

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Edmundsbury Church of England Primary Academy

Vision

1 Thessalonians 5 vs 11 says, 'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.' At St Edmundsbury Primary Academy, we are a caring Christian community who believe in 'One Another-ing'. This means actively looking for ways to contribute to the thriving of others, in our families, classes, school, local community and beyond.

St Edmundsbury Church of England Primary Academy has a number of strengths, but there are also areas that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. These are set out in the Development Points section below.

Notable Strengths

- Leaders have developed a Christian vision that is the cornerstone of academy life. The Christian concept of building each other up drives their decision making to meet the diverse needs of the school community. As a result, pupils and adults feel nurtured and empowered.
- The vision and its supporting values shape a culture that enables pupils to live well together. Innovative, whole-school strategies are transforming pupils' emotional wellbeing, enabling them to flourish in their personal development.
- Collective worship is highly valued and central to pupils and adults' spiritual growth. A range of rich experiences and partnerships brings the school's vision to life, helping individuals to reflect and make wise choices.
- The vision shapes a meaningful curriculum that builds pupils' confidence and engagement. Leaders make bold decisions that enable pupils, including those who have additional needs, to be active and curious learners.
- Motivated by the vision, leaders foster a keen sense of responsibility. Many opportunities enable pupils to take care of each other and their school environment.

Development Points

- Because school and trust leaders have not ensured that pupils achieve highly in religious education (RE), and that accurate and inclusive assessment ensures this, they should implement consistent assessment processes to track pupils' progress. Teachers should use these to inform teaching so that pupils across the school achieve well in RE and know how to improve.
- Implement a whole school approach to spiritual development. Use this to ensure that the curriculum encourages and supports pupils' spiritual growth.
- Strengthen pupils' understanding of justice. This is so that they can respond to injustice in a broader way and know how they can make a positive difference.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

St Edmundsbury's Christian vision sits at the heart of academy life, uniting pupils and adults in a shared sense of purpose and belonging. Leaders have thoughtfully revised the vision and its supporting values to meet the needs of a diverse population. It sustains and strengthens the community through times of success, as well as challenge. Pupils and adults understand how to build each other up through their words and actions. Driven by Jesus' teachings to love and serve one another, leaders make courageous decisions. They target significant resources so that pupils have the right provision to flourish in their personal and social development. This is transforming pupils' school life by enabling them to learn and play well together. Leaders seek out opportunities to celebrate pupils' successes with families. Their initiatives are increasingly effective in establishing a shared sense of achievement. The academy's vision aligns with that of the multi-academy trust. Trust leaders support and sustain the continued growth of this rapidly developing Church school. Governors take an active role and are committed to the academy's improvement. Although their evaluation of pupil achievement in RE is underdeveloped, they know the impact of the vision across other aspects and support leaders effectively.

Vision and Curriculum

The vision's focus on building self-esteem and perseverance motivates leaders to design a practical curriculum to meet pupils' wide-ranging needs. A whole-school, structured approach helps them to settle purposefully into learning. Pupils respond well to the security of predictable routines within lessons. Topics and resources, such as reading texts in English, are thoughtfully chosen to broaden pupils' horizons. Thus, they have a growing appreciation of the diverse ways that people live their lives. A range of enrichment activities, such as theatre workshops, brings learning to life and deepens pupils' engagement. Adults know their pupils well. They innovatively focus resources and adjust the learning environment to give those who have additional needs the bespoke support that they need. Thus, the curriculum builds confidence and enjoyment so that pupils increasingly feel successful in their learning. Leaders have begun to consider a whole-school approach to spiritual development. For example, pupils are moved by seeing plants grow as they garden outdoors. However, this aspect is in the initial stages of development and the curriculum's potential to nurture pupils spiritually is not fully realised.

