



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

### Wraxall Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Address Bristol Road, Wraxall, Bristol, BS48 1LB

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

**Overall grade** **Good**

**The impact of collective worship** **Good**

**The effectiveness of religious education (RE)** **Good**

#### School's vision

Picture a school, surrounded by nature, where children are inspired through enriching and inclusive experiences. Nurtured to be the best they can be. In demonstrating our values, the children are 'seeds sown in good soil' Mark 4:20, achieving amazing things throughout their lives. Developing a better, more compassionate future for all.

#### Key findings

- The distinctively Christian vision and associated values, closely matched to the school's context and locality, are understood by all members of the community. These shape all aspects of the school's work.
- The unswerving passion and drive of the headteacher, actively supported by the governing body and the Trust, ensures that the vision and associated values remain the foundation of the school.
- The sense of community, enhanced by well-established links with the church, is tangible and results in pupils instinctively supporting and caring for one another.
- Times of reflection are built into collective worship, which is invitational, inclusive and enjoyed by pupils. Opportunities for spiritual development are not consistently embedded across the school and the impact on flourishing is therefore limited.
- Religious education (RE) has a high priority in the curriculum. It is systematically planned and taught well. The impact of provision in RE is not robustly evaluated meaning leaders are unclear on how well pupils progress over time in the subject.

#### Areas for development

- Clarify the school's shared definition of spirituality to ensure consistency of understanding and approach, promoting further opportunities for all to flourish spiritually.
- Enhance and embed opportunities for adult led and child-initiated reflection and prayer, to support pupils in developing their awareness of self and others.
- Further develop systems for evaluating the impact of the RE curriculum on pupil progress so that leaders know how well pupils are progressing in the subject over time.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### Inspection findings

The Christian vision, securely rooted in theology, is pivotal to everyday life at Wraxall School. It has been carefully shaped and developed by all members of the school community to fit the unique context and locality of the school. The Parable of the Sower forms the foundation of the vision, reflecting well the beautiful countryside surrounding the school in this small rural community. Pupils talk confidently about themselves as seeds, nurtured within the 'good soil' to be able to grow and flourish. Challenges that pupils and adults may face are likened to the thorns in the parable that everyone works together to overcome. The dedicated headteacher, well-supported by active governors and the Trust, ensures that the vision remains the heart of the school's work. She, personally, has high aspirations for all pupils at the school and is unswerving in her determination to enable them to 'be the best they can be'.

The partnership between the school and the church is mutually highly valued. The church is described by many as 'part of the school' reflecting its centrality. Many have a visual reminder of this closeness as they walk through the church grounds on the journey to school. Pupils are welcomed to the church building regularly for RE lessons and special acts of worship. These are well-supported by clergy and members of the congregation. The school engages actively with the Diocese, and staff and governors regularly attend diocesan training. Leaders can evidence how this has enhanced the distinctive Christian character of the school. School leaders routinely evaluate the effectiveness of the school as a church school. Their robust monitoring, evaluation and reflection results in ongoing improvements. For example, the ethos committee has been developed to include pupil members. This followed identification that a stronger pupil voice would benefit the ongoing enhancement of the Christian character of the school.

The curriculum is designed around the vision, building in regular opportunities for pupils to learn outdoors in the environment on which it is based. Activities to motivate and widen pupils' aspirations are routinely built into the curriculum, such as skiing and climbing lessons for older pupils. Parents recognise these opportunities as the school 'going the extra mile' to achieve the best for their children. Throughout the pandemic, the needs of each individual were considered. Bespoke learning packages ensured that, regardless of need or challenges being faced, all pupils were enabled to flourish during periods of school closure. The approach is the same when children are in school. Teachers and leaders know pupils well and respond appropriately to additional needs and barriers individuals may face. Learning is tailored accordingly to ensure that all can flourish. Pupils feel well supported by their teachers and this feeling is shared by parents. One parent commented on how quickly the school noticed and responded when their child was struggling to cope during lockdown.

Pupils enjoy RE. They demonstrate a developing understanding of the beliefs and traditions of a variety of world faiths. They show respect when discussing these with one another. Older pupils are confident when exploring big questions and listen to one another respectfully, epitomising the school's values. The curriculum is well-planned and balanced reflecting the vision of aspiring to achieve the best for all. Leaders, however, are unclear on the progress pupils make over time in RE.

Maintaining mutually supportive relationships between all members of the community is key at this school. Staff talk of support received professionally and personally and parents say that 'nothing is ever too much trouble'. All members of the school community feel listened to and report a strong sense of 'family' which is firmly attributed to the vision. Staff report that their well-being is a high priority. Having a designated staff member in place who is responsible for mental health and well-being illustrates the importance placed on this area. Everyone considers themselves to have a key role and feels part of what the school is aspiring to through its vision. Pupils are passionate about supporting others. Many pupils have initiated their own fundraising campaigns in aid of causes close to their hearts. They relate this work to the vision; 'helping others to grow' and their key 'umbrella' value of compassion. These efforts are celebrated and nurtured by adults in school. Behaviour is good, also attributed to the vision. Pupils respond well to the 'behaviour for growth'

system in place which rewards pupils with seeds for demonstrating the school values. They talk enthusiastically about watching their seeds grow at home representing the values they are living by. The school community is referred to as a 'family' by many. This is evident in the instinctive way that pupils care for and support one another.

Inclusion is central to the vision at this school. Everyone is welcomed and feels valued regardless of their background, faith or ability. This comes naturally to pupils who talk about 'everyone being special and important'. As a predominantly monocultural community, leaders make it a priority to develop pupils' understanding of the diversity around us. For example, leaders carefully select books and resources and arrange visits to celebrate different cultures and faiths.

Acts of daily worship are carefully planned and reflect the school's vision and associated values. Pupils enjoy worship and sing with exuberance. Pupils confidently participate in worship, including through drama and leading the school in prayer. All show respect during times of reflection and prayer. Pupils have a developing understanding of the purpose of prayer although it is not something they talk of using in their personal lives. They have a developing understanding of the Christian belief of the Trinity and can articulate the reasons that Christians share in the Eucharist. Pupils talk confidently about how worship helps them to learn more about their values. They value the opportunity to be together again following the pandemic restrictions. Leaders ensured that collective worship continued when learning remotely maintaining its centrality to school life. Opportunities for stillness, reflection and prayer are routinely built into acts of worship. Similar opportunities are not, however, utilised consistently across the curriculum or throughout the school day. Pupils are unclear about how and when they are able to use designated reflection areas around school. This limits opportunities for spiritual development and for pupils to deepen their own personal spirituality.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

RE has a high priority within the curriculum. Planning is thorough, creative and well sequenced, and teaching is good resulting in pupils remembering some key learning. Teaching and learning in RE is monitored by school leaders. This has brought about improvements such as extending opportunities for whole school RE learning across the school year. However, leaders do not have clear systems in place to measure how pupils progress over time. Appropriate support is provided to ensure those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to engage in the learning.

### Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	14 March 2022	URN	146004
Date of previous inspection	7 May 2015		
School status	Voluntary aided primary school	NOR	77
Name of MAT/Federation	Lighthouse Schools Partnership		
Diocese	Bath & Wells		
Headteacher	Amy Townsend		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	The headteacher leads two small schools within the Lighthouse Schools Partnership.		
Inspector's name	Anna Willcox	No.	915