



St Mark's CE Primary School

SIAMS Self Evaluation Form (SEF)

2023 – 2024



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School Context

School type: Church of England Aided

URN: 146465

Pupil PAN: 465 pupils (420 main site and 45 nursery site)

Academy Trust: St Mark's is a proud member of the Orchard Community Trust and is a lead school for Christian Distinctiveness and SIAMs.

Links: Our school has excellent links with the Hanley Ministry Team and the Lichfield Diocese Board of Education. St Mark's has been used by the Diocese to share good practice in the teaching and learning of Religious Education.

Who are we?

St Mark's CE Primary School is a larger than average inner city primary school with 454 pupils on roll (as of 22nd March 2024). The school is split over two sites – our main site, which has pupils taught from Reception up to year 6 (420 pupils), and our nursery class (45 pupils), which is situated in Thomas Boughey Children's Centre. There are a higher than national average number of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding (50% as of 22nd March 2024) but these are not necessarily the most vulnerable pupils in school.

St Mark's experiences extreme rates of mobility and turbulence. In 2022-2023, 99 pupils either arrived or left school during the academic year, which was 22% of the school population. There is no pattern or trend to our mobility and turbulence. Whole school attendance for the last academic year was 92.5%, which is below the national expectations set out by the Department for Education but pleasing considering the impact that the number of pupils taking extended leave had on attendance.

The school converted to become an academy on June 1st 2020 and are a proud founding member of the Orchard Community Trust. The school is currently being led jointly by the Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Sarah Goodwin, who has been in post from April 2022, having being a senior leader in school since 2013. In addition to this, Mrs Deborah Sadler has been appointed as the school's new substantive Headteacher (full time from September 2024) and will be leading in school for two days a week throughout the summer term 2024. St Mark's also has an Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Victoria Bradbury, who has been in post since 2017. Ofsted conducted a short inspection of the school in March 2017 and, as a result, St Mark's retained its status as a '**good**' school. In April 2016, St Mark's had a statutory SIAMs inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) as a Church of England Aided School and the school moved from 'good' to '**outstanding**'.

School Outcomes 2022-2023

Below are the outcomes for the 2022-2023 academic year, including comparisons against the Local Authority and National averages.

EYFSP – GLD

	2019	2022	2023	Local Authority 2023	National 2023
EYFS - GLD	59%	41%	49%	63%	TBC

Phonics - Year 1

	2019	2022	2023	Local Authority 2023	National 2023
Year 1 Phonics Check	80%	63%	51%	75%	79%

Phonics - Year 2 Re-takes

	2019	2022	2023	Local Authority 2023	National 2023
Year 2 Phonics Re-takes	36%	32%	70%	59%	TBC

Key Stage 1

	2019	2022	2023	Local Authority 2023	National 2023
Reading	59%	57%	50%	65%	68%
Reading Greater Depth	10%	5%	5%	15%	19%

Writing	58%	50%	48%	59%	60%
Writing Greater Depth	8%	5%	2%	7%	8%
Maths	59%	60%	64%	68%	71%
Maths Greater Depth	10%	5%	13%	14%	16%
Combined R, W and M	54%	50%	46%	56%	56%

Year 4 Multiplication Check

	2022	2023	Local Authority 2023	National 2023
Average Score	19.2	19.8	19.6	20.3
% achieving between 21-25 marks	N/A	61%	56%	61%

Key Stage 2 (Unvalidated)

	2019	2022	2023	Local Authority 2023	National 2023
Reading	53%	73%	46%	66%	73%
Reading Greater Depth	12%	18%	3%	23%	29%
Writing	54%	56%	55%	69%	71%
Writing Greater Depth	7%	7%	5%	13%	13%

Maths	58%	69%	29%	69%	73%
Maths Greater Depth	15%	16%	8%	17%	24%
SPAG	76%	76%	57%	70%	72%
SPAG Greater Depth	29%	18%	5%	29%	30%
Combined R, W and M	49%	49%	23%	TBC	60%
Combined R, W and M Greater Depth	0%	5%	2%	TBC	8%

Key Stage 2 Progress (Unvalidated)

St Mark's	2019	2022	2023	Local Authority 2023	National 2023
Reading	+1.9	+0.7	-2.7	-0.6	0
Writing	+1.2	+0.6	+1.3	+0.5	0
Maths	+0.2	-0.5	-4.7	-0.4	0

School Development Plan 2023-2024

The following are the school's key priorities for the 2023-2024 academic year:

Priority 1 - To improve outcomes in mathematics. To continue to embed a Singaporean approach to mathematics in EYFS.

- Continue to embed a Singaporean approach to mathematics in Nursery and Reception.
- Develop staff subject knowledge and understanding of a mastery based approach to mathematics.
- Develop staff understanding of how to use concrete resources (across all topics) effectively to ensure pupils understand and can communicate their key learning.
- Ensure all work provides challenge to enable pupils to make even stronger progress.

Priority 2 - To design and implement an effective Modern Foreign Language curriculum that meets the needs of all learners.

