Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Leybourne, St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary Academy

Vision

Nurturing the Spark of God Within

Building a safe and joyful community; embodying our core Christian values of love, trust, compassion and respect in everything we do; enabling our gifts to be revealed and shared so that we may live in the fullness of life as citizens of the world.

'Those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles.' Isaiah 40:31

Leybourne, St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary Academy 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

- Driven by the vision to 'build a safe and joyful community', a culture of compassion and wellbeing is at the heart of the school. Pupils and adults are valued, loved and nurtured. This ensures that families are understood, staff are trusted, and pupils thrive.
- Collective worship is highly valued, inclusive and life-giving for pupils and adults. These times offer the school community the opportunity to flourish spiritually, particularly through being together and having the time to reflect. This reflection continues into the school day.
- Strong partnerships exist between the school, the church, the wider trust and the local community. As a result, these relationships and connections enhance the life of the school community and the positive impact of the Christian vision.
- Shaped by the school vision, the curriculum and extra-curricular activities enable the school community to flourish. The spark in pupils is nurtured by this offer and support is provided for them to achieve their full potential.
- Religious education (RE) is effective. Pupils have a deep fascination and appreciation for the subject. Curriculum planning is strong, ensuring pupils are given a depth of knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths.

Development Points

- Deepen the understanding of spirituality among staff, pupils and governors. This is to enable a consistent and cohesive approach to spiritual development across the curriculum and further 'nurture the spark of God within.'
- Broaden pupils' appreciation and understanding of justice and responsibility. This will enable pupils to use their voices and actions to challenge injustice and make a positive difference in the world.
- Embed a systematic and rigorous process of monitoring and evaluation of the Christian vision. This is to support the growth, development and impact of the vision across the school.

Inspection Findings

Leybourne is a welcoming and inclusive school where everyone has a unique 'spark' to be discovered, nurtured, and shared. Leaders have created a safe, joyful community, resulting in a strong sense of belonging. Leaders understand the needs of pupils and adults well. This, along with the vision, drives policy and procedures, creating a powerful sense of togetherness. Pupils and adults express ownership and commitment to the values of love, trust, compassion, and respect. Pupils feel pride in living out the values and receiving a 'Leybourne Bright Spark' award. Staff, pupils, and governors are inspired by the prophet Isaiah's words. Enabling all to 'soar high on wings like eagles' is a shared pursuit. The focus on building confidence and resilience in pupils helps make this a living reality. The school's vision and that of Tenax Schools Trust align, enhancing the work of Leybourne as a Church school. Governors have a secure understanding of the school and their decision-making responds to the needs of the community. However, governors do not review the impact of the vision. This means that strategic decisions are taken with limited understanding of what is making a real difference to flourishing.

The school's aspiration for pupils to 'live in the fullness of life as citizens of the world' inspires the delivery of an exciting curriculum. It offers diverse and meaningful learning experiences that spark curiosity and allow the talents and gifts of individuals to flourish. Leaders believe there are many pathways to excellence and therefore prioritise both personal and academic development. Pupils feel safe and supported in school and recognise that to 'soar', they need to grow through making mistakes. This increases their confidence and helps them to achieve their full potential. The school gives priority to enrichment. Woodland learning is a highlight for pupils, who enjoy being able to explore, be curious and engage in learning within the outdoor environment. Leaders appreciate that different pupils need different things to be successful. Specific interventions and programmes allow individuals to be settled and thrive. The development of spirituality is evident within the school community. Some staff and pupils can articulate the 'wow' and 'ow' moments they experience inside of them. However, this understanding is not yet embedded consistently throughout the school, meaning valuable opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum are sometimes missed.

