

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Crowcombe Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Crowcombe, Taunton, TA4 4AA

School vision

Together, Let us Love, Encourage, Achieve and Flourish.
We aim high through our Christian Values of Generosity, Optimism, Determination, Curiosity and Courage. 'And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some as are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the day approaching.' (Hebrews 10:24-25) Through this vision we model our school culture, values and ethos. Our school vision directs our work and enables the schools to live up to their foundations as church schools.

School strengths

- Leaders are passionate and ambitious, establishing a Christian vision which gives clear direction to improvements. A cohesive staff team see their responsibility of living out the vision so all see the difference it makes.
- A culture of high aspirations permeates all aspects of daily life. It raises expectations, grows self-esteem and resilience enabling all to flourish.
- Collective worship enables pupils to understand the significance of the vision in daily life. Pupils play a significant role in worship as leaders, planning and agreeing improvements.
- There is high-quality provision for music, the arts and forest school which enable pupils to recognise and grow their talents.
- The profile and impact of religious education (RE) is rising where new approaches are engaging, deepening their understanding. The quality of teaching and learning is at least good or better, enabling pupils to think at a deeper level.

Areas for development

- Extend and deepen pupils' understanding of core religious concepts and Christianity as a living faith, so pupils feel confident to articulate these and use these to make links with new areas of learning.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on themes raised in collective worship so they recognise and verbalise how these shape their thinking and actions.
- Ensure opportunities for spiritual flourishing are identified in curriculum planning and enable pupils to express their ideas in a variety of ways.

Inspection findings

Leaders bring energy and passion to the work of this Church school. Ambitious targets raise the impact it has for pupils, notably in RE and collective worship. Fundamental was agreeing a distinctive Christian vision which gives clear direction for improvements. This effectively addresses

the needs of the community. There is an emphasis on extending pupils' understanding of diversity, raising aspirations, ensuring that pupils' needs are met. Pupils talk with increasing confidence of the significance of the vision to their lives. This is nurtured by linking key terms in the vision to Christian values. Consequently, pupils see what difference the vision makes to daily life. Leaders' enthusiasm is inspiring, where they lead by example. A new staff team is dedicated to the vision and perceive their role in living it out. Members of staff feel valued, supported to grow their talents, developing leadership skills. Staff create trusting relationships with parents, involving them more fully in their child's learning. Monitoring and evaluation of the impact which the vision has is robustly undertaken. A plan identifies areas to review which governors use to identify foci for improvements. Involving the pupils' ethos team deepens the impact they make. This led to planning for collective worship having a stronger focus on Christian festivals, extending pupils' understanding.

Leaders are inspired by Jesus' teaching of seeing the potential in everyone. This enables pupils to be the best they can be. Ambitious leaders instigated a review of provision using experts to implement high-quality practice. Staff recognise those who require further support, leading to personalised strategies being put in place. This is making a difference for many pupils to access learning. Regular screening identifies pupils who require support for social and emotional development. Staff create specific programmes to nurture, so pupils feel valued. Mental health provision is most effective. Pupils are encouraged to recognize their emotions, developing strategies which help them to be calm. Peer support creates a strong inclusive culture, fulfilling the vision of encouraging one another.

The vision enthuses leaders to create a curriculum which enables each to become the best person they can be. Leaders point to biblical examples where people have discovered their God-given talents, making a difference for others. Learning experiences help pupils to understand their role in the world and the contributions they can make to the community. The school invests in offering high-quality experiences in music, arts and forest school. All pupils have opportunities to play a variety of instruments, culminating in a prestigious concert. A rich range of art experiences stimulate learning. The forest school is enhanced by visits to Exmoor bringing to life the beauty of God's world and caring for the planet. This inspires pupils to action, such as beach clean ups. Deepening pupils' understanding of diversity is a key focus. Residential visits to London and elsewhere enrich pupils' appreciation of difference. Pupils' awareness of global communities is growing. Woven throughout is a persuasive culture of aspiration which raises self-belief. Staff's high expectations are shared with pupils, who set their own goals, knowing the next steps in learning. Pupils grow in confidence, discover talents, where their successes are consistently celebrated. There are a range of opportunities to enrich pupils' spiritual flourishing. However, staff have only recently agreed their definition of spirituality, so experiences are not planned to develop their understanding. At present, pupils have limited opportunities to express their spiritual thinking and are not fully aware of its significance for them.

