

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Herne Church of England (Aided) Junior School

Vision

A thriving, aspirational community rooted in God's love.

Herne Church of England (Aided) Junior 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

- The school is rooted in its Christian vision, underpinned by a strong foundation of Christian thinking. Its thorough implementation means pupils and adults flourish confidently.
- Herne Juniors is a spiritual school. There are abundant opportunities to reflect. The school provides a haven and enables pupils to develop confidence. It is a safe place to be and pupils thrive. Due to this, they have a deep understanding of belonging.
- Collective worship is a strength. It brings the school community together, is relevant and purposeful, and allows time to reflect. It is designed to be fun and relatable to everyday lives. It is rooted in biblical stories and enables pupils and staff to gain spiritually.
- The school has a powerful, outward-facing culture, and the pupils' passion for advocating change is impressive. Pupils understand the impact they have on others now and can have in the future.
- Leaders and staff are deeply committed to serving the school. The school is highly inclusive, and vulnerable pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are provided with the support they need to flourish.

Development Points

- Build on the delivery of religious education (RE). This is to enhance pupils' ability to explore and investigate religious beliefs, perspectives and worldviews.



Inspection Findings

Herne Junior is a school guided by its Christian vision where pupils thrive due to the high aspirations of leaders. They passionately enable pupils and adults to flourish using their vision, which stems from the story of the Good Samaritan. The school community understands the vision, and pupils know how to live well. Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of their pupils and use this, along with their vision, to drive policy and procedures. As a result, there is a powerful sense of inclusivity and belonging. This can be seen in the exceptional behaviour of pupils, how they treat each other and aspire to do their best. Leaders ensure the Christian vision is a lived reality and lead by example. They are dedicated to supporting other local schools. They do this through the strong links with the diocese and the coastal alliance.

The school's aspiration for pupils has created an exciting and inspiring curriculum. This, underpinned by its Christian vision, offers rich learning experiences that foster curiosity and interest. Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of the curriculum, meaning pupils and adults understand strongly what it means to be spiritual. Planned moments for spirituality allow pupils to reflect on moments of insight. Pupils talk about the 'wow' and 'ow' moments they encounter through questions such as, 'is it possible to capture a spiritual moment as an image?' Vulnerable pupils are recognised quickly. Using the forest area, nurture time, and screening, the school provides individual support for these pupils. The school accesses external services, such as counselling, so that pupils flourish.

Collective worship is a strength of the school and plays a central role in the school day. Pupils enjoy worship, particularly their involvement in re-telling stories from the Bible through drama. This helps them to gain a deeper understanding of how the teachings from Jesus impact their lives and those around them. The school celebrates the uniqueness of their pupils and adults by paying particular attention to acknowledging their successes. This allows pupils to be recognised for their God-given talents, whatever they may be. Times of prayer, stillness, singing and reflection support spiritual growth within worship. Pupils know this is a safe time to reflect and share. Pupil worship leaders take pride in their role. The strong partnership with the local church enriches worship. Pupils, adults and the wider community monitor the impact of worship innovatively. Worship is fun, relevant and relatable, and rooted in the Christian vision. This means pupils and adults deeply understand what it means to flourish spiritually.

Through their Christian vision, pupils and adults understand what it means to live well. The 'discovery den' and 'woodland school' create an open and inclusive space which is well used. Pupils are not afraid to talk about complex topics such as racism, bullying and mental health. They are equipped with the skills to debate and discuss these topics maturely. Due to this, pupils and adults speak openly and freely. Adults talk about their wellbeing and recognise how school leaders foster this positively. This includes time to listen and manage workload. Continuous professional development plays a vital role within the school. This positively impacts their staff and pupils. There is a strong sense of purpose at Herne Juniors, and through the school's Christian vision, they live well together in an inclusive, dignifying, and equitable culture.

Herne Juniors promotes an active culture of justice and responsibility. Pupils have a strong sense of freedom, rights and the duty to seek justice for those who cannot. This is seen through their school food waste and composting initiative and their passion for supporting homelessness. Pupils' social action comes from their work with local charities to tackle the root problem of issues. This, along with their work to support the refugee crisis, creates an active culture of responsibility towards others. The 'courageous advocacy' team speak excitedly about bringing



change through their action and the impact of this is seen in their Global Neighbours accreditation. Pupils at Herne Juniors have an underlying belief that they have the power to change the world.

RE is highly valued. The RE curriculum is broad and balanced. Classroom working walls are relevant, and communal displays show how RE is valued. The diocese supports staff training in the effective delivery of RE, which enhances high-quality teaching. Accurate assessment indicates that pupils make good progress. The impact of this is seen in the pupils' exceptional religious literacy skills. These skills are notable when talking about the impact of the sacred Torahs found after the Second World War. Governors play a key role in driving RE and challenge staff to ensure high quality teaching allows for spiritual and academic flourishing. Pupils are given the opportunity to ask and answer big questions of meaning. However, they are less confident when making enquiries into religious and worldviews.

Teachers are committed to making RE meaningful and engaging to their pupils. A big question is used at the start and end of teaching units. This allows pupils to understand how they have developed their understanding throughout their learning. Adults use a variety of methodologies, such as role play, mind mapping and visits to enhance learning experiences. Due to this, pupils have a good understanding of multi-faiths and can compare these with their own beliefs. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their experiences such as visiting a gurdwara and talking to the rabbi at the synagogue. Pupils understand Christianity as a global faith and comprehend the practices, beliefs and institutions of global religious traditions. Pupils reflect on experiences and emotions and use these to make sense of their learning.

Information

Address	Herne Church of England (Aided) Junior School, School Lane, Herne, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 7AL		
Date	06 March 2025	URN	118739
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	369
Diocese	Canterbury		
Headteacher	Mal Saunders		
Chair of Governors	Dorrell Furness		
Inspector	Sam Killick		