

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bembridge Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Vision

Our vision is for our children to learn to love God, one another and themselves through our core Christian values of love, courage and respect. Our curriculum inspires excellence and challenges our children to be their best. Everyone feels valued. We grow children who show LOVE to all. Our children demonstrate COURAGE and show RESPECT. We build strong relationships to ensure everyone feels nurtured and safe. We want our children to have positive emotional and mental health and an understanding of their place in the wider world. We will value differences, ensure a love of learning and all strive to be the best we can be.

Strengths

- The strong Christian vision at Bembridge Church of England Primary is lived out through the values of love, courage and respect. Its impact is evident within the school. Pupils show and receive love and respect. As a result, they feel valued and try very hard to give their best. They flourish.
- Collective worship encourages spiritual growth. Pupils and adults are refreshed and inspired by this special time of day. This often influences the actions they take in their lives.
- The school provides a calm, safe and nurturing environment. Pupils get on well together and take responsibility for one another. It is highly inclusive. Those pupils who are vulnerable, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given extra consideration. As a result, they thrive.
- Leaders and governors are committed to the ethos and development of Bembridge as a church school. They monitor and evaluate its work and the impact of the vision. As an expression of this, ensuring the wellbeing of staff and pupils is a matter of extreme importance.
- The strong partnership with the local church is very fruitful. It provides highly effective personal, emotional and pastoral support to the school.

Development Points

- Develop pupils' understanding of spirituality and how they might express it. This is to help deepen their personal spiritual development.
- Strengthen the opportunities for pupils to think about becoming more actively involved in fostering justice outside of school. This is to improve their awareness of how they can have an impact in the wider world.
- Extend pupils' knowledge of Christianity as a global worldwide faith. This is to ensure that they understand more fully the breadth of beliefs and practices which Christians have.



Inspection Findings

The impact of the Christian vision at Bembridge Primary School is evident from the moment you enter the building. It is highly relevant to the context, needs of the school and the island community. It is lived out through its Christian values of love, courage and respect. These are very thoroughly underpinned by biblical references. Surveys of pupils show that they know the values very well, and they influence their lives. Pupils belong to a school where they show care for one another, before thinking of themselves. Courage is evident in the way in which pupils persevere with work even when they find it challenging. They respect adults, knowing that their views are considered, and that they are listened to carefully.

Extremely dedicated leaders show care and compassion and model the vision through their actions. Pupil and parent surveys show that the school is highly inclusive. Vulnerable pupils and those who have SEND are given individual help with learning. This often transforms their lives. For example, the governors made provision for a sensory room to help pupils who needed this form of help. The curriculum is regularly evaluated to ensure it meets the aims of the vision. Extra-curricular provision is extensive. It encourages team building and the development of respect. There are a wide variety of clubs. This even includes a carnival club where pupils make the props and perform together at carnivals across the island. This demonstrates considerable courage by pupils. The governors are very conscientious. They are determined that the pupils should be provided with the opportunities to allow them to fulfil the vision. They have recently revised their monitoring and evaluation process. This now ensures they involve the views of a wider spectrum of governors rather than one link person. This is already having an impact. For example, prayer tables in classrooms have been updated, with new resources being provided.

There is an agreed understanding among staff about what spirituality encompasses. They use planned and unplanned opportunities, such as frost on the ground, to foster pupils' spiritual development. However, pupils have only a limited knowledge of what spirituality means to them, and they lack enough vocabulary to explain this.

The partnership with the local church is exceptional. As well as the regular visits from the local vicar to lead collective worship, church members help in many other ways. They assist at lunch times and on trips. They guide, and often lead, sessions with pupils when they visit the church as part of their lessons. They provide financial support to enable the school to help families in need. The church early years toddlers' group, 'church mice', links with the pre-school and with the Reception class. The Christian value of love is taught in both groups and hence the partnership working with the school begins at an early age. A new initiative from the diocese has seen the appointment of a spiritual worker in the school from the church. She is providing valuable pastoral support for both pupils and staff and is enhancing the impact of the vision.

Collective worship is regarded by pupils as a special part of the day. They know that this is a time when they gather to worship God, to pray and to reflect. Pupils light a candle and bring the cross to the table. This signifies the start of a sacred and spiritual time. Worship is inspiring. It is highly creative but at the same time very meaningful to pupils and adults. Pupils recalled when the vicar baked a cake to show how many ingredients it takes to produce an excellent outcome. Worship is firmly rooted in biblical references and stories, and this gives all a sense of belonging. Simple opening liturgical sentences are responded to with understanding and enthusiasm. Times of reflection develop pupils' spiritual thinking. Joyous singing is an uplifting occasion. Staff say this often moves them and they gain solace and comfort from the reflection time. Prayer, while invitational, is an important part of school life. Pupils know the Lord's Prayer and recite it meaningfully. They write prayers which they use in class collective worship. This time helps pupils and adults flourish spiritually.



The strong relationships which exist in the school community illustrate the effect of the vision. Pupils, leaders, staff and governors show care for the community they serve. Pupils clearly get on well together and talk openly about loving one's neighbour. For example, an older pupil, sensing a younger pupil's uncertainty in collective worship, guided him carefully. The school behaviour policy, with its emphasis on restorative and forgiving justice, supports the vision and is rooted in love. Staff and governors are attentive in ensuring pupils' wellbeing. Governors are assiduous in considering the mental health of staff. Support available to families is signposted in the weekly newsletter. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the way the school deals with any issues and helps their children through providing different strategies. Leaders and staff go well beyond what might be expected to help when the need arises. They support one another well and as one member of staff said, 'I never feel alone with a problem'. Pupils take their school responsibilities very seriously. Acting as ambassadors, sports leaders and buddies to pupils in Reception, they outwardly demonstrate respect and love.

Pupils know that they have a responsibility to those who are disadvantaged. Their contributions to the foodbank and other charities prove this. They visit a care home in the area and have made Christmas cards for a charity. Pupils respect the earth's resources and the eco group has just begun to develop its work outside of school. Pupils know about instances of justice and injustice in the world. However, there are few opportunities built into the curriculum for pupils to consider how they could make a difference to injustice.

Religious education (RE) meets the requirements for a Church of England school. Governors ensure that RE has enough resources to provide effective lessons. Training and advice from the diocese are thorough and well received by the RE lead. Other teachers in the school benefit from her knowledge and the training she gives to them. She ensures the curriculum is planned to develop knowledge and an appreciation of a variety of religions and non-religious world views. She monitors the implementation of the RE curriculum. Pupils talk about the variety of activities which they do in RE lessons. They like being able to ask lots of questions. However, pupils do not fully appreciate the variety of beliefs and practices which Christianity incorporates within Britain or worldwide.

Information

Address	Walls Road, Bembridge, Isle of Wight PO35 5RH		
Date	17 October 2024	URN	118181
Type of school	Maintained voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	183
Diocese	Portsmouth		
Headteacher	Elizabeth Chambers		
Chair of Governors	Deb Abell and Sally Davies		
Inspector	Marcia Headon		