

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

<b>Marden Vale Church of England Academy</b>	
Address	William Street, Calne, SN11 9BD

### School vision

‘With God, all things are possible.’ Matthew 19:26  
Zacchaeus realised that, with God, all things are possible.  
‘Zacchaeus changed his ways and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now, I give half of everything I have to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus said to him, "Today you have been saved."' Luke 19  
We work together to make all things possible with God's help. We use the story of Zacchaeus to help us understand that we can change for the better.

### School strengths

- There is a tangible sense that ‘with God, all things are possible’ within the whole community at Marden Vale. This Christian vision underpins the school’s work at all levels resulting in pupils and adults feeling empowered.
- The Christian vision shapes provision for pupils who are vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This enables all to flourish within a wholly inclusive community.
- Looking after one another with care and love is overwhelmingly natural for all members of the Marden Vale community. This is deeply rooted in the school’s culture and ethos.
- Worship is wholly invitational and inclusive enabling all to take part and flourish spiritually.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum provides regular opportunities for spiritual development. It is well-balanced with frequent time and space to explore big questions.

### Areas for development

- Fully embed the shared understanding of spiritual development across the school community. This is to enable pupils to confidently express how it helps them.
- Broaden pupils’ awareness of justice. Further empower them to take courageous action on both local and global issues close to their own hearts.
- Deeply embed pupils’ knowledge of a range of faiths. This is to develop their appreciation of diversity, as well as its influence on peoples' lives.

### Inspection findings

The strong sense that ‘with God, all things are possible’ is the key driver behind every element of the work at Marden Vale. This Christian vision is not only understood by the whole school community but it is also wholeheartedly believed. This creates an inclusive culture where there is a strong sense of acceptance. Differences are valued and celebrated here. Learning opportunities and experiences are routinely adapted and personalised so that they can be accessed by everyone. Pupils naturally



encourage one another and talk enthusiastically about the care they receive from school staff. Parents rightly echo this and say that ‘nothing is ever too much trouble’ for them. Support packages put in place by school leaders and the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust (DSAT) are valued. They enable staff to flourish. Leaders actively encourage colleagues to engage in ongoing professional development and empower them to pursue training they request themselves. Staff wellbeing is prioritised and they feel looked after and cared for. They take advantage of the emotional support on offer, including from specialist staff.

The story of Zacchaeus instils a common acceptance about the importance of forgiveness at the school. Pupils know that when things go wrong there is always the chance of a fresh start which they value. They have a clear appreciation of equity and have a firm belief that everyone should be treated fairly. Consequently, everyone routinely considers the feelings of others when faced with challenges. This further enhances the strong sense of inclusion. Pupils have an awareness of injustice and a drive to make a difference. They participate enthusiastically in fundraising activities. Small groups have started to lead on courageous action projects to have a positive impact in the world around them. For example, ensuring that local people who are less fortunate are able to have a present at Christmas. However, this work is not embedded across the school.

Learning experiences have been carefully designed to meet the needs of all pupils ensuring that everyone is enabled to flourish. Enrichment activities are routinely utilised to bring additional meaning to learning experiences. Staff adapt and personalise lessons for pupils with SEND giving them the best opportunity to flourish academically. This directly reflects the vision. For example, resource base pupils engaged in sensory activities developing their understanding of the gifts the wise men brought to Jesus. This carefully designed lesson helped them relate to the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, specifically ascertaining why they were special.

There is a shared approach to developing spirituality across the school. This is in the early stages of development. It centres around special times bringing about change or deep thinking. There are regular opportunities to engage in prayer, reflection and stillness throughout each day. This includes across the curriculum and during worship. For example, pupils share their deep thinking about the beliefs of others during RE lessons. Their actions show that these positively impact on them, although their ability to articulate this is less well developed.

Strong partnerships, including with DSAT and the church community, further enhance spiritual flourishing. The ‘Bridge Project’ provides an on-site chaplain who offers emotional and spiritual support to pupils, staff and families. This work is highly valued by all. It has assisted the school with forming close relationships with the wider community. Opportunities to participate in trust and diocesan events, such as iSingPop and the leavers’ service at Salisbury Cathedral, are prioritised. These experiences provide comfort through knowing they are not alone as part of a loving ‘wider family’ within the trust and diocese. This contributes further to pupils’ spiritual flourishing.

Collective worship is an integral part of the day, valued by all. It is appreciated as a time to be still, reflect and spend time together as a caring school ‘family’. Worship is wholly invitational and inclusive. Pupils of different faiths and none benefit from these meaningful times. Those with SEND are sensitively provided with the resources and support they need to be able to fully take part. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how, through worship, they learn more about the Christian values and what they mean to them. They know a variety of Bible stories and can draw learning points from them that they relate to their own lives. This develops their personal belief that ‘all things are possible’. Committed volunteers from the church community ‘Open the Book’ team lead the school regularly in worship. These times are valued by all, further deepening knowledge and understanding of Bible stories. Pupils relish opportunities to participate meaningfully in collective worship, from setting up to writing and leading their own prayers. Their confidence develops through these

opportunities that are open to all. The newly established 'GROW council' are passionate about the part they play in worship. However, their work is in the early stages of development.

School and DSAT leaders are influential in ensuring RE has a high profile at Marden Vale. The curriculum, based around 'big questions', provides opportunities for pupils to think deeply and flourish spiritually. Teaching through specialist resources gives them a good knowledge of key concepts, including incarnation and salvation. Pupils of all ages have an impressive grasp of the Christian belief that 'Jesus is God in human form'. 'Faith days' form a key part of the RE curriculum. They enable pupils to be immersed in world religions and cultures. Pupils are provided with hands-on experiences of a variety of beliefs and practices. This results in them being able to recall some key facts about a range of world faiths. However, their knowledge and understanding of these is not deep. As a result, pupils are not able to talk confidently about the impact religion has on peoples' lives. Those with SEND are well supported in RE enabling them to fully participate and make progress in lessons.

A committed team of governors and DSAT leaders provide ongoing support for the school. The Christian distinctiveness is routinely monitored although the robustness of this is variable. The school and trust work in close partnership with the diocese. The innovative, diocesan led 'Programme for Church School Flourishing' has promoted purposeful support and monitoring from DSAT. This brings about ongoing improvements. Through this practice, staff across the trust work closely together to share good practice and provide mutual support. Underpinning this is an unrelenting drive from all leaders that 'all things are possible'.

The inspection findings indicate that Marden Vale Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	20 November 2023	URN	141988
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	142
Diocese	Salisbury		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Louise Scrivens		
Chair	Rosemary Tong		
Inspector	Anna Willcox	No.	915