

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Lawrence Church of England VA Primary School

Vision

Achieving together † Learning for life:

Our shared vision is to be a joyful and loving school community; rooted in clear Christian values, where every child participates, celebrates achievement and cares for the people and world around them.

Strengths

- Leaders have ensured the Christian vision is deeply embedded. It is at the heart of decision making and actions. This enables pupils and adults to achieve and flourish together.
- Partnerships and collaboration across this loving community are strong. Opportunities for professional development empower adults to foster a love for learning in pupils. As a result, they thrive.
- Collective worship is cherished by pupils and adults. An exceptionally strong partnership with the local church enriches the school's worship life.
- Wellbeing and mental health are a priority for leaders. The highly effective support given to pupils and adults ensures they feel loved, respected and cared for.
- Strong subject leadership in religious education (RE) is driving an evolving curriculum. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Development Points

- Further develop the current work on identifying opportunities to embed spirituality across the curriculum. This is to enhance experiences of spiritual flourishing for pupils and adults.
- Extend pupils' understanding of the concept of injustice in the world. This is so that they understand how to make a positive difference by acting as agents of change.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision, inspired by John 10:10 and articulated as 'Achieving together, Learning for life' is central to life at St Lawrence. Leaders clearly articulate how the vision informs strategic development. Staff and pupils talk with enthusiasm about how the vision and values are lived out. This provides a solid foundation through which pupils and adults can flourish. Governors know the school well. Staff appreciate their support and challenge with development priorities. The Christian ethos committee effectively monitors and evaluates the impact of the vision ensuring this remains central to the school's work. Highly effective relationships within the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust, are supported by partnerships with the diocese and church. These enable individuals to thrive within this loving community.

The vision guides and shapes the school's rich curriculum. The rural setting, backing onto the river Thames and beautiful grounds are used skillfully to enhance lessons and activities. In addition, links with an organic farm and a range of local experts further enrich the curriculum offer. Staff are rightly proud of this community centred approach. Governors, along with school and trust leaders, routinely evaluate the curriculum's impact. This ensures it continues to improve. The vision guides the school's work with pupils considered to be vulnerable and disadvantaged. Inclusivity is at the heart of this provision. Enhancing spiritual development opportunities within the curriculum is a priority for leaders. The use of the 'ows, wows, nows' approach is beginning to provide a shared language for pupils and adults to express their understanding. However, this is not articulated consistently meaning opportunities for spiritual flourishing are missed. A range of extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum further. For example, the Christian based explorers activity club is incredibly popular with pupils.

The vision is at the heart of collective worship, allowing pupils to relate teaching to their everyday lives. It is a cherished part of each day. Pupils love coming together with their peers and this instils a strong sense of belonging. Staff appreciate the spiritual space and time to reflect. Beautiful singing brings joy to those present. Pupils and staff alike value the opportunity to plan and lead worship. Staff share poignant examples of inspirational pupil-led worship challenging their thinking. Links with the local church are exceptionally strong and supportive. This partnership significantly enhances the school's worship life. Clergy are a regular presence in school providing much valued pastoral care and guidance. Pupils particularly enjoy the drama and role play brought by the committed Open the Book team. They delight in experiencing a different worship style. As a result, pupils can remember a range of Bible stories and teachings. Dedicated areas in each classroom provide a special space for prayer and reflection. Pupils engage meaningfully with a central interactive reflection area through activities and discussion. Combined, these approaches have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual flourishing.

The vision to be joyful and loving, enables leaders to create a caring community built on overwhelming love and respect. Relationships across the school are exceptionally strong. Pupils are polite, behave well, and support each other lovingly. Recent work to review the behaviour policy ensures they have a range of strategies to help them disagree peacefully and resolve disputes if needed. Year 6 buddies actively support Reception pupils to feel safe and part of the school. This enables them to show and develop responsibility and empathy. Warmth and compassion characterise these relationships. A glass heart, made by each buddy, journeys with pupils through the school. Kept in wooden hand carvings in classrooms, this is seen as being held by God. This has a profound impact in uniting and nurturing the school community. Mental health and wellbeing are priorities for leaders. Staff are overwhelmingly appreciative of how leaders actively encourage workload reduction. Staff feel valued and supported. A comprehensive range of development opportunities ensures they flourish professionally. Nurture sessions and play therapy have a striking impact on pupils. The Rainbow Room provides a special place where both pupils and adults can feel safe and supported.



Pupils actively contribute to living the school's vision through undertaking a range of leadership responsibilities. They serve one another proudly as school councillors, sports leaders and librarians. Guided by the vision to care for people and the world around them, pupils are inspired to support those in need. For example, pupils lobbied leaders to exchange end of term class treats for support for communities in war zones. School councillors are empowered to nominate charities to benefit from a range of fundraising activities. Pupils complete this task with impressive maturity, often in response to local events or challenges. These activities are beginning to develop their understanding of their role as agents of change. Pupils are ambitious and determined to have a greater impact. However, their understanding of injustice is variable. This means that opportunities for them to lead social action are not fully realised.

RE has a high status across the school. It is a priority for leaders, governors and teachers, reflecting the vision well. Pupils have a well-developed knowledge of biblical teaching. They demonstrate an impressive, detailed understanding of a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils give pertinent examples of how learning in RE helps them to enhance their understanding of the world. They see this as crucial to promoting respect and tolerance. Pupils are rightly proud of their work, both in RE books and celebrated on high quality displays. They enjoy their lessons and are curious in their learning. Challenging questions are explored through a range of thought-provoking activities. This enables pupils to extend and develop their thinking through informed and balanced discussions. The well-sequenced curriculum is complemented using additional resources. These are used successfully to further deepen pupils' knowledge of Christianity. The curriculum is enriched through a variety of visits to places of worship, both virtual and in-person. RE teaching is very effective. Leaders work meticulously to continually develop the curriculum. For example, work on task design is enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. These developments are ably supported by trust and diocesan training and guidance. Pupils' work is of a high standard. They make effective progress in RE because of the well-structured curriculum. A comprehensive approach to monitoring and assessment involving leaders and governors, checks how well pupils achieve over time. This information is used to continually enhance teaching and learning.

Information

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| Address | Wharf Lane, Lechlade. GL7 3AU | | |
| Date | 24 October 2024 | URN | 145524 |
| Type of school | Academy | No. of pupils | 180 |
| Diocese | Gloucester | | |
| MAT | Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT) | | |
| Headteacher | Gordon Soutar | | |
| Chair of Governors | Freya Moreby | | |
| Inspector | Christian McGuinness | | |