

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Winchcombe Abbey Church of England Primary School	
Address	Back Lane, Winchcombe, Cheltenham, GL54 5PZ

School vision
<p>“Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example in what you say and how you live.” 1 Timothy 4:12</p>

School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The powerful outward-working of the vision is felt and lived by all members of the school community. High aspirations for all encourage everyone to believe deeply that they matter. They express with confidence all that they can be as examples to others. • The vision directs the challenging decisions leaders make so that highly effective pastoral support leads to flourishing pupils and their families. Compassionate intervention is swift and ambitious. • The school’s culture, which promotes opportunity for all, inspires adults and pupils to strive to transform lives. This is central to the school’s collective worship and curriculum where difference and diversity are promoted. Pupils are well prepared for living in today’s world. • Religious education (RE) is expertly led. Creative approaches within the RE curriculum help increase pupils’ understanding of people who are examples of living out their faith and worldview. • As a successful member of the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust, the school’s leaders use their expertise to make a significant contribution to help communities across the trust thrive.

Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further enhance the effect of planned opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum. This will help pupils to acquire the broadest range of language and tools needed to express being spiritually aware. • Enrich the flourishing of even more pupils through developing their capacity to plan and deliver inspiring collective worship across the school. This will further support how the vision encourages leading by example.

Inspection findings
<p>Around every corner of this loving school, pupils and adults demonstrate examples of what it means to truly flourish. They are resolute in their belief that no-one should look down on them because what they say and do makes a difference. Families talk passionately about the vision making a positive contribution to their lives because it is centred around ensuring opportunity for all. Parents rightly identify that ‘it cements the ground of the school’, reflecting how strongly the ethos of the school is rooted in all its actions. This firm foundation provides an intrinsic source for the decisions pupils, staff and leaders make. They admire the actions of one another as they seek to demonstrate</p>



God's love for all.

Shaped by its Christian values, the school is an inclusive and welcoming community. As a result of the vision to set an example, governors and school leaders make bold financial decisions. There is recognition that every journey has its bumps; consequently, pastoral support meets pupils' needs as and when they happen. This means a full-time member of staff is on hand to provide that immediate 'safe space'. Wellbeing is further enhanced by a partnership with a family engagement officer. Barriers to learning are explored with parents and attendance has risen as a result. A wide variety of clubs are now free for all pupils and reflect the school's commitment to broaden horizons, regardless of financial constraints. Adults regard their work in school as 'not a service to, but a journey with'. Families of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) recognise this compassionate approach. They value the determined conversations that happen with other professionals get the right advice, support and necessary funding.

The school's curriculum focuses on learning pathways which navigate through every subject. Four curriculum drivers (aspiring, seeking, believing and achieving) direct pupils' learning. Lessons are designed to help pupils know how others achieve success. Real world examples affirm the positive contributions cultures and people have made to society. For example, in a lesson on Islamic culture, the first player to wear a hijab at the football World Cup was included. Highly-valued staff encourage excellent discussion with learning partners. This emphasises how the vision of school nurtures all pupils to share their points of view with respect.

Spirituality thrives through the purposeful relationships evident across the school. Pupils and adults share the same language of 'ows', 'wows' and 'nows' to explore how their world connects with something far deeper within themselves. This familiarity of approach provides a strong structure to embrace spirituality and a natural curiosity to enhance it from an early age. However, some older pupils explain spiritual encounters using a limited range of language. As a consequence, the individuality of spiritual expression is sometimes restricted. The school's eight values, which include courage and humility, nourish spiritual development. They are proudly and consistently displayed. Chosen in response to how Jesus walked the earth, they weave themselves regularly through what is taught and how the school community behaves.

Collective worship richly supports the whole community to develop strong 'family' bonds, united in the rhythm of Christian liturgy, prayer and song. It anchors the school day. Well-chosen living and historical people provide role-models so that pupils and adults connect with Biblical stories. Effective planning brings these together with the weekly values and curriculum drivers so that the impact of collective worship is profound. Evaluation guides leaders to making choices which help keep collective worship relevant and accessible for all. Pupils keenly enjoy this special time together and want to have even more opportunities to plan and lead their own. They have been given the right tools and now wish to be examples themselves.

Strong links with the local parish church and nearby associations provide further opportunities for worshipping creatively and wider learning. For example, visitors from 'Gloucester City Mission' and 'We All Matter' motivate the school community to want to make a difference. Pupils are very proud of how their own school parliament sets an example. It gives them a chance to promote responsible change. This has enabled pupils to make ethical choices such as persuading leaders to purchase refillable glue sticks in school. Year 6 were inspired to increase the uptake of library cards by their families to stop local library closures. Learning includes people in the curriculum who are at the heart of promoting justice and long-term change. Living the school's vision, pupils are determined that however young they are, they know they can make a difference.

Pupils are enthusiastic about learning in RE. Sequential steps of knowledge, skills and vocabulary are mapped out rigorously which help staff have even more confidence to teach RE well. High-level questioning leads to responses which connect to pupils' own behaviours and the choices they make. Consistent structures are in place across the school to support retrieval of knowledge. This has a notable effect, ensuring that most pupils remember key facts from previous learning. Pupils naturally use what they have learned across the curriculum. As a consequence, they are highly prepared for living in a global community. Pupils value how RE broadens their perspectives and 'gets you ready for the future'. Leaders know what is required to further improve a subject which has a high priority within the life of the school.

As a result of the vision, this is a community which is relentless on driving itself and others forward into even better places. The highest of aspirations to reach beyond where they are means nothing is left to chance. It has an influential, yet reciprocal, relationship with the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust, where both are strengthened by each other's vision and practice. The whole culture of the school, collective worship outcomes and its work in RE is highly valued by the trust. Governance at all levels is highly effective. School governors demonstrate a challenging yet perceptive evaluation of the effectiveness of how the vision makes a difference to the people they serve. Leaders within the school contribute very effectively to supporting other communities across the trust. Their work is richly acknowledged. The school appreciates being stronger together through the work of the trust which impacts across the local authority, the diocese and beyond.

In all it says and does, this is a school where its Christian vision shines as a beacon for others to follow. It skilfully expects its pupils and adults to be vibrant illustrations of God flourishing in and through their lives. They proudly accept the challenge.

The inspection findings indicate that Winchcombe Abbey Church of England (VA) Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	17 October 2023	URN	140797
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	291
Diocese	Gloucester		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT)		
Headteacher	Sally Johnson		
Chair	Lynne Banks		
Inspector	Robert Hollis	No.	2232