

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Long Mountain Church of England Primary School

Address Worthen, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY5 9HT

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish

Overall grade **Good**

The impact of collective worship **Good**

School's vision

'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on a stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house, in the same way, 'let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'
Matthew 5: 15-16

We strive to enable everyone to grow and flourish, both personally and academically, so that their 'light will shine'.

Key findings

- The dedicated headteacher and governors ensure that the school's vision is deeply rooted in a clear understanding of Christian belief. It infuses all that is done so that everyone can shine.
- Forged by challenging times, relationships between the school, church and community are strong and mutually beneficial.
- The headteacher brings wisdom, care, calm and stability to the school. Consequently, it is moving forward with considered strategic intent to provide enriching learning experiences for every child.
- Worship is planned and led with theological depth and imagination to inspire and encourage everyone.
- The quality of provision for religious education (RE) has been inconsistent, therefore older pupils do not have an age-appropriate understanding of major world religions.

Areas for development

- Further enhance the impact of the school's Christian vision on pupils and adults so that all can shine even brighter. Review and strengthen processes that underpin governors' monitoring and evaluation of the impact of worship, RE and the vision.
- Ensure that the curriculum for RE has clear progression and high expectations to improve the quality of religious and ethical literacy, knowledge and understanding.
- Enable pupils to plan, lead and evaluate worship to build self-confidence and contribute to spiritual development.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Long Mountain Church of England Primary School is shining with delight and great expectation following the appointment of the headteacher in January 2021. It has heralded a time of consistency and security after a period of considerable change and challenge. The school's leaders have made many courageous decisions in recent years to hold a course that is true to the school's Christian foundation. Through difficult times, a school has evolved that is committed to being a lighthouse of hope and excellence for all. Governors have taken responsibility for providing a well-resourced pre-school to strengthen education within the community. Following a time of uncertainty in terms of school leadership and staffing, there is a great sense of thankfulness for stability. Confidence and aspiration have been re-kindled through the leadership and passion of the respected headteacher. The governors were deliberate in their intent to appoint someone who would live out the Christian values of the school and ensure that every pupil can flourish. In just less than a year, and despite the frustrations of the pandemic, it is clear that the headteacher is leading the school from strength to strength. She serves the school community with love, resolve and humility. Her insights and skills are shared generously to support other schools. Positive relationships with local schools, local churches and the diocese reinforce the school's effective leadership. School leaders meet regularly so they are able to articulate how the school's vision is at the heart of school improvement. There is a carefully considered and rich curriculum which has ignited a renewed love of teaching and learning for staff and pupils. School leaders are aware of what needs to improve so that children can be enthusiastic and successful learners. Teachers are leading subjects that they are passionate about which is impacting on the pupils' love of learning. The school's vision is being fulfilled as pupils and staff aspire to shine as brightly as possible with their own unique gifts and talents. Targeted professional training and local subject networks for staff contribute to the strategic plan to improve support and challenge. The school is committed to cradling and nurturing the light of every pupil. Teaching and learning for pupils with additional needs is carefully targeted and monitored. These targeted actions are tangible ways that the school lives out its vision. Many pupils benefitted emotionally and academically from the provision that was made during periods of lockdown. Communication with parents is greatly appreciated and enables children to receive support and encouragement so that they can learn and grow confidently. All are welcomed at Long Mountain because the school believes that everyone is precious and to be cherished. The Christian vision is communicated well through newsletters and direct contact. The village communities, which are served by the school shine more powerfully together. The school is actively involved in community and church events. The light of the school's vision is radiated through practical acts of care and kindness especially throughout the pandemic.

The school's values of 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control', the 'fruit of the spirit', are taken directly from the Bible. Pupils shine with these values because they are a reference point throughout the school day for good choices and positive relationships. 'Shine' certificates are awarded to celebrate many ways of being a shining light. The calm and restorative way of dealing with difficult relationships in school is greatly appreciated by pupils. Consequently, children grow in confidence and develop ways of respecting and valuing each other's differences. In daily worship times, pupils and staff are invited to reflect on stories from the Bible, especially about the life and teachings of Jesus. This deepens their understanding of the 'fruit of the spirit'. There are also opportunities for pupils to reflect on current affairs to encourage a sense of justice and practical response. However, many pupils do not have enough experience of formulating, discussing and expressing their own thoughts and feelings. Pupils are empowered to be courageous advocates, demonstrating kindness for others and contributing generously to national charity events. The new curriculum empowers pupils to feel that they can initiate their own responses to areas of local, national and international need. Worship is thoughtfully and creatively planned by the headteacher. She employs a range of resources, liturgy and artefacts from around the world to make deep theological ideas accessible and relevant. This creates a special and holy time for pupils and staff whether in reality, or virtually during the pandemic. Worship provides spiritual fuel to keep lights shining brightly. Worship songs are chosen from a wide-range of Christian traditions and the pupils enjoy singing with live accompaniment and in harmony. They benefit spiritually from the worldwide breadth of Christian worship. Staff are increasingly confident to lead worship but pupils are not benefitting from the responsibility of leading worship. Pre-pandemic, the school enjoyed welcoming members of the local churches to lead 'open the book' worship. The school community revel in coming together to celebrate Christian festivals and Year 6 leavers in church.

An exciting project called 'Touchline' is having a great impact on the spiritual development of pupils. It is driven by the school's curriculum to improve holistic health. School staff are working with a provider who is teaching pupils how to put school values into practice through rugby and prayer. Pupils buzz with excitement and enjoy times of prayer outside. 'Touchline' brings the school into close partnership with other schools and the headteacher is working with the provider to embed this provision. The school makes the most of its stunning location and grounds to add to the children's pleasure, for example with forest schools experiences. The school recognises the importance of preparing pupils for a bigger and more diverse world. However, RE has not been taught systematically enough to contribute fully to that understanding. Whilst pupils gain some knowledge about major world faiths they do not always remember what they have learned and find it difficult to connect pieces of knowledge. RE teaching is effective in strengthening how pupils understand and live out the school's vision and values. School leaders and staff are working relentlessly with the additional pressures of the pandemic to secure the very best outcomes for every pupil. They seek to ignite flames of aspiration, hope and possibility for everyone. Long Mountain Church of England Primary School is shining brighter and brighter bringing love, joy and peace to this community.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	8 December 2021	URN	123518
Date of previous inspection	12 February 2015		
School status	Voluntary controlled	NOR	98
Name of MAT/Federation	N/A		
Diocese / Methodist District	Hereford		
Headteacher	Beth Rowe		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in line with national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	Worthen C of E Primary School closed and re-opened as Long Mountain C of E Primary School in August 2017. Pupils from federated schools that closed, St Mary's C of E voluntary aided primary, Westbury and Hope C of E voluntary controlled primary, are educated at Long Mountain C of E Primary.		
Inspector's name	Angela Daniel	No.	757