

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Botolph's Church of England VC Primary School, Botesdale	
Address	Back Hills, Botesdale, IP22 1DW
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

School's vision
<p>Based on 1 Corinthians 12:14</p> <p>Teamwork is the key to living life in harmony, so that we can do God's will. Through our vision, we aim to develop well-rounded individuals who experience a range of learning opportunities across a broad and balanced curriculum. We support and care for everyone to be safe and successful.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders have recently reviewed their Christian vision which is underpinned by biblical teaching. This drives the actions of the school. Governor monitoring of spiritual development, collective worship and religious education is underdeveloped. • The nurturing culture of the school ensures that the well being of the whole community is a priority for school leaders. Pupils and staff are heartened to be the best they can be through support , encouraging perseverance and celebrating achievement. • The religious education (RE) curriculum is well managed by the curriculum leader. Pupils value the creative opportunities the subject provides. They are knowledgeable, curious and confident learners of RE. • Local church community partnerships support the school in its provision for collective worship . Pupils lack opportunities to engage in planning, leading and evaluating of collective worship in ways that lead to spiritual growth. • Pupils are knowledgeable and passionate about environmental concerns. However opportunities to make a difference as they learn about issues of inequality and injustice in God's world are more limited.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen pupils' spiritual development through greater opportunities to lead, plan and evaluate collective worship and to better use reflection spaces. • Strengthen pupils' understanding of courageous advocacy and social action enabling them to make a positive difference beyond charitable fund raising. • For leaders to establish a clear definition and understanding of spirituality. This will enable them to better monitor its impact on pupils.

Inspection findings

St Botolph's is a warm, welcoming and inclusive school where pupils and their families are well known and cared for. Led by an energetic headteacher, the newly reviewed biblical based Christian vision drives the school's actions. As a result pupils, families and adults genuinely feel valued and respected. The school enjoys very supportive relationships with the parish church and the local free church. The school community chose the values of friendship, courage, respect, forgiveness, truthfulness and thankfulness. Pupils are able to provide examples of when they have demonstrated them or noted them in others. Governors are a regular supportive presence in school during governor days and at parents' evenings. However their monitoring role is yet to be fully developed.

The curriculum and a range of extra curricular activities, including the arts and sport help to prepare all pupils for life. Curriculum planning allows opportunities for pupils to be curious and to pose and answer big questions. Pupils say asking big questions gives them an opportunity to acknowledge the opinions of others and to disagree respectfully. School leaders demonstrate a high level commitment to supporting the vulnerable and vulnerability is not a barrier to participation. Great care is taken to know individuals so that appropriate provision can be put in place enabling them to flourish. Leaders make decisions to allocate sufficient funding to support pupils when necessary. When it is appropriate families are signposted to support services and partnerships with outside agencies such as the Early Help Hub and the Benjamin Foundation. This contributes to the flourishing of all. The working out of the vision through adjustments and flexible arrangements ensure pupils are all fully included. Moral, social and cultural elements of the curriculum are clear and visible in both RE and collective worship. This is also evident in personal, social and health education. However opportunities that lead to pupils overtly exploring spiritual development are less explicit and distinctive. Reflective spaces are to be found in shared classroom spaces. The impact of these spaces on individual spiritual growth is unclear,

As advocates for change, past pupil cohorts championed the need to move to a more sustainable heating system. Encouraged by the vision and supported by school leaders this is now moving to fruition with the final phase installation of air source heating pumps. Led by the Christian vision the present pupils cohort are given opportunities to put forward their views. They know their voice makes a difference to school life. School council members are proud of money raised for charity and understand the importance of supporting 'good causes'. Opportunities current pupils have to engage in social action such as challenging poverty and injustice is less clear.

The vision creates an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect. Forgiveness and reconciliation is seen as an important part of the behaviour process. Staff enjoy working at St Botolph's and model the value of friendship and care for one another. They are supportive to new colleagues and sensitive to the needs of others. Senior leaders are conscious that all staff have a healthy work-life balance. Mental health training to support children and adults is being undertaken enabling pupils and adults to feel confident about expressing their views and concerns. A positive relationship between parents and school is a key feature of school life. Parents are grateful for the care staff show to their children and accessibility is important to them. Parents speak well of the school, some citing its strong church ethos and values as a reason for their school of choice. They praise the school's caring, nurturing environment and the values it instills in their children.

Collective worship takes place daily. Local clergy regularly lead worship and support its delivery each Friday. This contributes to the pupils' greater knowledge and understanding of Christian belief. Pupils particularly value the worship led by Open The Book and Gen-R-8.

During the rest of the week there are opportunities to share in the school's Christian values and their relevance to the teachings of Jesus. Pupils are invited to participate, take part in prayer and reflect in moments of stillness. However opportunities to use worship, personal prayer and reflection as an aid to spiritual growth are limited. At present there is no planned sequential plan for the content of collective worship. Pupils do not as yet engage in planning, monitoring and evaluating worship. Evaluation and monitoring of the impact of collective worship by leaders is yet to be developed.

Links with the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich are strong and appreciated. The RE leader is able to ask, and receives, resources required and she participates in RE training from the local Diocese. The Diocesan adviser for RE has also delivered whole school training to staff. The school follows the Suffolk agreed Emmanuel Project as its RE syllabus. The three strands of human science, theology and philosophy are intertwined through its themes. Pupils enjoy their RE learning,. They are curious and intrigued about world faiths and want to better understand and respect the beliefs and practices of others. One pupil expressed the view that as they grow older it gives an understanding and tolerance towards other people. The pupils are articulate in expressing their views and opinions. Some pupils showed an understanding of a Trinitarian God. They also have an understanding of Christianity as a global faith, though are less certain of the part Anglicanism plays. Creative RE days are much enjoyed by the pupils who are enthusiastic about them. Parents say the children are keen to talk at home about the learning and activities they undertake on these occasions.

St Botolph's is a place of encouragement and teamwork where all are valued as children of God. As a result pupils and adults feel that together they can achieve success.

Information			
School	St Botolph's Church of England VC Primary School, Botesdale	Inspection date	20 January 2023
URN	124758	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich	Pupils on roll	180
Headteacher	Mark Cobbold		
Chair of Governors	Susan Wright		
Inspector	Teresa Osborne	No.	2130