

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Pulford Church of England VA Lower School	
Address	Pulford Road, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 1AB
School vision	
<p>Growing God's family, through faith, hope and love, dedicated to realising the potential of each person. Our Christian faith and values form the basis of everything we do. As a Church of England school, our vision focuses on our three values of faith, hope and love; within these we explore community, respect and wisdom. Our values are at the heart of all that we aim to achieve.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's biblically rooted Christian vision guides and directs all aspects of its work. It is the golden thread by which all its actions are planned, evaluated and adapted. • Relationships at all levels are overwhelmingly positive. Faith, hope and love for one another is a key feature of the school and its work. • There is a determined focus on flourishing for all and in all its forms. Staff work tirelessly to ensure pupils are enabled to be the best they can be. Pupils know they can rely on their teachers in all situations. • Religious education (RE) is carefully planned and thoughtfully led. Great care has gone into preparing the new syllabus. Pupils leave the school well-equipped to consider the beliefs of others and what they believe for themselves. • Collective worship is at the heart of life in this school. It is highly valued by staff, pupils and parents. Leaders ensure it is inspirational and inclusive. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ways to develop a shared understanding of diversity in all its forms to enable everyone to live well together. • Ensure rigorous systems are in place to enable the accurate tracking of pupil progress within the new RE curriculum. • Further promote pupils as agents for change so they are empowered to make a positive difference to local and global communities. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Leaders at Pulford Lower School have built an inspiring and joyful community in which everyone is enabled to flourish. The school's well established Christian vision is the golden thread which permeates all the school's work. It is rooted in the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus. Love for one another shines brightly throughout the school, from the very youngest pupils to the oldest.</p>	



There is a palpable sense of service, to the children and the wider community, in all the school's work. Although the school's context has changed since the vision was developed, it has been revisited regularly. Leaders have correctly determined that it is still appropriate and will withstand further changes as the community grows in future.

The impact of the vision is carefully monitored by all school leaders. Governors visit regularly to review how it is experienced in the day to day life of the school. This enables them to accurately evaluate its effectiveness. In turn, these evaluations inform their future planning. The three core values of faith, hope and love are used to monitor decision making at all levels and these values are well known by pupils. Even the youngest pupils in the pre-school talk of their 'three special words'.

As soon as families join the school, they are 'enveloped' in the vision. Parents talk of the way they are made to feel welcome, supported and accepted. Families who find themselves in difficult circumstances are supported without judgement. Parents have been enabled to form informal support networks, for example, by the sharing of a travelling crib. This further underpins the school's work to enable all to flourish. The school is held in high regard within the wider community for its outreach work.

Adults and pupils thrive at Pulford as a result of the lived out Christian values. Leaders strive to ensure each child receives what they need, be that academically or socially. When difficulties arise, leaders act swiftly to find imaginative ways to support pupils to bring about the necessary change. Pupils respect each other's differences. They know that they are all unique and have different skills and talents. Pupils encourage each other and look forward to celebrating their friends' achievements every week. This is viewed as an act of love for one another, showing the school's vision in action. Pupils understand that they don't have to agree about everything but they must do so 'in a friendly way'. Leaders are exploring ways to ensure all aspects of diversity are represented within the school's curriculum offer. However, this work is still in its infancy. Leaders ensure parents and staff also flourish. Strategic decisions by governors enable staff, at all levels, to further their professional development. This impacts positively on the way that adults thrive at Pulford. Leaders make courageous decisions to ensure everyone can flourish, for example, setting up a pre-school and wrap around care.

Pupils are immersed in spirituality throughout the daily life of the school. They talk with confidence about what it means for them. Many of the older children can describe moments of wonder within their own personal spiritual development. They value different areas of the school where they can explore and reflect within their busy day. This inspires them to think more deeply about issues they feel strongly about. Taking time to reflect and consider difficulties people face in their lives, enhances pupils' spiritual growth. They are encouraged to look beyond themselves to the needs of others. Inspired by their reflections, pupils actively seek out opportunities to challenge injustice.

Collective worship is the heart beat of the school's daily life. It is carefully planned and faithfully follows the Church calendar. Worship is led by a team of school leaders, including members of the parish church. They ensure each daily act of worship is age appropriate and follows Anglican tradition. Older pupils are given the responsibility of leading aspects of worship each day. This enables them to think carefully about their own responses. Younger pupils look forward to having this opportunity in turn. Worship is inspirational and fully inclusive, allowing everyone to engage in it. Age-appropriate resources and humour are used to ensure it is memorable. It is highly valued by pupils and staff. Pupils often talk about worship at home, sharing stories and songs with their families. This further supports their spiritual development. Singing is an integral part of collective worship. Strong links with the local parish church means the children's repertoire is shared in both places, further strengthening community links. Pre-school pupils enjoy singing 'Allelujah'. Prayer is naturally embedded in worship and in other parts of the school day. Pupils understand prayer as

‘talking to God’. Very young pupils confidently say The Lord’s Prayer and are proud to do so. Pupils, staff and parents look forward to holding their services in church for major Christian festivals.

RE is a strength of the school’s curriculum offer. The school is part of a local cluster which enables them to share their expertise with others. The experienced RE leader ensures it is well-taught and fully resourced. A new syllabus has been introduced recently, following a great deal of preparation. This has ensured teachers are well trained in teaching a range of world faiths. Pupils’ books reflect a variety of learning activities and their work is of a high standard. They are able to discuss their learning in great detail, demonstrating their secure subject knowledge. For example, pupils know a number of important Bible stories and can relate these to their own lives. Pupils use this knowledge to think about what they believe for themselves and explain why. Those with additional needs have their learning carefully adapted so they are enabled to make progress. Great care is taken to ensure pupils are given memorable experiences to support their learning, such as trips to temples and mosques. They look forward to their RE lessons each week and frequently share their new learning at home with their families. As a result, parents share the learning experience with their children. As the syllabus is new to the school, leaders have rightly recognised that assessment of RE is not yet secure. This means that leaders do not currently have a clear picture of pupils’ progress over time.

The inspection findings indicate that Pulford Church of England Lower School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	9 November 2023	URN	109619
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	249
Diocese	St Albans		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	David Heather		
Chair	Edward Price		
Inspector	Victoria Burgess	No.	2139