



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Cranborne Church of England VA First School	
Address	Water St. Cranborne, Wimborne Dorset, BH21 5QB

School vision

‘Love, Learn, Fly’
Our vision is underpinned by the Bible verse 1 Corinthians 16:14 “Do everything in love’.

Our school values are:

LOVE (John 13:34)
We encourage our children to love one another as God loves us. By practising forgiveness and reconciliation, we enable all to live well together and to flourish.

WISDOM (James 1:5)
We teach our children to know right from wrong, learn from experience and make the right choices.

HOPE (Psalm 39:7)
We equip our children with the skills, passion and resilience, to achieve goals, and give them confidence as they 'fly' from Cranborne First School to journey through life.

School strengths

- A clearly expressed Christian vision is at the centre of the school. It drives all aspects of leadership and decision making. As a result, adults and pupils thrive.
- Collective worship provides an impressive foundation to each day. It effectively promotes the spiritual development of the whole school community.
- The Christian vision shapes Cranborne’s behaviour policy and expectations. Children clearly recognise that love and kindness sit at the heart of the school.
- Cranborne’s vision effectively promotes strong and cohesive partnerships. It works exceptionally well with The Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust (DSAT). This ensures that provision is strengthened in the school in collaboration with its partners.
- RE is well planned and resourced. As a result, pupils value their learning. They develop an understanding of the need for mutual respect and living well together.

Areas for development

- Embed the recently developed spirituality policy and develop a robust system to evaluate its impact. This is so pupils and adults can benefit from a wide range of opportunities for spiritual growth.
- Develop clear systems for the measuring and moderation of pupils' learning within RE. This is to ensure that teachers can identify gaps in attainment and plan effectively to ensure all make good progress.

Inspection findings

As a result of its deeply embedded Christian vision this small school has a big impact. Leaders ensure that all decisions are rooted in the vision, so that ‘everything is done in love’. This means that pupils and adults in the school thrive, knowing that they are cherished. The impact is also felt in the wider community as the school works in effective partnerships with its neighbours. Pupils confidently describe how the vision is lived out in daily life. It positively influences their attitudes towards each other and how they see themselves. Pupils treat each other with respect and kindness. They are confident and resilient. They feel well prepared for their next steps, ‘to fly’ onto their next challenge. The vision underpins the behaviour policy, as a result a calm, purposeful atmosphere pervades the school. Leaders are exemplary role models for true ‘servant leadership’.

Cranborne First benefits greatly from the partnership working promoted by its trust, DSAT. A significant amount of development work occurs across the ‘Priory Hub’ group of schools. This ensures that staff time is used effectively, which supports their well-being. The Christian values of the school are closely aligned with DSAT. As a result, there are ambitious expectations for each individual’s personal development. Effective monitoring systems across DSAT ensure that governors are closely involved in the life of the school. They know it well and confidently hold leaders to account ensuring that every decision is ‘made in love’. The school’s Christian vision drives routines for learning. Pupils recognise that they are given challenging work. They understand it can be good to make mistakes and to share their learning. In this way they are living out the school’s values of hope and wisdom.

Collective worship forms the foundation for each day in the school. This important time together is transformational. Leaders ensure that it is valued by pupils, staff and families. Pupils engage well. They are peaceful in moments of stillness and prayer. They show delight in singing and active participation. This produces an atmosphere of enthusiasm and joy. Those pupils who are part of the school’s ‘Collective Worship Community’ committee, take great pride in their role. They lead some aspects of worship and are active in its evaluation. They have the opportunity to plan worship with other pupils from across the Priory Hub. This enriches their development as young leaders. Visiting speakers from a range of backgrounds increases the pupils’ experience of variety in worship. Services held at the local church for festivals such as Christmas and Easter are important to families. This also supports their spiritual development. The leavers’ service in the church is particularly significant to parents as they see their children ‘ready to fly’. The recent introduction of a monthly Sunday breakfast church at the school is an exciting opportunity. It is a clear example of the school reaching out to encourage the spiritual flourishing of the whole community.

Deepening pupils’ awareness of diversity is a priority for leaders. Careful choice of literature texts promote discussions on stereotypes and enable teachers to challenge misconceptions. This extends pupils’ understanding of the values of love, wisdom and hope that are central to the Christian vision. Leaders ensure that this focus is maintained and enhanced. The recently developed spirituality policy has the expectation that all staff plan opportunities for spiritual growth across the curriculum. As a result, staff recognise the importance of developing spirituality of pupils. This enhances everyone’s well-being. However, there are no formal processes in place for evaluating the impact of this important development.

Pupils actively promote fairness and helping others. They make a difference in their school, the local community and beyond. Following a recent pupil-led assembly on world water day the school council are committed to toilet twinning across the school. This is a big challenge given its context. Pupils offer practical support whilst developing a real understanding of the needs of others. They are reminded throughout the day, ‘you are never too small to make a difference’. As a result they are empowered to ‘think big’.

Members of the school community are deeply valued for their individuality and uniqueness as children of God. Staff benefit from a wide range of opportunities for professional development provided by DSAT. Consequently they feel encouraged, supported and loyal. The school quickly get to know each of its pupils well. Individual needs are carefully diagnosed and met. There is a clear emphasis on well-being. The recent introduction of the 'stormbreak' programme for pupils is providing them with strategies to maintain good mental health. A wide range of enrichment activities ensure that pupils flourish. Their achievements both in and outside of school are recognised in collective worship. This increases their sense of belonging and provides assurance that their individuality is celebrated.

The DSAT's 'Church Schools Flourishing' programme has been developed in close partnership with the Diocese of Salisbury. It ensures that the school is well supported in the development of RE. As a result, the curriculum is well-planned and resourced. Non-specialist staff are provided with effective support. This enables them to feel confident in their teaching. Pupils across the school enjoy their learning. They particularly value the chance to increase their knowledge of a range of world faiths and opinions. Active participation in discussion and respect for the views of others are key features of these lessons. RE teaching forms a firm foundation for pupils' understanding of the need for dignity and living well together.

The sequencing of the RE curriculum enables increasingly complex issues to be addressed over time. Good use of questioning means that pupils develop their understanding in lessons. As a result, they increase their appreciation of a range of world views and beliefs. Teachers use end of unit tests to provide a useful indication of learning. However, there is not a rigorous system in place to measure and moderate progress of pupils over time. Consequently planning to meet the needs of pupils is less secure.

The school works tirelessly to live up to its Christian vision. It sets high expectations for all, equipping pupils and staff to reach their full potential.

The inspection findings indicate that Cranborne Church of England VA First and Nursery School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	23 April 2024	URN	148301
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	66
Diocese	Salisbury		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Annette Faithfull		
Chair	Rosemary Tong		
Inspector	Nicki Edwards	No.	2207