

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barrow 1618 A Church of England Free School	
Address	Barrow, Broseley TF12 5BW
School vision	
<p>With faith, friendship and courage we grow! Like the trees and plants in our Barrow school grounds, we are nurtured and GROW – and we just keep growing – and as we keep growing, we keep asking questions – and we never stop learning ...</p> <p>As Jesus explained in the Parable of the Sower, “But what is the seed that fell on the good ground? That seed is like the person who hears the teaching and understands it. That person grows and produces fruit, sometimes 100 times more, sometimes 60 times more, and sometimes 30 times more.” (Matthew 13: 18-23)</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders are committed to ensuring that everyone is welcome into the ‘Barrow family’. They are eager to develop a strong church school curriculum that will enable everyone to flourish. • Pupils and adults grow together within a strong nurturing culture of respect, care and friendship. This is enabling the Christian vision to become apparent. • School leaders ensure that there is a carefully considered curriculum for religious education (RE). Pupils learn to understand and respect the beliefs of others, which prepares them for life in a diverse society. • Pupils make good progress in RE because of strong teaching within a culture of curiosity and debate. Consequently, pupils develop a secure level of knowledge about religions and worldviews. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and trust leaders have not ensured that collective worship is enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. Therefore, leaders should plan for consistently inspirational collective worship that is rooted in the Christian vision and allows for spiritual growth. • Ensure that school governors and leaders remain up to date with training in order to develop as a strong Church school. • Strengthen self-evaluation and monitoring strategies. This is in order for school governors and leaders to know how to drive the school forward as an effective Church school. • Develop a shared understanding and language of spirituality across the curriculum. This will enable the pupils and adults to express and develop things of a spiritual nature more obviously. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>School leaders are resolute about providing an education which is grounded on the bedrock of its historical and Christian foundations. They have drawn inspiration from the school’s rural setting to develop a Christian vision of growth. Working together, particularly outdoors, enables pupils to have an</p>	

age-appropriate understanding of how they can grow in faith, friendship and courage. The vision becomes a reality as people are nurtured to have faith in their own abilities and to trust others. This small school family is described as the 'Barrow family'. It is because staff understand every pupil as a unique and precious individual. They are dedicated to meeting the needs of every pupil, whatever their natural skills and talents. Consequently, pupils are encouraged to feel a sense of achievement and strive to be the best version of themselves. Whilst school leaders are eager to build on the school's Christian foundation, they do not access regular training. Governors entrust responsibilities to school leaders. However, they have not established robust systems to know how pupils and adults are growing and flourishing in every way. Consequently, there is not a reliable mechanism for cultivating the school's Christian character.

Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is centred on outdoor learning opportunities. They enjoy the wonder, peace and freedom of the school's natural environment. Through such enriching experiences, pupils develop both skills for learning and for being good citizens. The Christian vision is lived out partially as pupils grow in the 'Barrow values' of care, respect, teamwork, curiosity, ambition and resilience. Adults and pupils develop the courage to do what is right and to persevere when things are difficult. Each value is associated with a verse from the Bible. For example, pupils know that it is right to respect others and to 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' However, school leaders do not have strategies in place to ensure that its Christian vision is enabling people to grow spiritually. Leaders and staff have not accessed professional training on spiritual development. Therefore, they have not developed a shared understanding of spirituality for the school community across all of the curriculum. Inspired by the Christian vision, school leaders have a heart for inclusion. They create an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding in which pupils feel understood and safe. Pupils are encouraged to be curious and become confident to ask questions and debate. Consequently, pupils of all abilities are supported and encouraged to grow as they develop their own unique talents. Staff work closely in partnership with parents to make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Achievements, both academic and as good citizens, are celebrated so that pupils grow in self-belief.

School leaders have not established ways of planning for inspirational collective worship that focuses on enabling pupils and adults to grow spiritually. Furthermore, they have not established processes for knowing how collective worship is enabling everyone to flourish spiritually. These factors have caused collective worship to be an area of priority for development. This is particularly evident following a period of change in school and church leadership. Collective worship has not developed as a holy time, rooted in its Anglican foundation, providing 'rich soil' for personal growth. It does not consistently draw the Barrow family together away from classroom learning into an atmosphere of expectation, reverence and reflection. Planning for collective worship is not predominantly focused on biblical narratives, including the life and teachings of Jesus. Therefore, pupils cannot recall a range of age-appropriate Bible stories to deepen their understanding of the school's Christian vision and values. Pupils regularly join together in saying the school prayer or the Lord's Prayer. However, opportunities for personal prayer throughout the day are less obvious. This is because school leaders have not developed confidence in being explicit about spiritual growth. The school community remembers and enjoys weekly 'celebration assemblies' most, because adults and pupils come together to share in joy and celebration. Collective worship is enriched by its relationship with local churches. Dedicated church members regularly lead memorable worship times which are rich in song and deepen an understanding of the Christian faith. The school celebrates Christian festivals such as Christmas with the whole school community. These are precious times in church and in school that are greatly valued by families.

Everyone is made to feel welcome and valued as members of the 'Barrow Family'. The school's Christian vision is lived out as friendships blossom. Older pupils, who model respect, good manners and care, are

partnered with younger pupils. A good way of growing well together develops as everyone looks for the best in themselves and each other. The school's behaviour policy includes the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation. This is the basis for resolving moments of conflict as they arise. It brings about a sense of peace and harmony. In this small school context, staff know and care about every pupil in the school. They are concerned about pupil wellbeing and invest time and resources into personal, social and health education. School leaders are eager for staff to flourish professionally and personally. Staff appreciate the flexibility and trust that is placed in them and work as a mutually supportive team.

Leaders and staff of this rural school realise that they have a particular responsibility to prepare pupils for the wider world. Pupils develop an understanding of what is fair and just. For example, they learn about influential people who have acted courageously to seek justice. As they start school, the youngest pupils learn to take responsibility by caring for animals and the natural world. The school encourages pupils to be active in making a difference, such as a pupil writing to the Prime Minister about animal rights. Skilful teachers encourage the older pupils to engage and debate issues of injustice in relation to world issues across the curriculum. In such ways, pupils grow in their desire to care for others and make a difference. For example, they regularly work in partnership with local churches on a Lenten project during Lent. These projects enrich the lives of others locally and nationally.

Pupils develop a very secure knowledge and understanding of religions and world views. Religious education is lead and taught with infectious enthusiasm. External professional training is shared with teachers of RE who develop subject expertise. A carefully considered curriculum has been developed for pupils, who are all taught in mixed -year classes. It ensures that pupils make good progress as they learn about a range of religions and world views. Pupils are enabled to develop in their learning, supported and challenged by teachers who respond to individual needs. This is supported by an effective whole school assessment system. School leaders are eager to ensure that pupils' learning is brought alive and made memorable with annual whole school world faith events. Strong teachers ensure that older pupils develop the ability to use religious language effectively to express their understanding. They are also immersed in a culture of rich philosophical debate. This allows them to appreciate the diversity within religious and worldview beliefs. RE prepares pupils for life, as they grow in an understanding of themselves and others.

The inspection findings indicate that the school has strengths as a Church school but that there are issues that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. These relate to collective worship and are listed in the areas for development.

Information			
Inspection date	8 February 2024	URN	138268
VA/VC/Academy	VA	Pupils on roll	97
Diocese	Hereford		
MAT/Federation	Barrow 1618 Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Anita Ward		
Chair	Carolyn Jones		
Inspector	Angela Daniel	No.	757