

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Parrett and Axe Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Mosterton, Beaminster, DT8 3JQ

School vision

At Parrett and Axe we firmly believe in “one education, many opportunities”.
Our core values of respect, kindness, equality and courage run through the whole of
our school community.

From our children’s first moments with us in Reception, as they discover enthusiasm for learning,
to their final days in Year 6, as they ready themselves for the next step in their education,
all that we do at Parrett and Axe focuses on every child becoming the best that they can be;
to truly fulfil their every potential. Well-being, happiness, success and collaboration are the
cornerstones of excellence in learning and our core purpose.

“Love your neighbour as yourself” (Luke 10 vs 27)

We are a Church of England School and are incredibly proud of our strong Christian ethos and we
encourage our children to follow this commandment through our core values.

School strengths

- Pupils’ understanding of the vision and associated Christian values is well developed permeating all aspects of daily life. They recognise the difference these make for them in various situations.
- The vision drives staff to meet the diverse needs of all. Ambitious leaders introduce new initiatives which make a significant impact for pupils.
- There is a pervasive culture of wellbeing effectively nurturing the mental health of all. Staff feel valued, live out the vision and flourish.
- A wide range of experiences enable pupils to discover and grow their talents. The vision stimulates an influential culture of high aspirations so pupils become the best they can be.
- Leaders are dedicated to the work of this Church school and use the vision to drive improvements. They lead by example. The vision creates a real sense of community and the importance of each individual.

Areas for development

- Ensure opportunities for spiritual flourishing are identified within the curriculum. This is to enable pupils to have the language to express the impact these experiences have for their thinking.
- Create a systematic approach to evaluating the impact which the Christian vision has on all aspects of being a Church school. Ensure all are involved in this process so this leads to ongoing focused improvements.
- Deepen pupils’ understanding of key religious concepts and specific vocabulary. This is to enable pupils to confidently articulate and use these to think at a deeper level.

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Inspection findings

Leaders established a Christian vision to raise the impact of this Church school and grow pupils' aspirations. This vision gives clear strategic direction to improvements. Pupils of all ages understand the significance of the vision through the parable of the Good Samaritan. They confidently identify where in the parable their four key Christian values are lived out. Pupils use the language of values throughout the day. Staff weave these throughout learning, so all recognise the diverse areas where the vision makes a difference. Pupils, of a religious faith or none, articulate where these influence their relationships, stating, 'it makes me a better person'. The vision effectively addresses the needs of the locality. It enthuses staff to reach out to meet the changing needs of families and nurture wellbeing. Leaders bring energy and relentless compassion to their work. They create a strong cohesive team who perceive their role as living out the Christian vision. Governors are fully committed to the school. However, there is no systematic plan which ensures all aspects of a Church school are evaluated to ensure impact and continuous improvement.

The figure of the Good Samaritan inspires staff to follow his example by helping those on the journey of life. Leaders take the view that this is what Jesus would do for both pupils and their families. They meet the needs of each person, taking them to a safe place to flourish. This inspires staff to explore new initiatives which effectively meet changing needs. The school is taking a lead in the locality in developing approaches for pupils' wellbeing. This leads to individualised approaches which support all. Pupils develop a toolkit of ideas which help them to manage their actions. The school has a reputation for its nurture, with some pupils making long daily journeys. This makes a real difference to their lives, they feel valued as the vision is lived out. Staff skills to meet specific needs are constantly enhanced. These address pupils' communication skills through early intervention, whilst effective screening identifies needs. For instance, lunch time clubs support pupils with sensory issues. Pupils are encouraged to recognise and verbalise their feelings. They use this understanding when resolving disputes, appreciating how actions made others feel, so they can move on together. Mental health provision has a high priority, which staff appreciate. Pupils regularly implement strategies which help them to be calm and support their mental health.

