

Keeping On Track

School	The Deanery Church of England High School
Adviser	David Thorpe
Date of Visit	4th February 2026
School's theologically rooted Christian Vision	As a Church of England school, The Deanery Church of England High School has a very clear Christian vision: To provide an education for life , enabling all of our school community to flourish and live life to the full.
How does the Christian vision respond to the CONTEXT of the school?	On the school's website this is very clearly broken down into what it looks like and how it is achieved. No visitor to the website can be left in any doubt that The Deanery is a Christian school. A concise history of the school and how the school's badge represents its foundation is prominent on the website. The Deanery is a very popular and significantly over-subscribed school. It takes pupils in Year 7 from 50 different primary schools; this makes it a very diverse school. It is a highly inclusive school. The school is highly significant to the town itself due to its current high profile, its setting near the town centre and its history ... the school's Christian character plays a hugely significant part in this. Many former pupils go on to achieve huge successes in their chosen careers. Several former pupils are now members of staff at the school, whilst other former pupils hold a variety of roles in the leadership of local churches. In recent times the school has noticed a marked increase in the number of students with not just additional needs but complex additional needs. The school's vision is both historic and contemporary – best described as 'radically traditional'.
How does the school environment and digital presence celebrate its theologically rooted Christian vision?	The relatively new building, with the chapel at the centre is an excellent, though unsaid, parable of the school being Godcentric. Crosses are prominently placed around the school building and in every classroom. These act as constant reminders that God is involved in every aspect of school life. The website 'sings' about the school's unashamedly Christian distinctiveness. The school uses social media to good effect in celebrating how the vision of 'life in all its fullness' is achieved by the students. The recent visit by the Bishop of Wigan (Liverpool) had a high profile on social media. This will have been read by people with no links to the school who cannot but help be impressed with how the school is encouraging its students to ask high level and deep questions.

<p>To what extent have the area/s for improvement from the previous SIAMS inspection been addressed?</p>	<p>As the school has made good progress since the previous SIAMS inspection (January 2021) the issues have either been fully addressed or are more long term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students now have a much clearer and stronger voice to identify and challenge injustice that they see. • The school is naturally sharing outstanding practice in being transformative with many agencies, not just other schools but also with their close work with Church Wigan and other local churches. There is a growing positivity around the town, this is a result of some of the excellent work being undertaken by the school in a borough wide sense. • The discussion around 6th form RE provision, and what this may look like, is a healthy one and will be informed by the revised Statement of Entitlement for RE and other diocesan high schools with Key Stage 5 provision.
<p>How is the school's theologically rooted Christian vision enabling pupils to flourish?</p>	<p>Both students and staff are given abundant opportunities to flourish. They relish the chances that they are given to succeed in many walks of life not just the academic. The school confidently but sensitively educates the whole child; this comes about as a result of living out their vision. Academic results are important. Under the scripture of 'life in all its fullness' students are encouraged to do their best in all walks of life. Exam results are important to the school, but school also acknowledges that they are not the only measure of a young person. Their character is developed so that they can demonstrate tremendous civic leadership. Students understand the world that they are growing up in very well, they know what, in society needs addressing and they are confident in their own thinking. Year 7 students are taken through The Alpha course. This gives them permission to question their own thinking and beliefs and to spiritually grow. Staffing decisions, driven by the vision, ensures that the school has a full-time chaplain. The chaplain has a very positive impact in many areas of school life and is a great support to all staff in the school. RE is a core subject and is taught by a team of specialist teachers who all have a passion for both the subject and the school. Their high expectations and consistent approach lead to rising standards in the subject at GCSE level and a small but growing number of students choosing to study at A Level. The subject is exceptionally well led.</p>
<p>How is the school's theologically rooted Christian vision enabling adults to flourish [staff, governors and parents]?</p>	<p>Staff commitment to the vision enables them to let their own light shine. This is supported by leaders through focused CPD which enables them to flourish as professionals. Well-being is key with staff working as a cohesive team, supporting each other. The vision and Christian ethos of The Deanery Church of England High School enable staff to flourish spiritually. Leaders go above and beyond to support families through difficult times. Parents are supported to access appropriate support by the two dedicated pastoral support staff. Relationships with the local churches are of the highest standard and are mutually beneficial. Governors know the school well because they are out and about in school regularly undertaking their monitoring role. They are kept well-informed about the school's progress</p>

Agreed current strengths:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision is the driver for all that the school does. It is lived out daily by the young people and staff and supports flourishing of the whole school, and wider, community. • In RE there is a rich, well sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum, which is well-designed and ambitious, and is bespoke to the school. Essential knowledge that pupils learn is carefully chosen. Standards are high. • Collective worship is inclusive and invitational; it is central to school life and is varied in its approach. Excellent use of local church buildings clearly cements the Christian nature of the school in the wider community. • Leadership of the school is of the highest quality, and the clarity of the leaders' vision is instrumental in helping the school to be so successful and popular.
Agreed areas for development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student involvement in shaping, leading and evaluating worship. • Continue the conversation about Core RE provision in Key Stage 5, possibly in conjunction with other Church of England high schools.
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