- Ensure high quality teaching and learning in a Modern Foreign Language (Spanish).
- Improve staff subject knowledge so they are able to teach Spanish lessons effectively.
- Knowledge, skills and understanding in Spanish are successfully built upon over time.
- Pupils can effectively use their prior knowledge, skills and understanding to enhance the quality of their work.

Priority 3 - To improve outcomes in writing, focusing on provision for all learners.

- Develop staff knowledge and understanding in teaching the updated Pie Corbett Talk for Writing process.
- Update staff knowledge and understanding in teaching the RWI Spelling programme.
- Develop a rigorous approach to the teaching of letter formation in EYFS/KS1.
- Develop a consistent expectation for handwriting teaching throughout KS2 in handwriting and RWI spelling lessons.



Priority 4 - To enhance teaching and learning in the Geography and History curricula.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Geography and History
- Improve staff subject knowledge when teaching Geography and History.
- Knowledge, skills and understanding in both subjects are successfully built upon over time.
- Pupils can effectively use their prior knowledge, skills and understanding to enhance the quality of their work in both subjects.

Priority 5 - Teachers to effectively evaluate the attainment/progress of individual and groups of pupils, correctly identifying gaps in learning. Ensure teaching is adapted to meet and challenge the needs of all learners.

- Ensure that teachers are effectively evaluating the attainment and progress of pupils in classes through AfL strategies.
- Classroom provision is carefully adapted to meet and challenge the needs of all learners.
- Knowledge, skills and understanding of pupils across all curricula are successfully built upon over time through careful planning and adaptation.
- Pupils can effectively use their prior knowledge, skills and understanding to enhance the quality of their work in all subjects.

Christian Distinctiveness Plan 2023-2024

The following are the school's key Christian Distinctiveness priorities for the 2023-2024 academic year:

Priority 1 - To enhance pupils' understanding of the 'Spiritual Pathways' to develop a greater understanding of how they can connect with God.

- Pupils will further develop an understanding of each spiritual pathway.
- Pupils can articulate how the spiritual pathways relate to them personally or others in the community or the wider world.

Priority 2 - To continue to develop and build on existing relationships with St Mark's Church to support Christian Distinctiveness in school and within the local community.

- Pupils get a broad and varied experience of linking with the Church community.
- School can contribute to the development of the Church community.
- Pupils gain more knowledge and understanding of the Church as a place of worship.
- Pupils develop their understanding of how Christians worship in Church.

Priority 3 – To further cultivate courageous advocacy to empower pupils to make a positive difference for themselves, others and the world around them.

- Empower the pupils to make changes for themselves, others and the world around them.
- Build confidence and collaboration in making a difference to others.

Priority 4 – To continue to expand pupils' knowledge, understanding and experiences of different places of worship and people of faith or non-religious belief, through regular visits and visitors linking to the curriculum.

- Pupils get the opportunity to experience visits to a range of different places of worship.
- Enhance pupils knowledge and understanding of different faiths, places of worship or non-religious beliefs.
- Pupils have the opportunity to speak to and meet people of no faith with non-religious beliefs.

Priority 5 – To further develop the RE curriculum in the EYFS setting ensuring a clear progression in learning from Nursery to Reception.

- Learning is recapped and built upon from Nursery to Reception.
- Pupils who join in Reception get the opportunity to catch up on previous learning taught at Nursery.

Our School Christian Vision

St Mark's Christian Vision



St Mark's is an inclusive, welcoming and nurturing family where everyone is loved, **RESPECT**ed and valued. We are proud to be recognised as unique individuals, who celebrate diversity within a supportive Christian environment, where all can flourish. We aim to make a positive difference to the world we live in for ourselves and others by following the example of the Good Samaritan.

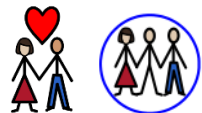
BIBLE QUOTE: 'Let all that you do be with love'. 1 Corinthians 16:14.

BIBLE STORY: The Good Samaritan

MISSION STATEMENT: '*Loving to Learn, Learning to Love*'

VALUES: *RESPECT - Responsibility, Equality, Spirituality, Perseverance, Enthusiasm, Commitment and Trust.*

St Mark's Christian Vision (adapted for EYFS/KS1)



St Mark's is a caring family.



We love each other.



We are all special.



We can all blossom.



We care for ourselves, others and the world just like the Good Samaritan.



"I get a tickle in my belly coming to school."

Rafael - Year 2

The Orchard Community Trust



The Orchard Community Trust

The Orchard Community Trust's vision is to create an inclusive environment, valuing diversity and equality, where everyone is respected. There is a strong commitment in the Trust to providing all pupils with an exceptional education, cultivating a love of learning and empowering them with a strong foundation to thrive and accomplish their goals in life, whatever they may be. At the heart of the Trust, is the desire and capacity to make a difference to each and every pupil it serves. The school's within the Trust work collaboratively together to provide the best educational experiences and outcomes for all pupils.

