

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Holmer Church of England Academy

Vision

‘Inspiring us all to create a better world,’ is rooted in Matthew 5:13-15, where Jesus calls His followers ‘the salt of the earth’ and ‘the light of the world.’ Pupils at the academy see salt as a symbol of the earth's flavour and goodness, essential for preserving it, just as they strive to preserve and nurture goodness in the world around them. They also view themselves as the light of the world, bringing hope and offering a brighter future to others.

Holmer Church of England Academy 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

- Holmer’s Christian vision has been carefully chosen to meet the needs of the school. It drives leaders’ decisions and actions. As a result, pupils and adults successfully ‘shine their light’ on the school community and beyond.
- The curriculum balances high expectations of academic success with character development and life skills. Impressive immersive experiences ensures religious education (RE) has a high profile in the school. This enables pupils to thrive and be prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Staff, pupils and families’ wellbeing is a high priority, providing effective care and love. The deep understanding of the vision and values drives support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Consequently, Holmer is a welcoming and respectful school community.
- Creative collective worship is a joyful reflection of the school’s Christian vision. It enables pupils to shine as individuals and supports everyone to live out the school’s values.
- Pupils are given a strong voice. They have many opportunities to discuss their beliefs and opinions. The school’s Christian vision and associated values provide them with the confidence to engage in courageous action to support the community and those in need.

Development Points

- Deepen learning opportunities that explore pupils’ understanding and promotion of justice. This is so that they are equipped to make further positive differences to their community and beyond.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision at Holmer drives committed leaders to ensure pupils and adults flourish. This is achieved by recognising and nurturing the unique qualities of those in the school community. Leaders understand the school's context, compassionately tending to the needs of pupils and adults. This shapes decision making and successful provision. The school community is inspired and driven to 'creating a better world'. Carefully selected parables alongside championed school values provide inspiration for actions and developments. This has a positive impact on learning and flourishing, as well as on the local community and beyond. Governors are engaged in school life in many ways, such as their regular visits for monitoring and evaluation. Their effective collaboration with school leaders ensures pupil voice and parent perceptions are at the forefront of their planning. Consequently, pupils and adults embrace the rich experiences that are provided. At the heart of this Church school, the vision transforms lives within the community for the better.

A tangible sense of unity, inspired by the vision, is evident at Holmer. Differences are recognised and celebrated throughout a wide range of learning experiences. As a result, pupils and staff feel included and valued as individuals. Parents cherish the school's commitment to ensuring all are treated well. In challenging times, leaders 'provide the light' for the school community to succeed. Effective individualised strategies are put in place to support pupils with SEND. Parents and carers are intrinsically involved in this process. As a result, pupils are enabled to celebrate 'marvellous moments' and fully flourish. Consequently, they successfully develop independence and make significant progress, both academically and socially. Staff recognise that the needs of the pupils are at the heart of the school, and they go 'above and beyond' for them. Wellbeing and mental health are a priority. Pupils are highly respectful of alternative views and consider their feelings in age-appropriate ways. This supports good mental health amongst their peers. Highly trained staff and well-planned strategies provide appropriate support where needed. Leaders' warmth and approachability are evident with welfare checks and hampers to families in need. Staff recognise their roles in the 'loving community' within the school that enhances their own wellbeing. As a result, they are also enabled to shine.

The school's Christian vision inspires all elements of collective worship. This integral part in the life of the school creates a successful sense of community and spiritual development. It is strategically placed at the start of each day to establish a welcoming, inclusive and inspirational environment. Leaders, including pupils, effectively shape and evaluate the worship experience. Staff and pupils significantly benefit from the space and time to engage and spiritually grow. Pupils' awareness of the world around them is impressive. As a result, they develop spiritually and morally, to form into respectful and well-rounded individuals. The school prayer meaningfully incorporates the vision and values. Pupils and adults are invited to consider key worship messages at the time and within their reflection journals. Frequent opportunities to share their own prayers further demonstrates the school's inclusive nature. 'Open The Book' sessions effectively add to the pupils' biblical understanding. Parental involvement and partnership is actively encouraged through regular invitations to worship and special services. This further develops positive relationships with pupil's families. This strong sense of a reflective school community results in adults' and pupils' successful spiritual flourishing.

Driven by the Christian vision, leaders have created an effective caring ethos at Holmer, centred around nurture and inclusion. Pupils and adults feel known and loved in this welcoming community. They are grateful that there is always someone to talk to about their feelings and worries, especially during difficult times. This culture of kindness extends beyond the walls of the school. Effective community engagement ensures that pupils interact well



both inside and outside of school. For example, pupils from service families are successfully nurtured with specialist provision that builds links well beyond the school itself. Playtime systems like 'peer mentors' help to resolve conflicts. They foster restorative conversations allowing pupils to move forward and forgive. Links with the local church are a significant strength, with a thriving chaplaincy that further enriches life at the school. Staff feel part of a supportive team that fosters their emotional wellbeing as well as their professional development. Consequently, pupils and adults flourish emotionally.

Inspired by the school's vision, pupils understand that whilst their actions might be small, they can have a significant impact. As the school focuses on achieving 'Global Goals', the eco committee leads positive change by participating in various environmental initiatives. This creates a culture where pupils contribute to their community and demonstrate responsibility. Similarly, the social justice committee demonstrates the importance of helping others by actively engaging in action. For example, the school sponsors a pupil overseas, who is now able to access an education that would otherwise be out of their reach. Pupils explain that these actions are inspired by the example of Jesus, who always helped others. Similarly, they champion the importance of being brave to stand up for others, which leads to a more fulfilling life for themselves. As a result, there is a culture of compassion, where all are cared for in this harmonious school community. Various fundraising activities are supported with regularity, for those less fortunate. However, pupils' understanding of justice beyond their school community is in its early stages of development. Leaders work tirelessly alongside governors to refine policies and practices. Continual evaluation and reflection shape the effective practices of the school. Consequently, pupils and adults are effectively embraced and guided through the challenges that they face.

Holmer's Christian vision drives the development of RE. Leaders ensure expert training and support from the local diocese are harnessed. This develops provision and expands the breadth of curriculum coverage. 'Big Questions' successfully foster critical thinking. Leaders thoroughly monitor and evaluate the subject accurately and make improvements accordingly. For example, rich experiences are scheduled to deepen pupils' understanding. The link with the Hira Foundation in Pakistan effectively contributes to a broad range of faiths and worldviews. As a result, pupils are confident to talk about differences with respect and conviction. Experienced practitioners have high expectations and ensure the inclusion of those with SEND. Pupils champion the importance of learning about world faiths and cultures. Additional links with alternative school's very different to Holmer, helps them to understand peers with a range of beliefs. Alongside this, they develop a sound understanding of Christianity as a global religion. Consequently, pupils are thoughtful and respectful of differences both locally and around the world.

Information

Address	Holmer Road, Hereford. HR4 9RX		
Date	5 December 2024	URN	137701
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	415
Diocese/District	Hereford		
Headteacher	Jayne Maund		
Chair of Governors	Samantha Lewis		
Inspector	David Scorer		
Address	Holmer Road, Hereford. HR4 9RX		