Religious Education

Leaders recognise the importance of RE. They work proactively with the diocese to develop a meaningful and relevant curriculum. Topics are structured logically to build pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a range of other religions and worldviews. Supporting the academy's vision to encourage active engagement, the curriculum is designed to stimulate pupils' curiosity. To this end, lessons focus on discussion and practical exploration. Fruitful experiences involving local clergy enable pupils to understand the significance of key concepts, such as the importance of the Eucharist to Christians. This approach gives them regular opportunities to appreciate the range of ways that people think about and practise their beliefs. Regular theme days enrich the curriculum. Through participating together in first-hand activities, pupils are able to make sense of the diverse world in which they live. For example, by experiencing aspects of the Jewish festival of Rosh Hashanah, they understand the religious symbolism underpinning the event.

Teachers plan experiences that spark pupils' interest and enjoyment. Staff access a range of support from the diocese and trust that builds their subject knowledge. They are confident in designing activities that enable pupils to recognise that people have a variety of worldviews. Pupils respect each other's perspectives and are reflective about their own beliefs. Targeted adult support



enables those who have additional needs to access learning alongside their peers. Staff give some feedback to pupils within lessons to help them learn. However, leaders have not established a comprehensive system of assessment in RE. Consequently, teachers do not know precisely how well individual pupils are making progress in their learning. Thus, staff do not have sufficient information to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs or to give individuals clear feedback on how to improve. As a result, although pupils engage well in lessons, their progress is inconsistent.

Vision and School Culture

The vision inspires leaders to champion a nurturing culture. By promoting the academy's values of friendship, compassion and respect, leaders' innovative actions are transforming pupils' wellbeing. Leaders make significant investments in structured, outdoor play. A wide range of games and adventurous activities promotes pupils' creativity and co-operation. Staff embrace the vision and consistently use strategies that teach pupils how to encourage others and build self-esteem. For instance, adults routinely pause so that pupils can tell their classmates what is special about each other. Staff know their pupils and families well. They work tirelessly to put the right support in place for pupils who are facing challenges. As a result, they increasingly access the help that they need to understand and manage their emotions. Thus, pupils are happy and engaged in school life, feeling secure and increasingly ready to learn. Leaders prioritise staff wellbeing. They give sensitive support, including through organisational change. Adults value opportunities to develop professionally through working with the diocese and colleagues in the trust. Thus, they are a united team, encouraging and affirming each other and their pupils.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The school's vision drives leaders to create a culture where people take responsibility for others and their environment. Pupils eagerly embrace a variety of leadership opportunities, such as worship leaders, and show their peers ways to live out the school's values. A range of activities enables pupils to recognise that they can work with others to make a positive difference. For example, they join with staff and families to improve the school grounds. Staff organise initiatives that involve pupils in charitable work, such as Harvest appeals for a local foodbank. Some joint pupil projects, including with other academies in the trust, involve them in wider initiatives. By writing thoughtful letters and visiting local care homes, pupils are beginning to show responsibility within their local community. Through the curriculum and collective worship, pupils explore wider issues of justice, such as plastic pollution and homelessness. However, their understanding of the active ways that they can challenge these broader issues of injustice is limited.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is a valued time when pupils and adults gather each day to pause and reflect on life's meaning and purpose. Carefully planned to explore the school's vision, the community feels nourished by the reassuring pattern that worship follows, including songs, stories, reflections and prayers. Pupil worship leaders take an active role in fostering participation by leading experiences that reinforce the school's Christian values. Led by a range of adults, individuals engage spiritually in thinking about themselves, others and their place in the world. For example, by listening to how Jesus encouraged people to make wise choices, pupils understand how they can act to be good friends to each other. Thriving partnerships with local churches enrich the worship life of the school. Church members regularly lead worship so that pupils and adults explore the Bible's messages in a range of engaging ways, including through drama. People value regular visits to local churches to mark important Christian festivals, such as Harvest. These experiences bring the wider community together and strengthen a shared sense of belonging.

Information

Address	Grove Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3BJ		
Date	22 September 2026	URN	151165
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	157
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich		
MAT	Elveden Schools Trust		
MAT Chair	Tamsin Minty		
Headteacher	Lorna Rourke (Executive Headteacher) Kim Bramley (Head of School)		
Inspector	Sue Mawdsley		