St Mark's is currently the only Church school within the Orchard Community Trust but it takes immense pride in this. It recognises the important role it plays in ensuring the school's Christian vision looks outwardly to the other schools and helps to uphold, support and further develop Christian Distinctiveness within the Trust. The school strives to share its theologically rooted Christian vision and values across the Trust, helping to enable a nurturing family in which everyone feels loved, respected, and appreciated. St Mark's loves its neighbours, just as the Good Samaritan did. The school and Trust demonstrate true sense of celebrating diversity and equality in a supportive Christian environment, with a desire for everyone to flourish. The Trust has two more Church schools who will be converting to become full academy members of the Orchard Community Trust within the next 18 months.

The Trust structure is a family of schools who all work together, supporting one another to ensure that everyone thrives and flourishes to the best of their ability. No one school is more important than the other. The Governance structures allow schools to be siblings but most importantly recognises the uniqueness and individuality of each school and how they all play a part in strengthening the Trust. St Mark's offers support and expertise to all of the other schools and greatly benefits from support offered too. The Christian Distinctiveness and SMSC committee meet termly to focus on Christian Distinctiveness across the Trust and how, at St Mark's, the school lives out its school Christian vision. This is shared by the Headteacher through a termly Christian Distinctiveness report. It is important that other schools link with this group and therefore are invited to update and share practise on SMSC or teaching and learning in RE at each meeting. Link Trustees visit school termly so that Trustees understand the school's Christian vision and how it is lived out.

St Mark's serves a very diverse local area and one of extremely high deprivation. There are many different communities found within the local area, some of which are very hard to reach. The school's Christian vision is clear as a way for everyone in the community to live together. It doesn't matter who you are, where you come from, your religion, creed or colour, we should all love, respect, accept and value one another for who we are and what we aspire to be. It aims for not only the pupils in the school to flourish and thrive, but everyone within the Trust community too. St Mark's aspires for pupils to be ambassadors for change, enabling them to make a difference for themselves, the school, the community and the world. It is important that everyone is seen as Good Samaritans helping those that need it at any time. The school and Trust also encourage everyone to be aspirational for the future.

At St Mark's, there is a strong emphasis placed on collective worship, which is designed to help everyone to grow spiritually. Everyone in school attends worship, with no one currently opting to withdraw. This demonstrates a sense of community and the significance and impact of worship. Every classroom has a reflection area and the school has the 'Rainbow Room' where everyone (pupils and adults) are invited to pray or maybe have a moment of quiet reflection. The teaching of Religious Education is given a high priority, and the Statement of Entitlement is fully met. The RE curriculum is designed to help pupils develop their knowledge and skills by reflecting our local community. Our website contains comprehensive information on our RE curriculum.

Excellent relationships are maintained with the Lichfield Diocese and St Mark's have been used as an example of good practice for collective worship and teaching and learning in Religious Education. The school has readily developed effective links between itself and the local Church over the last 18 months and are now working in partnership to further support the wider community we serve, allowing all to flourish. St Mark's is also hoping to be involved with the Lichfield Diocese's 'Growing the Faith' bid, which is in its initial stages. The school has already been involved in key discussions on how it could support developing effective partnerships with the Church and grow faith across the local area. In October 2023, the school hosted a round table discussion with the Bishop of Stafford and parents on how deprivation impacts on families within the community and what more could be done to allow families to flourish more readily.

How do we live at St Mark's?

IQ1 - How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision enable pupils & adults to flourish?

- How is the Christian vision expressed? For example, is it through values that are faithful to the Anglican/ Methodist foundation of the school?
- What other strategies do leaders employ to ensure that the theologically rooted Christian vision is a living reality that enables pupils and adults to flourish?
- How do leaders know that the theologically rooted Christian vision is enabling people to flourish?
- How does the vision of the trust resonate with the school's theologically rooted Christian vision in a way that enhances the work of the school and its Christian foundation?

Impact: How do we know it is working?

The school's Christian vision is clear and articulated by everyone within the school community. Respect is at the heart of everything within school and always ensure that everyone feels welcomed, loved, supported and nurtured. Pupils and staff follow the example set by the Good Samaritan and recognise the importance in helping and supporting others in a positive Christian environment. The school's values help everyone to flourish and allow one another to support ourselves and those around us at every opportunity. They also teach us the over-arching importance of showing RESPECT to one another.

Responsibility: To make good choices and the right decisions for ourselves, our school and God's world.

God spoke, "Let us make human beings in our image, and make them reflecting our nature. So, they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle. And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth." (Genesis 1:26-28)

Equality: To ensure that everyone is treated fairly and show the same love for each other like the example set by the Good Samaritan.

"Love your neighbour as you would yourself, there is no commandment greater than this" (Mark 12:31)

Spirituality: To connect with God through the different spiritual styles.

"Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9)

Perseverance: To always try our very best and don't give up, even when things get tough.

Let us not become tired of doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people." (Galatians 6:10)

Enthusiasm: Have a strong feeling of excitement and interest in everything we do.

"In everything you do, stay away from complaining and arguing so that no one can speak a word of blame against you... Shine like beacons of light." (Philippians 2:14-15)

Commitment: Have faith in God and ourselves in all that we do, to help us achieve.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (Timothy 4:7)

Trust: to be truthful, honest and reliable, believing in God, ourselves and others.

