

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Stelling Minnis Church of England Primary School

Vision

Our school is a beacon of light. A place where every child and adult is encouraged to shine brightly and reach their full potential. Through curiosity, courage, and compassion, we shine like a lamp in our classrooms, like a village on a hill in our community, and like shining stars across the wider world.

Stelling Minnis Church of England Primary 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

- Firmly rooted in a biblical narrative, the school's vision and values inspire its strategic direction. This enables pupils and the majority of adults to shine brightly individually and collectively.
- Shaped by the Christian vision, the curriculum offers a wide range of experiences, utilising opportunities within this rural area. This allows pupils to develop curiosity and shine like a lamp in the classroom as they explore their own unique skills and talents.
- Underpinned by compassionate, caring and respectful relationships between staff and pupils, the school environment effectively nurtures pupils' wellbeing.
- Collective worship is a focal point of the school community. It strongly reflects the school's vision and values and provides opportunities for celebration, reflection and inspiration in a Christian context.
- A close partnership with local schools and the diocese supports the development of religious education (RE). This is enabling pupils to discuss Christianity and world faiths with enthusiasm and interest.

Development Points

- Develop a shared language and understanding of spirituality across the curriculum, school environment and acts of worship. This is to enable the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults.
- Build on the existing opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and knowledge in RE. This is through deep enquiry-based learning and extending creative opportunities so that they are better able to reflect on questions of meaning and purpose in RE.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship by school leaders, including governors, staff and pupils. This will ensure that worship and reflection continue to improve to meet the needs of all pupils and staff.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Driven by a desire to enable individuals to shine brightly, the vision and values reflect the needs of pupils and the school's context. They underpin the strategic direction of the school, with pupils at the heart of decision making. This has motivated innovative changes to the curriculum within the school's rural setting, making a positive difference to pupils' lives. The values of curiosity, compassion and courage are lived out in daily life between staff and pupils. These modelled interactions, both in the classroom and outdoor activities, generate a strong sense of belonging. Governors know the school and its context well. This has ensured that they understand the vision and how it underpins the work of the school. Their monitoring and evaluations are observant and challenging, helping to develop Stelling Minnis as a Church school. A network with three local schools provides a community of practice on which school leaders can draw and contribute. It forms a powerful collaboration focused on mutual encouragement and improvement. This has given school leaders the confidence to make brave decisions, well supported by governors with a long-term vision.

Vision and Curriculum

Pupils are nurtured to shine like a lamp in their classrooms through a variety of well-designed curriculum experiences. A focus on achieving the best and broadest outcomes has enabled pupils to flourish in a range of contexts. Activities that foster curiosity and a love of learning across the curriculum are invariably linked to the local area. For example, pupils study a local river and visit trenches in a nearby village. This stimulates and engages pupils so that they achieve success in their learning. The introduction of a farm school has made a significant impact on pupils' enjoyment in school life. Within animal husbandry, pupils have grown in confidence, often finding unexpected inner reserves and enthusiasm. Experiences in the outdoor environment nurture spirituality through 'ow' and 'wow' moments. However, there is neither a shared language nor understanding of spirituality across the school, thus limiting the spiritual development of staff and pupils. The specific needs of those with special education needs and/or disabilities are met effectively through a range of bespoke provision. This ensures that individuals shine brightly at Stelling Minnis.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship draws the school together as a community. Lighting the candle at the start of worship forms a visible and shared expression of the school's vision. It assures pupils that Jesus is with them and that they are safe and protected. The weekly celebration worship allows pupils to shine brightly. They take pride in their own achievements and that of others. Bible stories, including those about Jesus, engage pupils. These inspire them to behave with kindness to each other, creating a caring school environment. Inspirational sending messages at the end of worship become an intrinsic part of conversation and motivation during the day. This ensures that the theme is embedded in school life and makes a difference to pupils' lives. Times of stillness and reflection enable pupils and staff to seek peace and calm within. Pupils know that God listens to them and will be present in their day, thus creating an inner confidence and supporting their spiritual awareness. At present, there is limited monitoring or evaluation of worship. This restricts the ongoing development of worship in meeting the needs of pupils and staff.

Vision and School Culture

There is an unwavering focus on enabling pupils to shine brightly. This allows for a distinct balance between learning knowledge and skills whilst fostering creativity and developing social, emotional and mental wellbeing. Pupils are treated with dignity and compassion. As such, they know their intrinsic value and worth. Governors have fully supported the development of pupil wellbeing. For example, by making financial decisions to create a specific nurture room. Pupils learn to manage their own feelings and emotions effectively using the zones of regulation. This spurs an inner resilience within pupils who know when to seek help from within and from elsewhere. Parents are valued partners in the development of Stelling Minnis. They are welcomed and know that



they can approach the school for any concern or need. Staff value professional development opportunities, especially from the diocese and local school network. This helps them flourish as individuals. During a period of change at the school staff have been highly effective in sustaining a culture of care and kindness. Within an ethos of collaboration, staff have been included in reviewing the school's vision. However, some staff do not feel personal validation or recognition in their contribution to school life.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils embrace a strong sense of shared ownership with school leaders in developing Stelling Minnis. A wide range of roles of responsibility empower pupils to have a voice and feel that they make a difference to the school. They were instrumental in the school's decision for pupils to spend more time in the outdoor area, for example. The vision is inspiring the school to reach out into the wider world. Effective partnerships have been established with the local community, including funding for mental health awareness training for staff. At other times pupils have partnered with the local church to deliver parcels of gifts to members of the community at times such as Harvest. This nurtures a spirit of generosity and kindness. Individually and collectively pupils have raised funds for charity, recognising their part in making a fair world for all. The farm school has a marked impact on pupils' ability to understand injustice, particularly in the natural world. A project on 'farm to fork' has raised awareness of the use of air miles to transport foods. As a result, apples will be used instead of oranges to make Christingles.

Religious Education

Leaders ensure that the RE curriculum is well balanced. A progressive enquiry-based approach allows pupils to build their knowledge and make connections between different world faiths and beliefs. Clear systems, such as detailed planning, are in place to help teachers know what pupils need to learn. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about RE and explain how it impacts their lives. Effective partnerships with local schools and the diocese have provided high-quality staff training in RE. This ensures they feel a growing confidence in teaching the subject and it continues to have a high priority. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the classwork, enjoying the more creative aspects of learning. The depth of their responses is limited at times by the lack of opportunity to reflect more deeply and develop their own worldview. However, pupils delight in discussion within RE. They are active listeners to each other's viewpoints and enjoy letting their light shine in the classroom.

Information

Address	Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis, Canterbury, Kent CT4 6DU		
Date	08 October 2025	URN	118681
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	75
Diocese	Canterbury		
Acting Headteacher	Rachel Buss		
Chair of Governors	Phil Reynolds		
Inspector	Elizabeth Pettersen		