

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Swainswick Church of England Primary School	
Address	Innox Lane, Upper Swainswick, Bath, BA1 8DB
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	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
<p>Our vision for Swainswick is a school where all children are known and valued as unique individuals, where differences are respected and celebrated. With community and childhood at the heart, our school nurtures kindness and imagination. Through high expectations and challenge, we inspire the children to reach their fullest potential.</p> <p>'Let your light shine' Matthew 5:16</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of Swainswick's unshakable outward looking ethos, all members of the school family serve as 'shining lights' far beyond their local community. This encapsulates the distinctively Christian vision which is tangibly the very heartbeat of the whole school community. • The headteacher is a dedicated, passionate, spiritual leader. As a result, the language of spirituality is commonplace and forms part of the rhythm of the school. • Caring for one other with kindness and love is overwhelmingly natural for all members of the school community. This is deeply rooted in the school's culture and ethos. • Religious education (RE) has a high profile within the school and pupils are given quality time to reflect on and discuss world views and beliefs. Effective systems for assessment in the subject are in the early stages of development. • Times of collective worship are deeply sacred and pupils enjoy opportunities to routinely plan and lead these special occasions.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the systems for assessment in RE to ensure they further enhance pupils' learning.



Inspection findings

The bedrock of Swainswick School's ethos and culture is the distinctively Christian vision, carefully crafted involving all members of the school family. Rooted in Matthew 5:16, all members of the community recognise the school as a 'beacon of light on a hill'. They talk about themselves as shining lights bringing about positive change; not just for themselves, but the world around them. The vision is lived daily and revisited regularly to ensure momentum is maintained. Poignant times of reflection, such as 'Vision Days' when the school community comes together to review the vision and talk about what it means to them, help maintain its centrality.

The school is transformational in the way it is entirely outward looking and determined to make a difference. Tackling climate change, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination are some of the key priorities and pupils have the knowledge and drive to make positive changes. Pupils themselves lead this work through the 'Future Fridays' group. For example, they have been successful in establishing a 20 miles per hour speed limit around the school. They are also actively campaigning, alongside members of parliament and local authority representatives, for an electric bus to transport them to school. Pupils actively nominate causes close to their hearts to support through a wide range of fund-raising activities. This impassioned global responsibility work enables pupils to illuminate way beyond their immediate locality. The unwaveringly dedicated headteacher's personal vision, of pupils realising 'the power they have as lights in the world', drives this endeavour.

All members of the school community describe Swainswick as a family where everyone knows each other, not just their names. Extremely positive, caring relationships are palpable. The deeply loving culture results in a strong sense of inclusion where everyone is accepted and cherished for being themselves. Parents say pupils 'are celebrated for who they are and their own uniqueness'. Staff are well-supported and feel valued as unique individuals. They describe being 'welcomed with open arms' and 'able to be themselves'.

Developing pupils' own interests and uniqueness is central to the school's vision. Their confidence is carefully nurtured to enable them to follow their dreams and ambitions. Leaders ensure they provide strategically planned opportunities to 'shine their light' beyond their immediate small, rural locality. For example, they have opportunities to transfer their performance skills from their classroom stages, to local churches, to public performance spaces. This results in high levels of confidence and ambition for the future. Parents talk animatedly about how pupils' confidence has increased tenfold since joining Swainswick.

The school's curriculum is carefully crafted, reflecting the vision, to enable all pupils to achieve their potential. The entirely child-centred approach nurtures individuality and uniqueness. The curriculum is fully inclusive enabling all pupils, including those with additional needs, to flourish holistically. There is a clear definition of spirituality, understood and embraced by all. Opportunities for pupil development in this area are strategically planned across the curriculum. This results in spirituality being part of the natural rhythm of the school. A vast range of enrichment activities, planned in response to pupil's interests, form a key part of wider curriculum planning. These further reflect the vision of nurturing each individual to achieve their potential.

Deeply spiritual, moving acts of collective worship inspire and motivate pupils to action. Poignant times of stillness and reflection are key, providing opportunities for personal spiritual development. The church is used weekly for worship, strengthening this seamless partnership. Collective worship is regularly held outside in the stunning countryside surrounding the school, further enhancing these special times. Pupils relish opportunities to



plan and take part in elements of collective worship and they do so with great confidence, reflecting the vision. Pupils regularly write prayers and share these with the whole school during worship. Pupils have a good understanding of the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They describe God as ‘one God in three forms’. Local clergy are heavily involved in planning and leading acts of worship. These carefully link Bible stories to the school’s values, developing pupils’ understanding of how they are distinctively Christian.

School leaders are well supported by committed governors and the multi-academy trust. Governors monitor the Christian distinctiveness of the school and this work shapes strategic planning for further development. The trust prioritises the centrality of the Christian vision and holds the school to account for ongoing development in this area. Training is provided to continuously develop all staff. Leaders are given opportunities to share exemplary practice with other schools across the trust, reflecting the vision of being a ‘beacon of light on a hill’. Leaders foster an extensive range of carefully chosen partnerships to enrich the vision in action. The partnership with the local church and wider parish is well-established. The church and school plan regular joint events and consider each other as part of the same family. This enhances the distinctive Christian character of the school.

Ongoing improvements in RE ensure the subject has a high profile. Pupils enjoy RE and take great pride in their work. They have a clear understanding of Christianity as a global faith and a deepening understanding of other world religions. For example, pupils talk confidently about the beliefs and practices of Hindus during the festival of Holi. RE lessons are creative and allow pupils quality space and time to reflect on their own beliefs and opinions. A key part of RE learning is spending time considering feelings and making links across the curriculum and more widely. Staff question pupils skillfully enabling them to think at a deeper level. The RE curriculum is well-planned and continuously under review to ensure it best meets the needs of all learners. There are new systems in place for assessing progress in RE. These are used by all teachers across the school and are starting to inform future teaching and learning in the subject.

Being part of this special school community changes lives and equips people to be ‘beacons of light’ well beyond their time there. This is perfectly encapsulated by the words of one child which became part of the school’s vision: ‘The world is big and we are small; but we can do anything, anything at all.’

Information			
School	Swainswick Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	9 March 2023
URN	147555	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Bath & Wells	Pupils on roll	80
MAT/Federation	BWMAT (Bath Hub)		
Headteacher	Grant Swarbrooke		
Chair of Governors	Shannon Carr-Shand		
Inspector	Anna Willcox	No.	915