

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

## St Margaret's Church of England VA Primary School

Address School Close, Tintinhull, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8PX

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)**

**Requires Improvement**

### School's vision

'We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us' Philippians 4:13

We are incredibly proud to belong to a Christian school. The distinctive Christian vision underpins everything we do. Knowing that Christ is here with us to strengthen us, means that we have high aspirations and expectations. He inspires us to live by our Christian values and to promote them wherever we are.

Our dreams are big and with Christ by our side we can make them come true.

### Key findings

- School leaders, including governors, can articulate the school vision and are beginning to use this to drive discussions and decisions. However, governors do not yet have a rigorous approach to monitoring the impact of the vision.
- Leaders have implemented a holistic curriculum that ensures the development of the whole child. Whilst there are some opportunities for spiritual development, these are not yet deliberately planned.
- Pupils demonstrate an enjoyment of learning in Religious Education (RE). However, planning lacks opportunity for deep enquiry and understanding the big story of the Bible.
- Pupils actively participate in collective worship. There are opportunities for pupils to flourish spiritually, although it is less clear how worship supports the spiritual flourishing of staff.
- There is a demonstrable culture of inclusivity where children and staff are well cared for and relationships with parents and the community are strong.

### Areas for development

- Determine the aim of the RE curriculum and ensure high quality implementation that enables progress and flourishing of pupils.
- Governors to develop a more rigorous approach to monitoring the impact of the school vision.
- Deliberately plan deep reflective opportunities for pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.

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 school's Christian vision is supported by a biblical text. The chosen Bible verse is articulated by leaders, including governors. The inclusive narrative shared by school leaders indicates how all members of the school community can engage with the vision. School staff, parents and pupils talk positively about the school vision and explain, through examples and description, what it means to them individually. Pupils talk about the vision and express with confidence how this helps to develop qualities such as perseverance, furthermore staff recognise how the school vision equips pupils with resilience and strength in their learning. School leaders are keen for the depth of the school vision to be fully lived out in school life and are beginning to use the vision to shape discussion and decisions. This is exemplified by the current review of the behaviour policy and the ambition to progress this to a relationship focused policy.

The leadership of the school during the pandemic was highly praised by staff and parents. These groups describe the approach as rooted in the desire to strengthen learning and families. Governors are ambitious, enthusiastic and eager to develop themselves and the school, speaking positively of the impact of recent continuing professional development with a diocesan adviser. Governors allocate time to reflect on how strategic discussions impact on the pupils. However, this time is not vision focused and governors do not have a rigorous approach to monitoring the impact of the vision.

School leaders place high regard on developing every child holistically. They have reviewed and thoughtfully developed the teaching structure of the school day to better equip pupils with key knowledge and skills in English and maths. This decision was rooted in the ambition for high aspiration and expectation of all pupils and recognises the unique circumstances and context of the school. The school curriculum is further enhanced through a forest school programme. A broad range of achievements are celebrated; academic apples and spiritual leaves are awarded to promote academic learning and the flourishing of the whole child. Pupils can identify the importance of prayer and describe an active prayer life in the school with a dedicated space to pause and reflect. Collective worship offers further opportunity for spiritual development; however these are not deliberately planned. This results in a lack of intentional and rich spiritual opportunities across the curriculum.

The strong inclusive culture of the school is a demonstrable strength. It embraces difference and the unique context of the school. Parents speak highly of the impact provision has had on their children and families. The school has passionate staff and effective systems in place for the early identification of issues connected to mental health and wellbeing, the 'handle with care' email warning system is a notable feature. Personalised provision for pupils is promptly implemented and rooted in a desire to holistically strengthen pupils. The strong pastoral approach is extended to supporting staff. Staff identified the sense of togetherness and community that enabled them to flourish personally and professionally through pandemic restrictions. Staff recognise the school leaders have been central to establishing this culture.

Through the school council, pupils are advocates for change, have an active voice and have implemented alterations to the school playground environment. The school actively supports a range of charities and pupils are involved in the planning and raising of funds for identified causes. There is a clear commitment by school leaders to build a strong sense of community. The school has established a wide range of partnerships and has placed itself in the centre of village life, actively engaging in a wide range of projects. The school has effective links with the parish church through a licensed lay minister who enthusiastically supports collective worship. Relationships within the school are good. The school is a happy and positive place. Pupils demonstrate kindness, friendship and support to each other whilst playing outdoors.

Pupils enjoy collective worship, and they are involved in monitoring, evaluating and supporting the planning of collective worship. An active group of children are further involved in planning and leading collective worship through their attendance at the school led extracurricular club 'Fun Church'. The leader for collective worship plans all daily acts of worship with care and thought to ensure these reflect the Anglican foundation of the school. Staff new to working in a church school are supported in leading collective worship at the time of induction. The planned collective worship is well structured and enables time for pupils to engage on a theme and reflect. Parents speak positively about worship and identified how the remote worship videos used during the pandemic created conversation in families at home. The leader for collective worship is passionate about ensuring worship is inclusive and invitational and utilises several resources to engage pupils through images, video and song. Collective worship provides opportunities for the spiritual flourishing of pupils, however it is less clear how worship supports the spiritual flourishing of staff.

Pupils demonstrate an enjoyment of RE and can talk about some aspects of their learning, although pupils do not recall a depth of knowledge which reflects the planned learning. Pupils engage with Bible stories in RE but have a limited understanding of the Bible as a big story. The RE curriculum ensures that pupils develop knowledge and understanding of major world religions. Pupils enjoy the creative approaches to learning in RE and identify RE as a safe space for discussion and debate, yet there are limited opportunities for pupils to write at length and depth in RE using age appropriate religious vocabulary. RE is planned using focus questions however these are not consistently evidenced in learning activities which limits the pupils' ability to apply enquiry, critical analysis and interpretation skills to their learning. Curriculum planning in RE evidences a balanced approach, but this is not consistently demonstrated in learning or reflected in the methods used to assess RE which generally focus on knowledge. The RE curriculum does not offer a deep, rich and high-quality sequential programme.



#### The effectiveness of RE is

#### Requires Improvement

The RE curriculum lacks depth and richness to enable all pupils to flourish. The teaching of RE is not consistently good and the subject is not yet rooted in deep enquiry. Therefore, pupils have limited opportunity to explore and develop critical skills and important religious language. As a result, progress is not widely evident in floorbooks and pupils do not confidently communicate a range of accurate religious knowledge.

### Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	20 June 2022	URN	123855
Date of previous inspection	17 June 2015		
School status	Voluntary Aided	NOR	80
Diocese	Bath and Wells		
Headteacher	Hayley Robinson		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above the national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages.		
Inspector's name	Steve Cowdery	No.	C1902