Just as the Good Samaritan went beyond others' expectations this inspires everyone to become the best they can be. All are aware of Jesus' words to go and do the same. This leads to pupils fulfilling their potential. Central to this is an influential culture of aspiration, where all successes are fully celebrated. This is enhanced by the impressive range of extra-curricular activities, notably in sport and music. Trusting relationships with staff create safe places for pupils to take risks, perceiving the importance of learning from errors. This grows resilience, pupils' self-belief and a curiosity to learn. Staff are aware of some spiritual opportunities to enable flourishing. However, these are not identified in curriculum plans. Nor are pupils able to express their ideas in a variety of ways which shows the impact these make. The curriculum is shaped by the vision so that pupils develop a good understanding of diversity. A range of literature texts challenge perceptions, for example, of stereotypes and the importance of black history. Others stimulate debates enriching awareness of refugees. Pupils have a growing understanding of caring for their planet, extending tree planting through their forest school work. This leads to pupils challenging one another to recycle. A growing awareness of injustice in the locality enables pupils to respond through supporting the local foodbank. Previous links with Malawi led pupils to recycle shoes. Increased opportunities enrich pupils' leadership skills contributing to more becoming agents for change. Examples include, leading a toy sale and selling eggs, raising awareness of issues they feel are important. This enables pupils to live out the vision of the Good Samaritan and make a difference for others.

The vision of loving your neighbour is lived out in relationships with federation schools. This enables subject leaders to work together, draw on good practice and introduce new approaches. Increasingly, the school shares its own good practice, notably for pupils with particular needs. Staff

keep up to date with best practice through well focused training via the diocesan partnership.

The school's inclusive culture and the quality of relationships within school is driven by its vision. Jesus' example is continuously drawn upon to show how all can live together well. Leaders pose the question of 'what would Jesus do' in different scenarios. Minor disputes are resolved through reflecting on choices and whether they have shown the respect Jesus would give. This leads to pupils treating one another with a high degree of dignity. As a result of the way the Christian vision is lived out the school is a warm inclusive community.

Staff and pupils are effectively supported by the pastoral care of local churches. Clergy play a central role in planning for worship, progressively exploring Christian values. Key themes are highlighted through questions suggested. Visitors enrich weekly worship and bring Christian festivals to life, for example, through the Harvest trail. Themes are explored in class discussions, heightening their significance and how each can respond. This changes the way pupils take care of the planet. Worship is inclusive and enables pupils to contribute with integrity. It can be inspiring, notably in caring for God's creation. Prayer and class spaces for reflection are valued as times to share with God or be calm. These contribute to pupils' and adults' personal spirituality. Pupils have a growing role in worship, leading aspects confidently. Monitoring has led to improvements, such as worship having a consistent structure and a school prayer which reflects the vision.

Religious education (RE) has a high profile championed by the subject leader. New approaches are being introduced which increasingly engage pupils and challenge them to think at a deeper level. Staff create lesson plans for each lesson which identify key ideas as well as which RE skills are being developed. Pupils are growing in confidence in debates about big questions. They recognise this as a safe space to share ideas, listen and refine their own beliefs. Pupils' understanding of core religious concepts and specific RE vocabulary is growing, but not fully developed. A thoughtful awareness of world views enables pupils to see how belief shapes lives. Pupils consistently articulate that they enjoy RE and see its relevance for their lives.

The teaching and learning consistently deepens pupils' knowledge in RE and there are examples of high quality practice. A new curriculum is being embedded which is well-sequenced, enabling pupils to deepen their understanding of key aspects. Assessment is secure, identifying which pupils need additional support, which is woven into future planning. As a result, pupils make consistently expected or better progress, notably those who are disadvantaged. More pupils are beginning to work at a higher level.

The inspection findings indicate that Parrett and Axe Church of England VA Primary is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	8 November 2023	URN	113807
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	136
Diocese	Salisbury		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Simon Smith		
Chair	Joint chairs of governors: Lisa Raison and Emma House		
Inspector	David Hatrey	No.	844