"Two people are better than one. If one person falls, the other can reach out to help." (Ecclesiastes 4:9 – 10)

The school's behaviour policy is closely aligned with the school values, which are fundamental to everything at St. Mark's. The RESPECT values are used in celebrating every accomplishment and in making connections to every setback. Every day, school encourages and tests pupils' thinking about the significance, meaning, and application of the values in all aspects of life.

Collective worship and a rich, engaging curriculum reflect the school's Christian vision in everything that the school aims to achieve. The school has recognised the importance of developing pupils' spirituality and this is enhanced through looking at the different spiritual pathways during whole school and classroom worship. Each class has a designated reflection area, which allows pupils to explore their own spirituality, as do interactive displays found in the Rainbow Room.

As well as this, the school is now engaging pupils in Church led services, such as Eucharist. These are held in school and at St Mark's Church, with the support of Reverend Gillian Shilkoff. The school also places a high priority of singing through the faith and our vision, values and spiritual styles are all explored through rich and varied song choices.

The school's relationship with St. Mark's Church has grown significantly over the past 18 months, despite receiving very little support in previous years. The vision of our local Pioneer Missioner, parish clergy and the school's Headteacher have been instrumental in ensuring that the school's vision aligns with that of the local Church, with the aim of developing a Christian way of living and bringing reconciliation and peacebuilding within the local community.

St Mark's is seen as a beacon school by the Lichfield Diocese in how its strong vision is underpinned theologically, linking well to the context of the school.

There are a wide variety of other stakeholders that the school has strong relationships with, such as the seven other schools within the Orchard Community Trust and two local Church schools who are looking to academise into the Trust. The Headteachers, Assistant/Deputy Headteachers, SENCOs, DSLs and subject leaders all meet termly to offer support and challenge to each other, living out the Trust and individual schools' visions. Through this we celebrate differences and uniqueness but are enabling opportunities for all.

In addition to this, the school has a wide range of effective partnerships with other providers, such as: City Music Service, Etruria Rotary Club, Beanstalks, Stoke City, local mosques and Reveal Theatre. There is also the opportunity for parent and pupil voice regularly throughout each academic year.

The school has an experienced RE Leader and a strong collective worship team who are responsible for the quality of whole school worship and reflection. St Mark's has a designated RE/SIAMS link Governor who carries out regular link Governor visits throughout each academic year, focusing on teaching and learning in RE/Worship and the impact that this has on pupils' attainment, progress and behaviour. This includes looking at class worship journals, RE books, speaking to pupils, reviewing the quality of the learning environment and observing teaching and learning and worship.

The Trust Christian Distinctiveness and SMSC committee meet termly to focus on Christian Distinctiveness across the Trust and how, at St Mark's, the school lives out its school Christian vision. This is shared by the Headteacher through a termly Christian Distinctiveness report. Link Trustees visit school termly so that Trustees understand the school's Christian vision and how it is lived out.

The school's leaders take their responsibility in developing the understanding of stakeholders at both school and Trust level with regards to St Mark's being a Church school. This is shared in many different ways e.g. CD/SMSC Trust meetings, through the RE curriculum, school website, school displays and through the school's values. Leaders and staff attend a wide range of training courses offered by the Diocese, Natre and other local training. St Mark's has also delivered training for schools, Governors and Trustees on Understanding Christianity and the SIAMs framework.

When hiring new employees, the school makes sure they recognise the value and importance of the school's strong Christian ethos. Staff are all expected to uphold the school's Christian ethos and vision. The school has only lost two teachers in the last seven years and boasts an extremely stable staff. This is extremely important as it shows the commitment that staff have to the school vision in ensuring it is lived out day to day.

The Headteacher works with all stakeholders regarding the self-evaluation of the school and reviews this regularly through-out the year via the day to day monitoring outlined in the schools AfL policy.

IQ2 – How does the curriculum reflect the school’s theologically rooted Christian vision?

- a. In what ways does the theologically rooted Christian vision shape the curriculum, including the extracurricular offer?
- b. How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?
- c. How do leaders know that the curriculum is having the intended effect for pupils?
- d. How, specifically, does the Christian vision shape the learning experience for pupils who are deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged?
- e. How does being part of the Trust enhance the school’s curriculum?

Impact: How do we know it is working?

Together with all relevant stakeholders, the school has developed statements of intent for each subject, outlining what it hopes to teach pupils across school. The school is dedicated to providing a well-thought-out and innovative curriculum, one that enriches the cultural capital for all pupils, especially those who are deemed disadvantaged.

All of our subject leaders have reviewed their curricula to ensure that it is challenging, unique, and progressive, providing our pupils with the core knowledge, skills, vocabulary needed to thrive and fully experience life in its fullness. Each curricula is built upon over time, from Nursery through to Year 6, taking into account what pupils need to know in readiness for Key Stage 3.

Leaders ensure that at the heart of the curriculum is quality first teaching and ensures that practitioners are kept up to date with current research and thinking around teaching and learning. Staff hold the highest of standards for every single pupil, and work hard to foster a love of learning where pupils show a great pride in and interest in all of their work.

All pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, are disadvantaged or have SEND, are challenged, engaged, and motivated to learn by the well-designed curriculum. Every term, a broad range of subjects are taught around a central theme, and pupils study the breadth of the National Curriculum. Learning is exciting and pupils are keen to share what they have learned and the progress they have made.

Throughout the school day, there are opportunities for pupils and adults to reflect and pray to God, both individually or with their peers. The Rainbow Room is our prayer and reflection space and is open to anyone during the day and after school. Pupils access it during break and lunch times, allowing them to reflect in a number of ways. This room also has a range of stories from different religions for pupils to read, as well as copies of the Bible and Quran. In classrooms, pupils have access to Bibles for reading.

In RE lessons, pupils are encouraged to think about, discuss and debate various aspects of different religions and non-religions. For instance, they are asked to consider questions such as: "What do Christians believe God is like? When Jesus left, what was the impact of Pentecost? What does it mean to be Hindu in

Britain today? What matters most to Humanists and Christians?" This enables pupils to delve deeper into Christianity and other religions and seriously consider the reliability of their own faith. It has been commented on by various professional on how well our pupils are able to compare and contrast Christianity to their own religion or other non-religious beliefs.

The school arranges for frequent church visits, although this is a challenge at St Mark's Church due to construction work. Our pupils love to express themselves through singing, praising God, and experiencing a connection with him while they sing. This provides additional opportunities for pupils to explore their spiritual understanding.

"The planned curriculum is progressive and takes into account prior learning, which is recapped regularly supporting pupils to remember what is taught."

"An enthusiastic leader who champions the subject across the school."

Ian Beardmore – Music Deep Dive – June 2023



St Mark's ensures that pupils make good progress over time, whatever their starting point is in school. This can be clearly seen in pupils' books. Pupil voice exercises show that pupils enjoy the curriculum in place and have a love of learning. Pupils who arrive at school during the academic year access our Sunbeams programme, led by our school Learning Mentors. Sunbeams is a short-term, focused intervention to support young people who are new to the school and new to English. Pupils who attend Sunbeams remain an active part of their main class. Pupils develop confidence in their academic and social skills, gain basic and useful English, and feel safe, happy, secure and ready to learn.

Inclusion meetings are held termly with each class teacher and the Inclusion leader. During these meetings, provision maps are updated and highlight current support provided to pupils with vulnerabilities such as EAL, Pupil Premium or SEND.

Our school extra-curricular activities leader, ensures that pupils are able to participate in a wide range of after school clubs, for a range of different subjects. These are ran by teachers and other external providers such as Stoke City and Staffordshire University's Forest School. Pupils in Year 6 can also take advantage of a residential programmes at Standon Bowers, which helps pupils to experience and gain independence and experience a range of activities they would not normally get the opportunity to participate in.

The school uses its Sport Premium funding to enhance the school's swimming curriculum. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 have the opportunity to learn to swim at Fenton Manor swimming pool during an extended one hour a week swimming lesson. This has resulted in a greater number of pupils being successful swimmers when they move on to their next phase of their education.

St Mark's has excellent relationships with the Orchard Community Trust and is used to share good practice as a Church school, particularly with teaching and learning in Religious Education. The school supports and guides our Trust family in Christian Distinctiveness so that all adults and pupils are able to flourish.

IQ3 – How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

- a. How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?
- b. How do partnerships with the DBE and/or MAST, and partnerships with parish/local churches enhance this?
- c. In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?
- d. In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?
- e. How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?

Impact: How do we know it is working?

Collective Worship takes place every day and allows all pupils to learn, reflect and grow their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths. This includes the following teaching and learning:

- Listening to, talking about and learning from stories in the Bible.
- Listening to, talking about and learning from stories from other faiths around the world.
- Learning about each of the school's Christian values through-out the year.
- Looking at and discussing world events.
- Celebrating both Christian festivals and festivals from other religions at the time of year they occur.
- Engaging in moments of silence and reflection.
- Listening to music when coming in and out of worship.
- Singing when coming in and out of worship.
- Engaging in daily collective prayer.
- Learning about and developing a greater understanding of the different spiritual pathway styles. Learning about our own individual spiritual styles.
- Singing together a range of Christian songs during regular song and praise. Understanding how the songs we sing link to our school vision, values and spiritual pathway styles.
- Participating in praise assembly, celebrating being Good Samaritans and thanking God for supporting us in our learning through the week.

The school's worship team, class teachers and pupils are actively involved with the planning and delivery of whole school or classroom worship. This ensures that worship remains inspiring and engages all pupils when delivering key messages. Whole school worship is also delivered by a range of different stakeholders such as the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, RE Leader, Worship/Music leader, St Mark's Church, the school's designated RE/SIAMS link Governor and the pupils worship council. A variety of resources are used during each worship to make it interesting, such as music or singing, role play,

drama, story-telling, video clips, interactive activities or discussions. Classroom worship is led by class teachers one week and then planned and delivered by pupils the week after. It is so important that pupils are able to lead together in worship, it ensures worship is inclusive and inspirational.

