

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

### St Oswald's Church of England VC Primary School

#### Vision

'Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future'

Let us encourage one another: Hebrews 10:25

St Oswald's Church of England VC 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.

#### Strengths

- Inspiring leaders promote and celebrate the deeply rooted Christian vision which encourages 'Learning for all.' As a result, the vision impacts positively on the lives of pupils, their families, and staff. It is enabling them to be a flourishing learning community.
- There is exceptionally inclusive support woven throughout high quality learning and nurture opportunities. Pupils with additional needs or vulnerabilities are valued as individuals and watched over with love.
- Driven by the vision of 'caring for each other', quality relationships are prioritised. Partnerships with the community, Church and Diocese enhance a culture of wellbeing for all.
- Collective worship is a cherished part of the school day. Coming together as a community in different ways across the week to sing, reflect and be still, nurtures spiritual development. These times enable pupils and adults to apply the vision and values to their lives and learning.
- In religious education (RE) the variety of resources and experiences on offer, enable pupils to ask questions and express personal ideas and beliefs with confidence.

#### Development Points

- Ensure a shared approach to spirituality. This is so that pupils and adults recognise how experiences within and beyond the curriculum contribute to their spiritual development.
- Deepen pupils' awareness of justice and equality. This is to better understand how their views and actions can more independently contribute to a fairer world.
- Broaden pupils' knowledge about a range of religions and worldviews. This is to enable pupils to experience greater diversity within faith and beliefs.



## Inspection Findings

Loving relationships sit at the heart of St Oswald's school. Rooted in its Christian vision, it is a place full of encouragement where pupils and staff thrive. Staff care deeply about pupils. They are passionate about ensuring pupils grow socially, emotionally and academically and have their voices heard. Driven by the school's vision of 'caring for each other', staff help pupils grow into confident and articulate young people. They live out that care in their daily interactions with pupils, families and each other. As a result, this school is an inspirational place in which to learn and work. Pupils are proud to be a part of this caring school where they feel valued and recognised as individuals. Leaders have made bold strategic decisions with the vision at the centre of their thinking. An example of this is the review of the school's support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have taken the decision to significantly increase support, to better meet pupils' needs. The impact of this is clear from conversations with pupils and parents who appreciate that the school recognises the importance of different approaches. Imaginative use of space both inside and outside school have further enhanced the support for these pupils who may otherwise be vulnerable. This includes a range of outdoor zones with varied activities supported by staff. Governors know the school well and love it. Through effective monitoring, they support leaders in their continuous drive to overcome any barriers, so that there is 'Learning for all.'

The school instils a strong sense of responsibility towards others and the joy of belonging, right from the moment families join. A jar in the entrance hall contains a pebble for every pupil and adult in the school, welcoming people into this loving community. Staff and pupils are given the opportunity to say goodbye to families who move on in special acts of worship, deepening and strengthening relationships. Staff proactively tailor loving support, including for each other. As a result, St Oswald's is a school full of exceptionally inclusive support for its pupils. They access a range of quality professional development, because of this morale is high. Staff feel valued because they are treated with respect. Dedicated governors see their responsibility for the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and staff as a priority. The inclusive culture in this school makes pupils and staff aware of the positive impact they can have on the flourishing of others. Pupils speak with confidence and pride about school initiatives where they have come together to promote wellbeing. The work connected to 'Hello Yellow' supporting positive mental health for young people, is a strong example of this. Individual opportunities for pupils to understand and challenge injustice and inequality in the world are more limited.

The school's curriculum empowers pupils with confidence. This is exemplified in the confident way they share ideas in lessons and how they encourage each other to be active participants in school life. Pupils are enthusiastic about the different ways they have to develop as individuals at St Oswald's. Pupils' learning experience is enriched by reading about people often far removed from their personal experiences. This includes texts especially chosen by staff and families. The school enhances the pupils' curriculum offer with a wide variety of enrichment clubs and other opportunities. An example being the Little Troopers sessions which support pupils from armed service families. These promote pupils' wider understanding of the world. The work the school has undertaken with the diocese in developing its approach to spirituality has had a positive impact. It has allowed pupils to begin exploring spiritual questions. However, this is at an early stage. A consistent approach to developing spiritually throughout the curriculum is not yet in place.

Collective worship is tailored to the needs of its pupils and is a cherished part of the school day. Leaders ensure that there is a consistent approach to worship, whether it be in the hall, in classes or in church. All pupils and staff are invited to attend and encouraged to participate. Whether through story, song or opportunities to explore



prayer, it is led with sensitivity and passion by leaders, staff, pupils and members of the Church community. The local clergy are a valued and supportive presence. This range of encouraging voices over time enable those gathered to reflect and feel part of a loving, spiritual community. Staff movingly share how their own spiritual understanding has also grown as a direct consequence of worship at school. Worship led by pupils is inclusive and inspiring. Pupils are proud that everyone is welcome and included, whether or not they have a faith. Self-chosen themes linked to the school's values, including trust and friendship are explored with enthusiasm. They enable pupils to apply their knowledge of Bible stories such as David and Goliath, where 'with faith and self-belief we can overcome challenges.' As a result, collective worship enables pupils and staff to make connections with their daily lives and learning.

Following recent changes, learning in RE is now more varied and thought provoking. Lessons are engaging because leaders have thought carefully about how to best resource RE. It is a time that pupils look forward to each week and one in which they engage enthusiastically. Individual thoughts and ideas are debated and curiosity is encouraged. This is enabling pupils to share views of an increasingly spiritual nature. Pupils demonstrate a growing ability to apply knowledge gained in lessons and to ask well thought out questions. For example, finding common threads that bind and connect people, even when they believe different things. This brings the subject alive and enriches pupils' learning experience. Leaders are still reviewing the curriculum to ensure that pupils have a broad understanding of religions and worldviews, including the diversity that exists within each faith. This is ongoing.

Pupils at St Oswald's enthusiastically take on many responsibilities and leadership roles. They relish the rich opportunities given to them. Confidence is quickly acquired by the youngest children in the school, supported and encouraged by older pupils, who take pride in their roles as buddies. Pupils are given the time, skills and confidence to express their views and ideas. For example, choosing role models who champion justice and fight inequality who reflect pupils' own ethnicity and culture. As a result, pupils at this school have many opportunities to develop independence and responsibility. This combined with high levels of nurture and encouragement, equips pupils for success in the next stage of their education.

## Information

Address	St Oswald's Church of England VC Primary School, Heslington Lane, Fulford, York, YO10 4LX		
Date	20 May 2025	URN	121535
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	316
Diocese and Methodist District	York		
Headteacher	Jemma Dunne		
Chair of Governors	Louise Toal		
Inspector	Rob Goffee		