modelling responsibility and building confidence. Leaders prioritise provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enabling them to flourish. Parents value the school's commitment to supporting families, particularly during difficult times. Leaders and colleagues care for staff as individuals, providing practical and emotional support when challenges arise. Leaders nurture a collaborative culture where colleagues feel secure and sustained in their roles. This shared commitment strengthens relationships and builds a resilient, united community. As a result, pupils and adults live well together and continue to flourish.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of justice, responsibility and their role in society. They undertake meaningful roles that develop confidence, leadership and service. The school council influences decisions, enabling pupils to contribute to school improvement. Older pupils support younger peers, modelling inclusion and encouraging positive play. Pupils act on issues they care about within school and the local community. The eco-team promotes environmental responsibility through practical action. For example, pupils care for their locality by collecting litter on the Chatsworth Estate. They also support others through contributions to a local foodbank and a homeless charity in Derby. These experiences develop compassion and a commitment to serving others. Learning opportunities extend pupils' understanding of justice beyond their immediate context. Links with schools in Barbados and Ecuador broaden global awareness. The curriculum highlights individuals who have improved the lives of others. Younger pupils learn how key individuals influenced education and expanded opportunities for learning. Older pupils compare farming in Kenya with local practices, deepening their understanding of global differences. However, opportunities for pupils to initiate their own responses to injustice are limited. Consequently, their confidence to lead change is less well developed.

Religious Education

RE has a high profile across the school, and pupils understand its importance within the wider curriculum. The recently appointed RE leader, supported by the Diocese of Derby, is strengthening curriculum planning and staff expertise. As a result, teachers deliver RE with confidence, clarity and purpose. The carefully sequenced curriculum enables pupils to build knowledge over time. They explore Christianity, other world religions and non-religious worldviews through meaningful big questions. Precise vocabulary supports pupils in expressing ideas accurately, while engaging resources deepen understanding. Pupils think critically about different forms of evidence and consider their reliability. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils use first-hand accounts, artefacts and images to explore the Hindu ritual of puja. Through this approach, RE develops empathy, reflection and a thoughtful understanding of others. Visits enrich learning by bringing beliefs and practices to life. Pupils visit Derby Cathedral and other places of worship, alongside regular visits to local parish churches. These experiences create memorable and meaningful learning.

The quality of teaching in RE is strong and reflected in the high standard of work in pupils' books. Pupils speak with pride about their learning and confidently explain key knowledge. They discuss Christianity and other world religions clearly and thoughtfully, showing respect for different beliefs and an appreciation of diversity. As a result, they are well prepared to engage positively with people from a range of faiths, beliefs and backgrounds. Assessment is purposeful and inclusive. Pupils choose different ways to demonstrate their understanding, enabling them to succeed. Tasks probe beyond simple recall, promoting deeper thinking and secure understanding. Teachers monitor attainment and progress closely, using this information to refine learning. Consequently, RE is an engaging subject in which pupils develop knowledge, respect and genuine curiosity about the world around them.

Information

Address	Pilsley, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1UF		
Date	19 May 2026	URN	112891
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	61
Diocese	Derby		
Headteacher	Emma Bond		
Chair of Governors	Andrew Wood		
Inspector	Anne Collins		