When a class leads worship for the entire school, each child gets to lead worship for their friends. They are leading worship for everyone, and their parents are welcome to come too. The school's worship council delivers whole school worship every half term and bases its theme for worship around the spiritual pathways or the schools vision and values.

As shared previously, the school is now engaging pupils and parents by offering Eucharist services termly at St Mark's Church or within school. There are also other opportunities to participate in special services such as the reading of the St Mark's gospel by pupils at St Mark's Church.

Pupils are encouraged to consider how their faith can support them during difficult times and how people look to God for strength when they learn about difficult events/disasters happening in the world around them, such as conflicts, earthquakes, fires, floods, etc. As a school, we offer prayers and reflection for those people involved and those who are suffering.

The school makes sure that, regardless of the method used, students are helped to explore and are introduced to the key concepts and teachings of the Christian faith. This includes:

- The Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance for Christians.
- The central symbols of Christianity.
- The cycle of the Church year.
- The importance of prayer.
- The central Christian values of respect, love, goodness, compassion and charity.
- The nature of human beings as children of God, being a part of his creation.
- Christians believing Jesus to be the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God.

When learning about difficult events/disasters happening in the world around them such as an earthquake, tsunami, terrorist attacks, fire, floods etc. the pupils are encouraged to think how faith can support them during these difficult times and how people can look to God for strength. The pupils also engage in collective prayer and reflection for the people involved.

The school now enjoys close links with the local church – St. Mark's Church - and has a positive relationships with both the team Vicar, Reverend Gill Shilkoff and the local Pioneer Missioner, Reverend Catherine Matlock. The Church does not currently have a congregation but is used as a community building as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which is being used to repair the Church roof. As part of this project, the school and Church have liaised together frequently and

it means that pupils are able to access the Church more readily, particularly for the RE curriculum and other curricula. In addition to this, it is hoped that the school will take part in a Christingle service at Christmas, as well as other Eucharist services during the year. The Church also supports school in delivering 'Messy' events after school at the end of each term.

IQ4 – How does the school’s theologically rooted Christian vision create a culture in which pupils and adults are treated well?

- a. How does the theologically rooted Christian vision enable all to live well together in an inclusive, dignifying, and equitable culture?
- b. How do school policies and practice create a culture in which people’s wellbeing is enhanced?
- c. How is enabling good mental health for all central to the school’s work?
- d. As a result of the theologically rooted Christian vision, what effective strategies are in place that help pupils and adults, including those deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged, at difficult times?
- e. How does the trust contribute to and enhance the inclusion and wellbeing of pupils and adults, ensuring that all are treated well?

Impact: How do we know it is working?

At St. Mark's, we make sure that everyone, adults and pupils alike, feels loved, supported, welcomed, and nurtured because respect is the foundation of everything we do. We take after the Good Samaritan and understand how important it is to assist, encourage and support each other in all that we do. Leaders recognise the importance of valuing every pupil and all members of staff and strive to ensure that everyone in school are treated as equals. Staff understand that to get the best outcomes for pupils, then everyone must work together as one united team.

Every member of the school community is different in one way or another. We celebrate our differences together and accept each other for who we are. Pupils embrace the many new arrivals that come into school each year, making them feel welcomed and loved. When pupils leave, we celebrate their time with us and know they take with them values for life.

Our school inductions are in-depth and thorough but this helps us to understand the background of each family and ensures that, if needed, the appropriate level of support is in place from the moment a pupil steps into school. Parents feel accepted and that they are not judged by school staff, and this is because the school’s vision celebrates diversity and uniqueness. We never judge, only accept. Our ‘Sunbeams’ intervention, supports all new arrivals into school. This 6 week rolling programme, is designed to help pupils to settle into school life and embed routines quickly. This is led by the school’s Learning Mentors, who ensure that pupils (where needed) learn basic language quickly. They ensure pupils have a buddy in class and have a tour of school, meeting key staff along the way. Pupils attend Sunbeams for around one and a half hours a day and then reintegrate back into class. Teachers understand that those pupils who are new to English thrive best in a language rich environment and hold high expectations for all pupils.

Although many pupils have vulnerabilities or may be deemed disadvantaged, this is celebrated in school. We are all disadvantaged in some way or another and the school prides itself on ensuring that every pupil gets the highest standard of education. Teaching and learning is tailored to meet the needs of all learners, whatever their starting point may be. Interventions allow pupils to catch up and make accelerated progress.

The school has a very stable staff, losing only two teachers over a seven year period. Many teachers have continued their journey from being newly qualified, to becoming valued leaders. At St. Mark's, every member of staff is a leader in their own right, and they each demonstrate this in a different way. Leaders understand that in order for everyone to thrive, we must value and accept each other's uniqueness.