The day at Leybourne begins with uplifting, inclusive worship that brings the whole school community together. Leaders ensure the environment feels welcoming, safe, and comfortable. A passionate, committed leader oversees and shapes the school's collective worship programme. This means worship is highly valued and a significant part of the school day. Staff and pupils regularly lead acts of worship. Pupil worship leaders lead with a strong sense of purpose about their role in helping others to grow spiritually. This active role contributes to their own and others' flourishing. Local clergy support the school's worship life through weekly visits and contributions. Worship continues into the day, with classrooms and corridors offering quiet spaces for reflection. Staff gently remind pupils of worship themes and messages during the school day. Bible stories are presented in engaging ways that inspire and challenge pupils. One pupil said, 'You don't have to be a Christian – every story has a moral to learn from.' In amongst their busy days, staff appreciate time to 'just be' and regularly find worship to be 'deeply touching.' Makaton signing of key phrases, helps pupils to feel included and makes worship more engaging. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and show respect, even when they choose not to join in. Ongoing investment in training helps staff lead worship with growing confidence and understanding.

Accepting, nurturing adults reflect the school's vision in their everyday interactions. The school deeply understands the needs of its pupils and families. Staff work together with a shared purpose to achieve the best outcomes for pupils. Parents value the care and support offered, especially during difficult times. As a result, strong relationships built on trust and openness flourish across the school community. Staff are supported, appreciated, and part of a

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united team. Leaders prioritise staff development to enhance subject knowledge, improve practice, and support career growth. Being part of Tenax Schools Trust connects staff to a wider team. Through sharing expertise and engaging in joint initiatives, staff grow professionally and support each other. As a result, they are hopeful and enthusiastic, with high aspirations for themselves and others. The mental health and wellbeing of staff and pupils is a high priority. Pupils have strategies to support them in managing their feelings and emotions effectively. Strong relationships help pupils express themselves and access support when needed. This fosters a calm atmosphere in classrooms and throughout the school.

Leaders provide many opportunities that develop empathy and encourage pupils to show compassion in taking responsibility for others. The 'Race Across Leybourne' programme enabled each class to partner with a community group to make a difference in their local area. When thinking about justice, pupils are encouraged to consider, 'what is my role?' Through this reflection, pupils are given opportunities to grow into well-rounded citizens of the world. Pupils recognise that fundraising helps those in need and, to this end, they support school events that raise money for local and national charities. Participating in a reverse advent calendar initiative and donating to the 'hygiene bank' demonstrate love, care and belonging to the local community. Through the curriculum and collective worship, pupils are encouraged to recognise and reflect on instances of injustice in the world. However, some pupils have a limited understanding of how to use their voices and actions to challenge injustice and create positive change.

The RE curriculum is highly effective in meeting the needs of pupils. Leaders have created a well-sequenced curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge and deepens understanding over time. It is carefully structured to develop a comprehensive knowledge of Christianity, other religions, and a range of worldviews. Big questions like 'Why do we need a creation story?' help pupils explore meaning and human purpose. Effective RE teaching goes beyond RE lessons. Pupils understand each other better, have meaningful conversations, and experience fewer disagreements. The priority and profile of RE across the school is clearly demonstrated. RE is treated as a core subject and is taught in the morning with extra curriculum time given to it. This enables all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to thrive in their learning.

Pupils at Leybourne find RE fascinating and enjoy learning about others' lives, as well as their own. Teachers enable RE lessons to be safe spaces for pupils to talk openly and share their ideas and opinions. Planned time for thinking and reflection helps develop high levels of religious literacy in pupils. A new and developing assessment framework helps teachers track individual progress. This means that teachers accurately identify pupils' achievement and adapt their teaching in response. Therefore, pupils across the school make consistent progress and learn well in RE. Staff participate in ongoing professional development for RE. This ensures that they provide meaningful lessons that deepen pupils' understanding of different faiths and worldviews. RE contributes significantly to the school's success in nurturing well-rounded citizens of the world.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	Rectory Lane North, Leybourne, ME19 5HD		
Date	18 June 2025	URN	143987
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	212
Diocese	The Diocese of Rochester		
MAT	Tenax Schools Trust		
Headteacher	Tina Holditch		
Chair of Governors	Phillipa Gibbs		
Chair of Trustees	Simon Curtis		
Inspector	Natalie Ralph		