Leaders are fully committed to drawing on best practice to enable all to flourish. Partnership with the diocese brings invaluable support for leaders, notably in RE. A relationship with the churches has grown, enriching the variety of worship. These include sharing in joint celebrations which are highly valued by parents and the community.

Opportunities for pupils to explore injustice across the world are being woven into learning experiences. This is underpinned by an understanding of biblical figures who show God's compassion by reaching out to others. Exploring Fair Trade enables pupils to see how responses can be made. Developing pupils' leadership skills gives them a voice to share concerns. This is encouraging pupils to take independent action as agents for change. Growing examples include projects to protect local habitats and dog walking to raise funds for the Ukraine.

Being together as part of a family in two schools is central to the vision. Leaders draw on Jesus' teaching of how all can live together well. This creates a warm inclusive culture where all are valued. Staff model dignity and respect for all which pupils adopt. Where necessary Jesus' ideas on forgiveness enable mistakes to be overcome, so each can move on together. Clear expectations about behaviour have seen this improve. Older pupils recognise how the vision and Christian values shape thinking and actions.

Collective worship is inclusive, open to all to contribute with integrity and frequently inspiring. It is fundamental to deepening pupils' understanding of the vision and what this looks like, by progressively exploring Christian values. This enables all to perceive how values make a difference in so many situations. The vast majority of pupils want to become worship ambassadors and play an active role. Increasingly, they plan worship, suggesting themes to be developed. This led to exploring how to address anxiety. Governor monitoring led to a monthly celebration inviting the community, reflecting the vision of being together. Pupils appreciate time to be calm and reflect, contributing to their spiritual development. Many find prayer helpful to share thoughts with God. Class based worship enables pupils to discuss ideas in greater depth. There is a growing understanding of Christian festivals. Pupils of all faiths articulate that they enjoy collective worship, although they are not always confident to explain why. Collective worship plays a significant role in the daily life of the school.

Leaders have a robust plan which is raising the impact of RE. In conjunction with diocesan advisers, a new curriculum is established which progressively deepens pupils' knowledge. 'Understanding Christianity', an RE resource, is extending staff and pupils' knowledge of Christianity. As a result, pupils' understanding of core religious concepts is growing. However, their awareness of Christianity as a living faith is less well developed. Pupils respond to big questions with increasing confidence, drawing upon biblical stories, verbalizing ideas more succinctly. Pupils talk thoughtfully about worldviews, recognising the importance of belief and how this shapes lives. Leaders ensure that the Church of England expectations for RE are being met. Monitoring by the subject leader indicates gaps in knowledge which focused teaching is effectively addressing.

The quality of teaching in RE is at least good and there are examples of excellent practice. Staff use new approaches well and challenge pupils to think at greater depth and justify their thinking. Pupils have a thoughtful understanding of religious vocabulary which they use appropriately. Pupil progress is good, whilst support for disadvantaged pupils enables them to flourish and feel successful. Approaches to assessment are being refined to give greater clarity of what pupils understand. This leads to clear foci for improvements.

These inspection findings indicate that Crowcombe Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Information			
Inspection date	27 September 2023	URN	123830
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	49
Diocese	Bath & Wells		
MAT/Federation	Crowcombe & Stogumber Primary Federation		
Executive Headteacher	Kate Lewis		
Chair	Janis Dean		
Inspector	David Hatrey	No.	844

