

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Brixworth Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Froxhill Crescent, Brixworth, Northampton, NN6 9EG

School vision

Be the best that you can be, academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually within a safe, healthy, inspirational and enjoyable environment.
‘For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.’ (Ephesians 2: 10)

School strengths

- The school’s vision is a direct, inspirational response to the needs of pupils in the context of the wider community. By explicitly supporting the development of the whole person, it encourages a broad flourishing for both pupils and adults.
- The main principles underlying the curriculum are linked to the vision and provide clarity of purpose in all subjects. This contributes positively to the impact of support for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND).
- Collective worship creates a strong sense of community and gently challenges pupils and adults to reflect on their own experiences. This, in turn, encourages them on their individual spiritual journeys.
- The vision is the foundation for a welcoming, accepting and inclusive school culture. This contributes significantly to the wellbeing of pupils, and of staff, who are supported both professionally and personally.

Areas for development

- Develop greater clarity in the language of spirituality used across the curriculum. This is to support consistency and equip staff to increase opportunities for spiritual development.
- Ensure balance between philosophy, theology and the social sciences in the teaching of religious education (RE). This is to help deepen pupils’ understanding of the way thinking and belief influence the way people live.
- Establish regular monitoring and evaluation by the governing body of the effectiveness of RE. This is so that leaders are challenged and supported in making the provision the ‘best that it can be’.

Inspection findings

Leaders understand the needs of pupils in the context of their wider community. As a result, the school’s vision works powerfully to support adults and pupils to flourish in each aspect of their lives. Building on the unique value of individuals as ‘God’s masterpiece’, the school is a place of acceptance and nurture. As a result, pupils are enabled to grow as confident, well-rounded individuals, motivated and keen to learn. They are taught to value success beyond the academic and encouraged to persevere in the face of challenges. They develop a strong sense of responsibility to



help others and care for the natural world. In this way, pupils are well-prepared for the next steps in their education. Parents value the care and consistency provided by the school, particularly for pupils with SEND. Leaders, including governors, encourage staff in every role to be the best they can be, along with the pupils. This contributes to a strong sense of shared purpose in a flourishing community.

There is a clear and purposeful thread from the school vision running throughout the curriculum. The five 'bees', relating to academic, social, emotional, spiritual and physical development, are well-embedded across the school. They help pupils and staff achieve balance in teaching and learning. Working 'to be the best you can be' in one aspect is not achieved at the expense of the others. Teachers give time to teaching specific learning behaviours used across the whole school. Progress is celebrated across all areas of development and from individual starting points. As a result, there are high expectations for pupils with SEND, who are able to experience success. Commitment to pupils as global citizens is evident in the emphasis on diversity in resources and curriculum topics. These include careful choices of reading books, artists studied and the range of countries explored. Leaders ensure a broad experience of enrichment activities for all pupils to support learning across the curriculum. Staff provide motivation and inspiration for learning by organising special events at the start of new topics. Pupils value the fun element in this approach, which contributes to their flourishing as engaged learners. For example, the staff performance of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory used drama to develop interest and empathy. However, the promotion of spiritual development in the curriculum lacks clarity and is less developed.

Collective worship is an important part of the life of the school. Despite high pupil numbers, leaders are committed to gathering regularly as a whole school, which maintains a sense of community. They take care to ensure that everyone can feel welcome, regardless of background or belief. The language used in prayers and songs invites rather than forces involvement. Worship focuses on Christian values in a clear structure that includes time for reflection and response. In this way, pupils and adults are encouraged to consider what they hear and apply it to their own lives. This contributes to their individual spiritual flourishing. One example is of pupils picking litter following a focus on love for the environment and stewardship of creation. Pupils use reflection areas in each class to continue thinking about challenges from worship. Written responses are kept in class books and provide evidence of development in thinking and understanding. Worship is enriched by strong partnerships with two local churches. Pupils benefit from this variety of different traditions, which deepens both their experience and understanding of Christian worship. Clergy plan and run activities for older pupils each Easter. These challenge their thinking and prompt questions that help develop understanding of the core elements of the Christian faith.

The aspiration 'to be the best that you can be' is supported by a nurturing culture. Pupils and adults feel accepted for who they are, while being motivated to grow and develop. Staff respond to individual needs and regularly adapt practice and develop provision to support pupils to achieve. Leaders develop positive relationships with families through good communication and a determination to understand the context of pupils' lives. Parents feel that their concerns are listened to and appreciate the care their children experience. The vision is completely inclusive of adults as well as pupils. Staff are able to flourish, professionally and personally. This is due to the openness and flexibility of leaders. They encourage colleagues to take responsibility for their own development and to contribute to shaping the future of the school.

The vision encourages pupils to be confident in themselves, while also looking for opportunities to make a difference to others. Leaders use daily challenges in collective worship to help pupils reflect on how they live and the choices they make. This contributes to a culture in which pupils believe they can change the world for the better. As well as raising awareness and funds for charities, individuals and groups act on issues they think are unfair. These include reducing single-use plastics



in school and making blankets for the homeless. Pupils are bold in their approach, knowing that they have a voice and that they will be heard by leaders. Examples of good choices and successful actions by older pupils build awareness and confidence in those of younger years.

Pupils enjoy RE, which is given priority by leaders as a highly valued academic subject. The well-sequenced curriculum is built around key enquiry questions that motivate pupils and encourage their curiosity. They are keen to gain knowledge, while also developing their own beliefs and convictions. Teachers encourage this by establishing a safe environment for discussion and debate. The curriculum supports pupils' learning by providing opportunities for pupils to respond to what they learn in creative ways. Art, drama and exploring stories through key characters prompt pupils to consider belief and practice imaginatively. However, there is not a sufficient balance between the different academic approaches of philosophy, theology and social sciences. Pupils learn about different expressions of Christianity and a range of religions and worldviews. This supports their growing appreciation of the diversity of human experience. Leaders are well supported by the diocese and provide time and resources to ensure that staff in school benefit from training. They have some understanding of the effectiveness of the curriculum from regular discussion with pupils. However, formal monitoring and evaluation of RE by the governing body is less developed.

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

Information			
Inspection date	7 May 2024	URN	121964
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	470
Diocese	Peterborough		
MAT/Federation			
headteacher	Neil Tyler		
Chair	John Trenfield		
Inspector	Peter Barfoot	No.	2216