

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Michael's Church of England High School	
Address	St Michaels Road, Crosby, Liverpool, L23 7UL
School vision	
<p>Building on the foundation of Luke 2:52, 'Jesus grew in wisdom and stature,' students and staff grow spiritually, personally and academically as Christ did. By embodying our Christian values of Love, Peace, Forgiveness, Courage and Equality, we flourish in a caring Christian community enabling achievement for all God's children.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision and associated school values are central to every aspect of the life of the St Michael's High School. They are well understood and underpinned by biblical teaching. They influence everything that the school undertakes, giving pupils and adults confidence and enabling them to grow and flourish. • High quality, meaningful collective worship is at the heart of the school. All are welcomed, included and inspired in thoughtful, contemporary ways. This has a very significant impact upon pupils and adults and is a strong contributor to the development of their spirituality. • The vision and values create a culture in which relationships within the school are a significant strength. The wellbeing of everyone is a high priority and there is an overwhelming sense of care and concern for one another. • Wide, varied and significant opportunities for pupil leadership enable pupils to live out the vision and values. As a result, they '...grow in wisdom and stature'. • The vision inspires leaders to actively create a school culture of inclusion and respect. As a result, pupils and adults are embraced and valued for who they are. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders, as a priority, to take steps to ensure that the teaching and assessment of religious education (RE) in Key Stage 4 is of the highest possible quality. This will result in improved pupil progress in the subject. • Extend opportunities for pupils to take action and become agents of change in matters of justice, inequality and responsibility. This will broaden their understanding about how they might influence positive difference. • Continue to strengthen an understanding of spirituality throughout the curriculum. This is to further extend and enrich pupils' spiritual development. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Biblical teaching underpins St Michael's High School's clear vision. This is supported by life-enriching values that infuse and enhance the school community. Together they create an environment that generously supports every person as an individual child of God. Through this, pupils and adults can grow together and flourish. Strongly complementing and underpinning the</p>	

school's vision and values are those of the Liverpool Schools Diocesan Trust.

Leaders and governors clearly understand what it means to lead a Church school. The vision is central in all their decisions and plans. Its impact is understood through their careful monitoring and evaluation. Thus, leaders and governors have a keen knowledge of the school, its community and its work. They understand how to take the school forward and are successful in ensuring that resources are used effectively. The trust and diocese have meaningful and active partnerships with the school. These result in enhanced, impactful support and networking that encourage and sustain leaders, adults and pupils. Through them the school is enriched as it navigates through, and emerges from, recently challenging times.

The school's curriculum and varied extra-curricular provision are built on the teaching of Luke 2:52, 'Jesus grew in wisdom and stature'. This is the school vision and through it, pupils and staff grow spiritually, personally and academically. This includes pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The school's chosen Christian values are woven into all aspects of study and learning. Through them, all are included, known, nurtured and inspired within a calm, caring atmosphere. In a number of subjects, most notably science, curriculum for life and RE, opportunities to explore and develop spirituality are growing. Here pupils are able to reflect, explore concepts such as infinity, and wonder at ideas and teaching about creation. There are frequent opportunities to contemplate and discuss big questions and big ideas within and beyond the curriculum. These enable deeper thinking and space to consider and appreciate the complexity and fragile beauty, of God's world. Because of the vision, leaders and staff are passionate about support for SEND pupils. As a result, carefully targeted provision enables these pupils to be included and thrive.

Strong pastoral care contributes to highly positive relationships and support, including for the most vulnerable. A staff member fittingly summarised this in indicating that adults look through a 'lens of love' in their dealings with pupils. A culture of openness and trust ensures that pupils and adults feel safe, included and listened to. Behaviour around school and in classes is very good. This promotes a calm and purposeful environment. Adults quickly recognise and respond to the needs of students and each other. This is because positive mental health and wellbeing is a high priority. A range of pupil ambassadors including rainbow, well-being, and young carers are highly active. Their work helps to ensure that all are understood, cared for and included. This means that everyone can be themselves and anyone who is struggling or in difficulty will quickly be supported and cared for. The vision promotes a culture which recognises each individual's significance and uniqueness in God's eyes. Through this, people speak of their personal growth and finding their 'inner hero'. This is endorsed in many ways in the school and pupils can be seen to grow in stature as they achieve 'Values Awards'.

In helping the school to live out its vision, pupils are encouraged to look to the needs of others beyond the school. They know they have a responsibility to the outside world and fundraise for a variety of organisations and in service to the local community. Thus, they grow in stature through reaching out, and positively impact the culture of the school. A large number of pupils have significant leadership roles. Through these they emphasise the importance of service to others. They are passionate about matters including human rights, eco-issues and school ethos and worship. This is especially evident in the Making a Difference Group. However, opportunities are limited in enabling pupils to develop this further to become courageous advocates against inequality, injustice and in care for God's creation. The school community lives and works well together in a positive, highly inclusive environment. Pupils know how to disagree well. On rare occasions when there is a problem, all are confident that matters will be rapidly and effectively resolved.

The school community appreciates the rhythm of meaningful collective worship that is central to its daily life. Highly effective oversight and leadership of worship is a particular strength. This brings

clear direction and purpose to this area of school life. Key themes from the church calendar and Christian life are explored in contemporary, engaging and often interactive ways. Through worship, the school community develops their understanding of the strong foundation of the school vision and values. These gathered times are inclusive, and all are warmly invited to join in. They enrich pupils' understanding of the relevance of faith and worship. Many find the impact of worship on their lives and thinking to be inspirational. For some, it results in profound, positive changes in their beliefs and behaviour. Valued times for reflection bring opportunities for personal response, growth and contemplation. Worship significantly supports the development and understanding of spirituality in the school community. It aids their ability to articulate its meaning and impact on them. The positive impact of school worship is extended in the local community and in shared events within the trust and primary schools.

RE reflects the school's vision and meets the requirements for the subject in a Church school. It is well-resourced, and well-qualified teachers ensure that they access up-to-date training. They are enthusiastic about the subject. As a result, pupils enjoy their RE lessons and find them to be engaging. Stimulating resources promote discussion and enable pupils to debate in a safe, respectful environment. Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 often take pride in their written work. However, teachers do not routinely ensure that tasks, assessments and reviews are completed or accurate. This means that many pupils have an incomplete or incorrect record of their learning and development in the subject. Assessment routines for pupils are not sufficiently robust. This frequently leaves pupils unclear and unsure about how they are getting on. Therefore, too often, they do not know and understand the steps that are required to develop and consolidate their learning. Thus, pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 do not make expected progress. All Sixth Form students have a regular programme for RE enabling them to meaningfully explore and debate ethical and philosophical issues. This is enriched by the Archbishops' Young Leaders Award scheme. Through this, students are able to learn and practise leadership skills, develop their character and engage in social action. Because the teaching of the Sixth Form A-level religious studies course is good, students following it make progress in their studies.

The inspection findings indicate that the St Michael's has strengths as a Church school but that there is an issue that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. The issue relates to RE and is: School and trust leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching of RE in Key Stages 3 and 4 is good, and that pupils make at least expected progress.

Information			
Inspection date	4 December 2023 - 5 December 2023	URN	141338
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	937
Diocese	Liverpool		
MAT/Federation	Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust		
Head of School	Claire McIntyre		
Chair	Chris Roberts		
Inspector	Peter Coates	No.	937