



DRAFT REPORT

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Cuthbert's Church of England Junior School, Wells	
Address	Keward Avenue, Wells, BA5 1TS
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
That together we may give our children roots to grow and wings to fly. Mark 4.30-32 Parable of the Mustard Seed
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Cuthbert's Junior School is very welcoming and pupils thrive here. Love and nurture for pupils and adults flow from the school's recently revised vision which is lived out through Christian values. • Leaders and governors are committed and knowledgeable and show great determination in helping the school in its improvement journey. The governors are frequent visitors to the school. However, there is not enough systematic or rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the vision. • The school has strong links with its local community. Pupils are generous in their fundraising for the foodbank and other charities. They have not understood that they can be agents for change acting against injustice in the wider world. • The values of the school are encouraged strongly through collective worship. However, currently there are limited opportunities for pupils to be involved in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship which slows their spiritual development. • Religious education (RE) is well led, and children are gaining good knowledge through the revised RE curriculum which is kept under constant review. They enjoy their lessons which give them many opportunities to debate and think.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that leaders and governors systematically and rigorously monitor and evaluate the impact of the vision on the school so as to help its future development. • Extend the opportunities for pupils to be involved in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship. This, together with an agreed definition of spirituality by the staff, would enhance their spiritual development . It will allow them to more readily recognise the impact collective worship has on their lives. • Encourage pupils to think more deeply about injustice and global inequality so they may learn about the importance of being agents for change.

Inspection findings

The recently revised vision has cleverly integrated the desire for pupils to succeed with the attributes and beliefs of St Cuthbert. The vision is strongly underpinned by biblical teaching and even the youngest pupils can explain what it means and how it applies to them. The parents see the vision as being highly relevant to their children. Explicitly Christian values drive the vision. The environment is very colourful and vibrant with many displays showing how pupils apply the values and vision in their work. The words of the vision, although well-known, are more subtly displayed around the building, for example, on small paper doves which pupils have made incorporating their own prayers. Every pupil is well known to staff. At the end of the pandemic the school took huge pains to reintegrate pupils and to address their fears. A beautifully crafted 'quilt' linked to the vision involved everyone in the return to normality. The school builds their confidence and encourages them in their ambitions for the future. Pupils who find learning difficult are exceptionally well catered for through teaching which has been carefully adapted to suit their needs. In some cases, lives have been transformed. Additional teaching assistants support all pupils so that 'roots to grow' are well established. The governors have made deliberate strategic decisions to employ staff who can help and support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and consequently these pupils thrive and succeed. Good use has been made of outdoor spaces with the provision of additional equipment and staff. The gardening club has transformed the confidence and skills of some pupils with SEND who are now have leadership roles showing other pupils how to grow vegetables. The governors know the school well, but they have not yet formally evaluated the impact of their decisions or the impact of the new vision on the success of the school. Nor have the policies on the website been revised to incorporate the revised vision.

The caring nurture to enable pupils to develop the 'wings to fly' extends to the staff. Their mental health and wellbeing have been considered carefully by senior leaders and actions such as a 'mindfulness session' or a 'pamper day' or time being allocated to work on revision of the curriculum are appreciated highly. Staff comment on the ready availability of professional development to help them enhance their skills. The team spirit amongst all staff and leaders is exceptionally strong and all say that whatever happens in school there is always someone to whom you can turn for help. Staff describe it as 'a happy place to work'.

Pupils are enthusiastic, kind and caring towards one another. They show respect and tolerance to all. They help one another in the playground and celebrate achievements of other pupils, both in and outside of school. One of them Behaviour in the school is good. Pupils take responsibility for acting as members of the 'mini police force' during lunch times or working as playground leaders to set out equipment or resolve any petty squabbles. Pupils consider it their responsibility to help people within the wider community. They have raised funds for local foodbanks not only at Harvest but at Christmas. They also participate in local charity events. However, they do not understand the depth of injustice which exists in the world or that their voice can make a difference in the wider world. The school has links with a range of partners all of whom have made a good contribution to the school. The Diocese is very supportive and links with a local parish are being re-established after a vacancy.

Opportunities for spiritual development are planned for within the curriculum. Pupils like the opportunity to ask questions of meaning and to debate issues. Some staff point out moments of awe and mystery when the occasion arises. However, there is no shared definition of spirituality among the staff and interpretations vary. This inhibits pupils' spiritual development.

Collective worship is inclusive. It is focused on the school's values rather than the vision.

Pupils are familiar with visitors coming into school to lead worship and speak enthusiastically about the Open the Book Team who invite them to participate. They also enjoy listening and joining in with visitors who creatively act out the Bible stories, or the value being considered. They sing songs enthusiastically. They express particular fondness for the collective worship in classrooms when there is opportunity for stillness and reflection with their peers. Class based reflective spaces are used well. However, there is not enough opportunity for pupils to be involved in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship. Prayers are an important part of school life, being said in worship and at lunch time. Pupils know the school prayer, which they wrote for themselves, exceptionally well. They also enjoy visiting the local Anglican church for worship because here they are given the opportunity to participate more fully in planning and leading worship. They show some understanding of the of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, they are less certain about the seasons of the Church's year and currently there is little opportunity for them to learn about different worship styles. Pupils find it more difficult to explain the impact that collective worship has upon their lives. RE is well led and planned by a highly enthusiastic leader. Pupils say that they enjoy RE. It contributes well to the way they learn, develop and flourish. The RE curriculum has recently been revised to incorporate the Understanding Christianity resources with the locally agreed syllabus. The school recognises that the curriculum needs further work. It is wisely subject to ongoing revision based on the outcomes of teacher assessment. For example, it was recognised that the questions being used in Years 3 and 4 designed to make pupils think were too challenging and have now been refined. Pupils like learning about different world faiths and readily explain why this is important. Worldviews are also covered well. Visitors from different faiths and beliefs bring significant value to the teaching which is done by class teachers. However, pupils do not fully appreciate that Christianity is a worldwide religion.

St Cuthbert's Junior School nurtures all individuals and gives them the opportunity to 'grow and fly'. It has been on a journey and has yet some further steps to take, but it is developing well as a good church school.

Information			
School	St Cuthbert's Church of England Junior School, Wells	Inspection date	10 March 2023
URN	123777	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Bath & Wells	Pupils on roll	172
Headteacher	Helen Mullinger		
Chair of Governors	Phil Michael		
Inspector	Marcia Headon	No.	761