The school continues to access a counselling service offered via the OCT Blossoms project. At present, this is for a small group of pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1. This has led to some pupils receiving one to one direct counselling and has truly supported mental health and well-being. The Orchard Community Trust has an active well-being group consisting of stakeholders from each school. The purpose of this group is to work together to support and enhance mental health and well-being for staff and pupils in schools. From this, a staff well-being charter has been created. In addition to this, the Trust has recently invested in 'Well-being apprenticeships', and St Mark's has a member of staff working towards this. This is impacting positively on the mental health and well-being of staff in school. The Trust's Parent Council meets termly and parents come together to focus on what works well in their child's school and share ideas on how schools could be further developed. It is important that parents have a voice and contribute to life within the Trust.

Wellbeing is prioritised at St Mark's. Staff provide effective emotional support for pupils when they need it. The school's Learning Mentors, provide support to pupils through regular drop ins, interventions or through other highly effective initiatives. An example of this is the 'Chat and Chill' initiative where by at lunch times, pupils are able to come together and chat if they have worries or relax if they were having a stressful day. Pupils can pray or take time out to reflect in the rainbow Room too. Staff understand that they are there to support one another and really do support each other when times are challenging. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher offer an open door policy for anyone that needs support.

Over the last year, St Mark's has begun to explore our school value of spirituality much more, focusing on the spiritual pathways. An example of this was when we held a 'spirituality day' in school. Pupils and staff focused on what spirituality meant to them. They spent time looking at what brings them joy and what their spiritual style might be. These included being a caregiver, a naturalist or a sensate. The rainbow room was turned into a sensory room and pupils and staff enjoyed being surrounded by lights, smells and sounds. Pupils completed a wide range of activities throughout the day such as completing meditative drawings, listening to music and making caregiver bracelets. The day afforded everyone with the time to reflect on what makes us – us and how we can spread joy.

Pupils are always asked to reflect on their behaviour, talk about it openly and link it to our school values. It's important that are values are used to promote positive behaviour and to support pupils when reflecting on poor choices. Support is provided to pupils when needed and this is evaluated by senior leaders half termly. Every day is seen as a fresh start, this promotes forgiveness across school.

The school's RE and PSHE curricula allow pupils the freedom to share their feelings about a wide range of topics in a safe environment. Evidence can be found in RE books and PSHE floor books or through pupil discussion.

IQ5 – How does the school’s theologically rooted Christian Vision create an active culture of justice and responsibility?

- a. How does the theologically rooted Christian vision enable positive relationships that balance individual freedom and rights, with responsibility towards others?
- b. How does this culture encourage justice and courageous advocacy, enabling pupils to make ethical choices and to be agents of change?
- c. As an outworking of the theologically rooted Christian vision, what partnerships are important to the school? How do they impact positively and reciprocally on people’s lives?
- d. How does the trust make a positive impact on the culture of the school?

Impact: How do we know it is working?

Pupils have a solid understanding what is meant by responsibility as it is one of the school’s core values. They understand that everyone has responsibilities and that we all have a responsibility to love and care for one another. Pupils understand that the story of the Good Samaritan emphasises the need to help others who are in need, no matter their background. This is demonstrated in the way in which pupils respect and care for one another. Learning walks around school demonstrate that pupils care for their school and work hard to ensure it is clean and tidy. Work in pupils’ books is of a high standard demonstrating that they are responsible for their own learning and have a desire to produce the very best work at all times. Learning prefects enjoy supporting younger pupils in school with their learning, giving up their time at break and lunch times to help others.

At St Mark’s, an emphasis is placed on pupil’s showing responsibility through being allowed to make decisions about school life and how they can effectively make changes in school, the community and the wider world. The School Council meet half termly to make decisions about important aspects of school life, such as: deciding what activities will take place during anti-bullying week, how to improve the school playground or even making decisions around specific projects. Evidence of this can be found in school council meeting minutes, which are shared on display in the main school corridor. School councillors have previously linked with Stoke City to develop ideas around a social action project. In the last academic year, they felt that the school social action project should be called ‘Nature’ and its purpose was to work together to protect birds, bugs and bees in and around school and within the local community. Pupils enjoyed working together collaborating and creating bird feeders to help God’s creatures. Members of the School Council also attend the Orchard Community Trust Student Council meetings termly, focusing on key decisions that can improve outcomes for all pupils within Trust.

The Eco Council meet regularly to look at ways in which school can make a difference to the world we live in. They enjoy taking part in a range of activities such as den building, bird watching or litter picking, which helps pupils to explore God’s natural world, look at how we can use nature to support ourselves and ultimately protect the world we live in. This is important given the area that the school is situated in. The school recognises that there are challenges in the community around litter and fly tipping. Eco Councillors have written to local councillors to ask for support in tackling this issues and have asked parents if they would be willing to give up their time at the weekends with school to help pick litter in the community. They want to be agents of change and support the community they live in.

Throughout each academic year, the school works hard to raise money for charities and organisations, helping to support those most in need. Pupils will signpost leaders when they feel they need to support others and example of this was the school raised over £600 for the victims of an Earthquake that affected people living in Turkey and Syria. This was done through a cake sale in school. We had many families at St Marks who were affected by this earthquake and parents and pupils felt it important to raise money for such a worthwhile cause. During the year, the school hosts 'Big Breakfasts' whereby families get to come into school and have breakfast together. Money raised from these events has been used to support local or international charities such as the Pakistan Flood Appeal. Raising money for charity helps pupils understand their responsibilities to help others less fortunate than themselves and teaches compassion and empathy.

