

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Thurgoland Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

#### Vision

To be and become your best self.

At Thurgoland Church of England Primary School, our Christian vision is rooted in the belief that every child and adult is uniquely created by God, with the potential to grow, flourish, and become their best self. Inspired by the Parable of the Mustard Seed, we value growth over time and nurture each individual with love, respect, and hope. Through a safe, joyful, and inclusive learning environment, we encourage the following characteristics for all children: love to learn, give it a go, show respect, aim high, be resilient. As team Thurgoland, we grow together in faith and community, learning to serve others and make the world a better place.

Thurgoland Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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

- The vision is the foundation upon which Thurgoland's work is based. It drives the decisions of leaders and the actions of the school community. It is a lived reality that enables pupils and adults to flourish.
- Relationships throughout the school are strong. High levels of respect and tolerance exist within a dignifying culture. As a result, people are welcomed, valued, and live well together.
- Collective worship is the beating heart of the school. Rooted in the Anglican tradition, it is shaped by the vision and provides opportunities for spiritual flourishing.
- The curriculum for religious education (RE) is structured effectively for the context of the school. It enables pupils to learn in depth about Christianity and a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.
- In line with the vision, the curriculum and extracurricular offer have been shaped to enable pupils to become their 'best self'. Those who are vulnerable or require additional support receive it. They are able to develop their own unique, God-given talents.

#### Development Points

- Develop an agreed shared language of spirituality that can be used consistently throughout the school. This is so that staff and pupils recognise, plan for, and articulate their own and others' spiritual experiences and thinking.
- Enhance opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to think deeply about how they can challenge injustice when they see it. This is to empower them to take action and make a positive difference.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

The vision at Thurgoland is the driving force in school life. It has been carefully considered by leaders and governors in response to the needs of the community. The Parable of the Mustard Seed is used as a model and inspiration. It is an image that is revisited regularly. For example, each class grows bulbs, which pupils observe developing like a mustard seed. This reinforces understanding of growth and flourishing. The key phrase of the vision, 'be and become your best self,' permeates every aspect of school life. It is referred to regularly. Pupils respond to it through a school prayer accompanied by sign language. Leadership is shared to make the best use of skills and experience. Governors and leaders evaluate the effectiveness of the school and make astute decisions to enact change when it is needed. They undertake their roles with a sense of responsibility. The vision is lived out daily, enabling this community to flourish.

### Vision and Curriculum

Because of the vision, leaders have shaped a broad curriculum and extracurricular offer that enables pupils to 'be their best self'. Supported by pupil curriculum ambassadors, they regularly monitor whether it is having the intended effect and take action if it is not. Refinements are made so that the vision is a living reality. These include developing a wider range of activities beyond the school day. Skilled staff make adaptations in provision for those who are deemed to be vulnerable. This ensures that they participate in a way that is right for them. They feel part of 'team Thurgoland' and thrive as a result. Opportunities for spiritual development are threaded throughout the curriculum. Pupils value the times that they are given for reflecting and thinking deeply, which supports their spiritual growth. However, they are less confident in understanding their own and others' spirituality. They do not have the language to describe it or realise its importance in their development.

### Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship has a central place in school life. It is carefully planned and organised each day, and enables pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. It is highly inclusive, enabling those of religious faith and none to engage with readings, responses and prayer. Strong partnerships with the church and pupil leaders enhance the delivery of activities. For example, stories dramatised by the worship team enable pupils of all ages to engage with the message. They know that worship is invitational and value the variety of experiences that they receive. They participate joyfully and enthusiastically, and have a rich spiritual life as a result. Staff appreciate positive opportunities to reflect and be thankful. The work of the worship team is supported by the minister, who is a regular visitor. Together, they make changes which impact positively upon the worship lives of others. Reflection spaces are presented consistently in each class. They each contain a knitted cross that provides a tactile way for pupils to connect with their contemplation. Pop up prayer spaces are used well to enable individual responses to worship. This enhances spiritual development.

### Vision and School Culture

A warm welcome is extended to people who come through the gates at Thurgoland. Those who are new to the school are embraced and quickly become part of the community. As a result of the vision, pupils and adults know the importance of looking after and supporting others. They are treated with respect and dignity. This means that pupils play co-operatively during recreational activities. Effective strategies are in place to provide help for them in a timely and effective way. Some are led by pupils, who are empowered to take responsibility for activities throughout the day. Staff are trained to provide help to those who are experiencing difficult times. This ensures that they get the right support when it is needed. Pupils feel safe and valued, and live well together as a result. Parents are recognised as partners. External agencies work well with the school to further these partnerships. For example, an outside provider delivered a workshop about dealing with anxiety, and this made a difference to parents. Leaders and governors create a culture that promotes good mental health. Wellbeing is prioritised. A standing agenda item in meetings of 'things to smile about' enhances positivity. Effective



professional development ensures that there are clear career pathways for staff. They are effective in their roles and appreciate the trust that is placed in them.

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Through the vision, pupils are given opportunities to impact positively in the lives of others. They appreciate that they are part of a wider community. For example, they regularly interact with the local inter-generational lunch club. They learn about injustice through planned activities and are adept at tackling unfairness within the school. Peer mediators resolve any rare conflict at break times restoratively, in line with the school's Christian values. Fruitful partnerships and collaboration with Sheffield Diocese support the outworking of the vision. Pupils make a difference in the lives of others by choosing to support local charities. Enterprise initiatives are used to raise money for the nearby children's hospital. Pupils also recognise how they can address injustice beyond the school gates. The vision has helped them to develop the skills and attributes to be the agents for change in their world. For instance, some pupils picked litter in an area that 'no-one really cared about' close to their home. However, these actions are not consistently initiated independently by pupils throughout the school.

#### Religious Education

The RE curriculum is expertly and enthusiastically led, driven by a clear and purposeful vision. It has been developed in response to its unique context and meets the requirements of a Church school. Drawing from a range of resources and strategies, it is carefully sequenced to enable pupils to develop knowledge progressively. It has a place in the weekly timetable and retains a prominent profile. The plans that teachers create reflect a whole school approach to ensure that vocabulary is taught intentionally. Knowledge is mapped so that pupils develop their skills and understanding in an ordered way. This enables them to learn in depth about Christianity and a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. The curriculum offers opportunities to explore diversity within faith. Big questions are encountered to enable pupils to think deeply about complex concepts and respectfully challenge the views of others. Leaders monitor the impact of the RE curriculum in a range of ways and make improvements when needed. Staff access professional development, including that provided by the diocese. This means that they are skilled and confident in delivering the curriculum effectively.

## Information

Address	Halifax Road, Thurgoland, South Yorkshire S35 7AL		
Date	29 January 2026	URN	106626
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	202
Diocese	Sheffield		
Headteacher	Dale Jordan		
Chair of Governors	Laura Gregory-White		
Inspector	Rick Weights		