



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Catherine's Church of England VA Primary School, Heathfield	
Address	Musket Road, Heathfield, Newton Abbot, TQ12 6SB

School vision

‘Within the love of God, working together, growing together for all to flourish’.
Jesus said “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”, in other words He wanted us all to ‘flourish’ (John 10:10).

Living this out we provide all our children with knowledge, perseverance and creativity to develop their God given talents. Jesus’ promise is for all people of whatever age, background or gender; we therefore uphold the right of every individual to be valued, to learn and to achieve their full academic and creative potential (Galatians 3:28).

School strengths

- The Christian vision gives rise to an unashamed sense of love throughout the school.
- The impact of the vision is evident in the high expectations that staff and pupils have for each other and the community.
- Strong partnerships, particularly with the federation and with local churches, enhance the life and the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- Pupils and adults are growing spiritually. The emphasis in collective worship on participation, scripture and reflection is a major contributory factor.
- A comprehensive and challenging religious education (RE) curriculum is an important feature of this Church school. Pupils respond well in RE, showing good understanding and strong verbal skills.

Areas for development

- Continue the review of the values associated with the vision so that they resonate with the school community and with St. Catherine’s Christian distinctiveness.
- Extend pupils’ interest about the world they live in by enabling them to understand more deeply and to advocate more effectively on issues of global justice and injustice.
- Increase the planned opportunities in collective worship and in RE for pupils to understand that Christianity is a vibrant, diverse, global faith.

Inspection findings

Pupils and adults live out St. Catherine’s School vision enthusiastically. They understand that they are loved and valued for who they are. They respond by being very proud to belong to the school community and by showing love to each other. The vision is underpinned by two key passages from the Bible. There is the promise and the invitation of fullness of life from Jesus (John 10:10). There is also the right for absolutely everybody to be able to flourish (Galatians 3:28). School and federation leaders, inspired by these teachings, share a commitment to providing conditions for all to grow.



Through their practical and strategic actions, pupils and adults thrive.

The values associated with the vision provide a common language for pupils and adults. Love, friendship, justice, courage, perseverance and compassion are well understood and practised. They are effectively explored in collective worship. Each value has an associated Bible passage and this means pupils readily understand them as Christian values. Leaders are currently reviewing these values with the whole school community. This is to assess if they are the best ones to sustain the vision in the future.

The vision's impact on the curriculum is to underline that everyone should achieve their potential. The school's values help shape the curriculum. They ensure that success is measured in terms of the whole range of skills that underpin a rounded individual in society. Federation and school leaders prioritise strategies to help those who find learning difficult. This is seen, for instance, in the attention given to speech and language development. Leaders are determined that pupils have chances to find where they can flourish. Hence, there is a notable range of enrichment opportunities, with trips and visits being highlights. Vulnerable pupils are prioritised to benefit from these. Many activities feature outdoor learning. This results in pupils, and the Eco council, in particular, campaigning and speaking well about environmental issues.

Spirituality is understood as taking deep reflection seriously. This entails learning more about oneself, allowing opportunities for awe and wonder and considering potential meanings to life. Big questions for each curriculum unit are one way of creating intentional moments for spiritual development. Pupils and staff are regularly able to consider what they are thankful for. Class reflection books capture pupil insights. That they are in the school entrance underlies their importance. Pupils and staff are inspired by reading each other's thoughts. The prayer tree, which is also there and which helps to keep the vision central, is well used.

Pupils and adults talk very naturally and positively about the impact of collective worship. It is the glue that binds the community together. The participation of pre-school children in school collective worship is just one indication of this. Older pupils understand the importance of the Bible generally and particularly how it applies to living out the school's vision and values. Staff and visitors encourage involvement in acting out key stories and in sharing insights out loud. Pupils enjoy singing and explain accurately how some songs are particularly relevant to Christian festivals. Pupils and staff are invited to pray and reflect. They consider the prompts and the time given for this as very meaningful. Many pupils can recite the quite lengthy school prayer. More importantly, they can explain how it makes them feel and act. Pupils and staff are growing spiritually. There are insufficient opportunities in collective worship and in RE to learn and experience more of Christianity as a vibrant, global faith.

The school is welcoming and inclusive. There are a notable number of pupils leaving and joining each year but all settle quickly and are cherished as individuals. Good rewards systems, including regular recognition of living out the school's values, help in this process. Federation and school leaders prioritise good mental health and wellbeing by providing valued resources such as a dedicated counsellor. Local churches, including the parish church, provide spiritual and practical support to the school and local community. Leaders are keen to employ local people to roles in the school. This is due to the vision's emphasis on everyone having the chance to fulfil their potential. Leaders nurture these people and many staff move to more responsibility as a result.

There are many openings for pupil leadership that makes a difference. This is one indication of pupil flourishing. Pupils are able to be part of an ethos group that considers how the school might develop as a church school. This mirrors the federation's ethos group which uses the experience of foundation governors and church school leaders to drive development. Pupils enjoy taking their

leadership opportunities as they are helping their fellow pupils and the wider community. Mental health ambassadors demonstrate this in a very committed manner. Pupils readily discuss compassion and justice and are becoming agents of change. However, pupils do not understand enough to advocate on global issues of justice.

Leaders ensure that the RE curriculum is thorough, sequential and challenging. Pupils study a wide range of religions and worldviews with Christianity given its due emphasis. Teachers ensure that the classrooms are safe spaces in which important questions of meaning and purpose are explored. Leaders plan visits and visitors that enrich RE. Pupils remember, for example, a trip to Buckfast Abbey that brought Easter to life and provided creative inspiration. They also appreciate the help in understanding the debate between religion and science through the visits of a Christian priest and a humanist. The federation and the diocese provide training for the RE subject lead that enables them to keep up-to-date with national and local developments. The classroom teachers then benefit from this through subject specific development time. Pupils gain as they discuss contemporary issues in religion.

Leaders use a variety of methods to evaluate RE. School monitoring, confirmed by inspection, suggests that learning and teaching are at least good. Teachers use skilful questioning and pupil response is strong. There is careful tracking of pupil progress within each unit of study and overall. End of unit assessments often are a response to the big question being studied. Pupils give thoughtful answers, for instance, in drawing out the significance of Jewish festivals and family life. Art, music and drama are used to help connect all pupils to the subject material. Teachers use effective strategies to intervene to break down barriers to learning. They often helpfully model and structure answers.

The inspection findings indicate that St. Catherine's Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	25 March 2024	URN	113463
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	125
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT/Federation	The United Schools Federation		
Head of School	Victoria Pearce Executive Headteacher - Martin Harding		
Chair	Nicholas Glanfield		
Inspector	Simon Stevens	No.	953