

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Grasmere Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	
Address	Stock Lane, Grasmere, Cumbria, LA22 9SJ

School vision

‘Love your neighbour as you love yourself,’ (Matthew 22:37) and
 ‘I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full’ (John 10:10).

We aim: to support each other’s growth; to ask wonderful questions and discover our own potential;
 and to have strategies for responding positively, honourably, courageously and creatively
 to all the challenges we will face in life.

School strengths

- Leaders have a deep and considered understanding of the Christian vision and associated values which guides all decisions and actions. Consequently, the words of ‘life in all its fullness’ are a lived reality.
- Ambitious leaders are passionate about the curriculum ensuring it is engaging through its breadth and depth. It is well-planned, well-sequenced and creative. Spontaneous and planned opportunities for spiritual development enhance pupils’ spirituality.
- A culture of love permeates throughout the school which is modelled effectively by staff. A deep rooted sense of acceptance is lived out through caring relationships. Consequently, pupils and adults are known, loved and valued as the unique person they are.
- Collective worship is an invitational and inspirational time to gather as one. It provides meaningful moments for stillness and reflection, together with joyful singing which is enhanced through the use of sign language. Therefore, it provides a special time for the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults.
- Pupils have a high sense of personal responsibility for the world they live in. They seek to actively challenge injustice through opportunities to be agents of change.

Areas for development

- Enhance relationships with the local church community. This is to strengthen the opportunities that pupils and adults have to flourish spiritually.
- Embed planned changes to the breadth of the religious education (RE) curriculum and the way this is assessed. This is to enrich pupils’ knowledge and understanding of a range of worldviews and faiths, including Christianity.

Inspection findings

Grasmere Church of England Primary School has its foundations rooted firmly in love. There is an overwhelmingly warm and welcoming atmosphere in school.

The school's distinctly Christian vision underpins everything it seeks to do. It is embodied by adults and pupils in the way they strive to 'live life to the full' every day. Leaders place the Christian vision and associated values at the beating heart of the school. There is a clear 'pursuit of excellence' and expectation for pupils and adults to succeed. Ambitious leaders highlight that this is so individuals can thrive 'as a child of God'. Leaders, including governors, ensure the vision guides their planning, including when they need to make important strategic decisions. They are mindful to ensure that the school's vision offers a 'richness of experience for children to flourish'. Leaders know how the Christian values are intrinsic to the daily life of the school. The natural way in which the Christian vision and values are embedded is inspirational and highly effective.

The school's curriculum is challenging and ambitious. Shaped by the vision, it enables pupils to use and develop their unique, and individual, gifts and talents. The curriculum is enhanced by a broad range of meaningful visits and wider opportunities. Pupils are therefore empowered to be confident learners, able to develop their knowledge and understanding over a broad range of areas. It is intentionally built on a 'language of values'. These are closely matched to the school's 'learning wheel' which links Christian values with real-life opportunities. This encourages pupils and adults to be responsible and mindful learners. Love and respect are evident throughout the curriculum. Staff effectively use the natural beauty of the school's location to maximise learning opportunities for pupils. Curriculum-based experiences and extensive wider curriculum provision help pupils to develop a sense of curiosity on their personal journey of spirituality.

Collective worship is inviting, meaningful and inclusive. Pupils' views, whether they have a personal faith or not, are respected and valued with a powerful culture of acceptance. Worship offers collaborative moments for reflection, engagement and discussion. Pupils are encouraged not only to take part in worship, but to have ownership of it. A range of worship resources inspire and draw in pupils and adults, enabling them to experience different Christian traditions. Staff and pupils work collectively to lead worship. This enhances the sense of togetherness and develops pupils' self-confidence and enthusiasm for this important time in the school day. Spiritual reflection and personal development are at the heart of shared worship experiences. Through carefully planned moments, pupils and adults deepen connections with each other and with their own spirituality. Leaders create dedicated space to provide spiritual moments when adults and pupils can 'just be'. The shared language of 'windows, mirrors, doors' provides an effective tool allowing them to reflect on their own spiritual journey. School and the local church community are keen to strengthen their relationship, rightly accepting the potential benefit of more collaborative work. This is to enhance the way it provides meaningful opportunities for those involved to flourish spiritually.

The Christian vision creates a culture where pupils and adults are treated well. Staff build strong relationships with the pupils in their care. They model positive behaviour and attitudes which inspire pupils' development and growth. They directly benefit from the love, care and support that staff demonstrate towards them each day. The vision creates a deeply embedded sense of the school being one loving family. Consequently, a culture which prioritises the wellbeing of all enriches lives. Staff support each other as professionals but also with love and compassion through any challenging circumstances they face. This ensures they know that they are valued and belong to a caring school community. They provide moments for pupils' physical, social,

emotional, academic and spiritual development. Difference is respected and celebrated through the vision and culture of the school. Pupils demonstrate the importance of diversity and appreciate that each person is uniquely made in 'God's image'. The vision of 'love your neighbour' ensures those who come to Grasmere feel a warmth of welcome. They feel protected and cared for in their new community. Consequently, acceptance and love are realities that are lived out each day.

There is a strong culture of justice for all in school. Through its vision and associated values, the school empowers pupils to be responsible citizens. They understand the importance of being given a voice to help bring about change in the local and wider communities. Using their knowledge of Bible stories and Christian values, pupils make changes because of their actions. This comes from their clear sense that all have the right to live in a just society. Their active response to highlighting climate issues shows how they make mature and impactful decisions. Following a recent storm in their area leaving limited road access, pupils have written to Parliament. As a direct result of their actions, the school has seen a positive outcome to the situation. Inspired by the vision, pupils stand up to injustice and are effective agents of change.

A creative and inspiring RE curriculum is implemented by staff. Most pupils say they enjoy RE lessons and are enthusiastic in their responses. There is a culture where pupils share and discuss their own learning in RE. Classrooms are safe places where pupils can openly express their personal thoughts and views. They are good at listening to each other and enjoy discussion in a respectful manner. RE is taught in a variety of creative ways which engage pupils. There are a wide range of opportunities for them to encounter living faith through visits and visitors in school. RE teaching enables pupils to develop their religious literacy and to build on prior learning. Working alongside the RE lead and the diocese, staff are well-supported by the latest local and national guidance. Staff follow a well-sequenced, progressive curriculum which helps pupils deepen their knowledge. School leaders are highly ambitious. Therefore, they are rightly keen to further enhance the breadth of the RE curriculum and implement a revised system of assessment. Proactive work to develop this is at an early stage so the impact is not yet clear.

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

Information

Inspection date	27 June 2024	URN	112319
VA/VC/Academy	VA	Pupils on roll	81
Diocese	Carlisle		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Johanna Goode		
Chair	Dominic Kelly		
Inspector	Andrew Kay	No.	C23/24