The school has links to many local charities such as Open Door and the Alice Charity. Parents and pupils help to support these charities by donating spare food for vulnerable families at Harvest time or other times during the year. It is heart-warming to see our families helping others in times of need, ensuring that others do not go hungry. The school also maintains its own small food cupboard for those who are in desperate need of food or essential supplies.

The use of 'Picture News' to support classroom worship helps pupils to understand the plight of others and the importance of being advocates for change. There are times throughout the year when it is shared during whole school worship. We always pray for those who are in need.

A high-quality Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE) education enables pupils to gain a better understanding of themselves and one another. They are able to examine their personal relationships at home and school through carefully crafted discussions and activities. Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as a valuable and distinct member of society, with their own set of unique strengths. They will learn practical ways to stay safe in today's world, including how to staying safe online. We teach our pupils about the diverse world in which we live, as well as how to behave and live in a healthy manner, protecting our own and others' well-being.

IQ6 – Is the religious education curriculum effective (with reference to the expectations set out in the Church of England’s Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education)?

- a. How do school leaders ensure that the provision, profile, and priority of religious education in all key stages reflects its place on the curriculum of a Church school?
- b. How do school and trust leaders ensure that the religious education curriculum is challenging, accurate, well-sequenced, well-balanced, relevant, and diverse?
- c. How do school and trust leaders ensure that religious education is well-resourced, and that continuing professional development for staff has an impact on the effectiveness of the curriculum?

Impact: How do we know it is working?

Pupils participate in weekly RE Lessons and a daily Collective worship sessions. The school’s spiral RE Curriculum consists of 50% Christianity and 50% other faiths or non-religious beliefs. St Mark’s follows the Understanding Christianity scheme for its Christianity units of work and the Stoke-on-Trent LA agreed syllabus for its discrete other faiths units of work.

The RE curriculum provides opportunities for students to comprehend and confidently compare or draw connections between Christianity, other faiths, and non-religious beliefs. It is available on the school website under the RE section. The curriculum map is well sequenced and progressive from EYFS to Year 6 and considers learning that pupils may need to know in Key Stage 3. Key sticky knowledge and vocabulary have been identified for each year group and teachers work to ensure that pupils make links to prior learning in previous year groups.

The RE Subject Leader effectively conveys expectations to Senior Leaders, Governors and staff about improvements made in the teaching and learning of Religious Education and ensures that they are up to date with current developments in the subject. The school’s RE link governor and Christian Distinctiveness advisor visit school every term and support the RE leader and Headteacher with monitoring or further advice or guidance around developments within the subject.

A variety of monitoring and evaluation procedures are used effectively to accurately identify strengths and focus on areas for improvement with the subject. The RE subject leader conducts monitoring, support, and challenge throughout the year and uses these to assess the impact of RE on pupils across school. Throughout the year, staff and pupils attend CPD opportunities either through the Lichfield Diocese, NATRE or the Stoke RE Network.

The Orchard Community Trust holds termly RE subject leader meetings whereby leaders meet to discuss the subject. Recently, they have focused on developments in teaching and learning in RE and how assessment is used to inform planning within each school’s RE curriculum. It also supports developing subject leaders knowledge and understanding to help support other practitioners in schools. St Mark’s has been used by the Trust and Diocese to share good practice in the teaching and learning of RE.

IQ7 – What is the quality of Religious Education?

- a. What is the quality of teaching?
- b. How well do pupils make progress in their learning as a result of a balanced and well-structured Religious Education curriculum?
- c. How does assessment inform teaching and learning?

Impact: How do we know it is working?

The quality of teaching and learning in RE deemed to be good and the subject is held in high regard by all staff. Pupils understand the importance of RE and enjoy lessons. Pupils show engagement in lessons and talk positively about their learning experiences within the subject.

RE lessons are highly creative and stimulating. Pupils work hard to retain what they have learned and can talk about their prior learning experiences. They are also able to compare and contrast different religions to a high standard. Trips and visits are encouraged across each year group and the school has recently devised a long term plan of visits or visitors for each year group, based on topics. This will further help and support in pupil's learning and understanding. Reverend Gill comes into school regularly and moving forward she will be supporting year groups with teaching and learning in RE units and supporting in visits to St Mark's Church. We also see the value and importance of Reverend Gill attending trips to other places of worship to demonstrate the value and importance of inter-faith relationships.

Pupils demonstrate self-awareness, open-mindedness and respect during lessons. They understand that everyone in school is unique and that we have pupils of all faiths and no faith in school. They develop and flourish into well rounded individuals who recognise their own intrinsic value and the difference that they can make in society.

Pupils take pride in their RE work and make good progress from starting points. The school's recently introduced assessment system allows pupils to share their knowledge and understanding at the start of a topic and then reflect about it at the end of the topic, highlighting in more depth what they have learned. This assessment system allows teachers to understand key concepts that have been understood and any next steps needed in learning.