

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Epping St John's Church of England School

Vision

'Be transformed by the renewing of your mind' Romans 12

At ESJ we celebrate every member of our family; we embody our Christian ethos through living well together with people of different cultures, genders, sexualities, faiths and abilities. We ready students for life through an ambitious, relevant curriculum that develops wisdom of the world around them and promotes a love of learning. Using this knowledge, ESJ students will courageously challenge outdated views, confidently communicate and demonstrate compassion through aspiring to make a difference in their local community and the wider world.

Epping St John's Church of England 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 school's inclusive Christian vision has been purposely thought through to reflect the context and needs of its local community. As a result, students and staff demonstrate mutual respect and an openness to consider others' points of view.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum is carefully planned and well resourced. Students recognise the importance of the subject and value its impact on their lives.
- The curriculum and collective worship have helped students to develop a good understanding of issues related to equity and justice.
- Students and staff are known, valued and cared for. Their wellbeing is a high priority. Students' individual needs are met so that they can engage fully in learning and school activities.
- Daily collective worship is distinctively Christian but also fully inclusive. Students and staff value this time of stillness at the start of each day during which they can be calm, reflect and develop spiritually.

Development Points

- Strengthen the school's dialogue and partnership with the diocese and local churches. This is to help the school community to fully live out its Christian vision.
- Sharpen the understanding of spirituality in the context of a Church school and embed this across the curriculum. This is to broaden the opportunities provided for students' spiritual development.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Students, staff, governors and trust leaders fully buy into the school's inclusive Christian vision. This has been carefully thought through by leaders to reflect the context and needs of the local community. Along with support and direction from the trust, the vision has contributed to the school's journey of improvement. It is evident in many aspects of school life. These include the way that students are cared for and the respectful way they interact with each other. Students understand that the 'renewing of your mind' includes a willingness to change one's perspective on things and understand others' point of view. The parable of the good Samaritan serves as a daily reminder about the compassion with which they should treat others. Staff model this in the way that they help and encourage students, especially those who need additional support. The school's vision is reinforced by its attractive building and thought-provoking displays. The trust's vision and values are aligned with those of the school and the diocese provides helpful monitoring and advice. However, communication between the school and the diocese and local clergy is not always effective in strengthening this important partnership. As a result, there are missed opportunities to fully develop the school's distinctive Christian character.

Vision and Curriculum

The school's inclusive and aspirational curriculum has been designed to reflect its vision. Its aim is to develop students' wisdom and love of learning as well as broadening perspectives and ensuring academic success. A wide range of extra-curricular activities are offered and the majority of students take part in at least one. Along with residential visits and dramatic productions, these help to develop students' talents, confidence and character. Students who have additional needs are particularly encouraged to take part. The school has introduced a clearer focus on spirituality across the curriculum. In each subject there are opportunities for students to reflect on their own beliefs and viewpoints and those of others. There are also occasions when they can explore a power greater than themselves, such as God or the wonders of science and nature. However, the concept of spirituality, especially in the context of a Church school, is not understood consistently by staff and students.

Worship and Spirituality

Daily collective worship takes place in form groups. This strengthens the spiritual element of the school's pastoral care and the sense of community. Student volunteers play an important role in its delivery, which adds to its impact. There is a different theme for each week, linked to the church calendar and a relevant Bible passage. The school prayer, the Lord's Prayer, the parable of the good Samaritan and each group's 'form pledge' feature each day. These are well known and understood by students and guide their behaviour and relationships. Whilst distinctively Christian in character, worship is inclusive and welcoming for students of all faith backgrounds. As one student explained, 'even if you aren't religious, collective worship gives you a time to reflect, regulate and aspire to things'. A collective worship council draws upon staff and student ideas and feedback. Local clergy also contribute to school worship. The vicar leads a monthly holy communion service in school and hosts Christmas and Easter services in the parish church. These provide valuable opportunities for students and staff to reflect on the central elements of the Christian faith. The Governors regularly visit the school and seek feedback from staff and students about collective worship as well as observing it taking place. As a result, they know that students are engaged in, and value, school worship and the opportunity for spiritual development that it provides.

Vision and School Culture

At the heart of the school's Christian vision is the commitment to 'live well together'. Staff model this approach in their interactions with students and each other. Students are treated as individuals and know that staff care about their wellbeing as well as their academic success. Personalised support is available for students who need it. As a result, some students' lives and futures have been completely transformed. Older students also value the helpful careers and higher education guidance that they receive. Students with special educational needs or



disabilities (SEND) are given the specialist support and adaptations they need to successfully access mainstream lessons. Leaders are firmly committed to reflective approaches to behaviour management and demonstrating mercy. As a result, students regulate their conduct in lessons and during social times well. The personal, social and health education curriculum contributes to students' wellbeing. It also helps them explore topics of particular relevance to their local community. Staff value the opportunities that are provided for their professional and career development. The 'open door' policy within the school facilitates peer support and opportunities for staff to learn from each other. They know that the trust, governors and leaders care for their wellbeing.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Students are given a range of opportunities to take personal responsibility and demonstrate leadership through day-to-day school life. Peer mentoring for younger students by those in the Sixth Form is a particularly well established and impactful initiative. The student leadership team plays an important role in ensuring that the views and ideas of the school community are sought and acted upon. Throughout the curriculum, there are opportunities for students to learn about examples of injustice. Their appreciation of important historical events, current affairs and ethical issues is well developed. They understand how their lifestyles and actions could help make a positive difference, reflecting the school's vision. Students have a range of opportunities to undertake community service or raise money for charities, such as the local hospice. The 'race for life' is an important feature within the school calendar. These activities help students understand the importance of serving others and giving generously.

Religious Education

RE has a high profile within the school. Students recognise the subject's value within the school curriculum and their lives. Drawing upon guidance from the diocese, the RE curriculum has been carefully planned to ensure that content is rigorous, relevant and engaging. The sequencing of the curriculum ensures that previous learning is revisited and reinforced when new topics are introduced. At Key Stage 3, Christianity is covered in depth alongside a range of religions and worldviews. Students study a GCSE RE course at Key Stage 4. For post-16 students there is a well-designed series of RE lessons as part of their tutorial programme. Topics explored include wealth and poverty, euthanasia, the fashion industry and freedom of speech. As a result, Sixth Form students are well-informed about religious viewpoints on a range of important philosophical and ethical issues. Regular governors' visits enable them to monitor students' work in RE and speak to them about their learning.

Information

Address	Bury Lane, Epping, Essex. CM16 5JB		
Date	12 May 2026	URN	145050
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	1044
Diocese	Chelmsford		
MAT	Burnt Mill Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Paul Drayton		
Headteacher	Michael Yerosimou		
Local Governing Board Co-Chairs	Clare Cooper and Mike Coggins		
Inspector	Andy Yarrow		