

# Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

## Northbourne Church of England Primary School

### Vision

Our vision of Nurturing Excellence and values of courage, compassion and community are inspired by the life of Peter, the fisherman who Jesus chose to be the leader of the early Christian Church. Peter, The Rock, was the foundation on which the church was built, just as our school is built on values that are the foundation stones on which we live our lives.

The image of Peter stepping out of the boat to meet Jesus (Matthew 14:22-33) captures the essence of our values: Peter had the courage to leave the safety of the boat; Jesus held out his hand with compassion to help; and the community of disciples willed Peter on.

Northbourne Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

### Strengths

- The Christian vision and values are integral to the school's ethos, nurturing excellence through courage, compassion and community.
- Collective worship is central to the life of the school, fostering a strong sense of community and shared purpose. It brings pupils, staff, and the wider school community together to reflect on big questions and develop personal faith.
- The vision fosters a nurturing culture that prioritises the wellbeing of pupils and adults, ensuring they feel valued and supported.
- Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and vulnerable pupils, are given opportunities to thrive. Barriers to learning are identified, understood, and addressed, empowering pupils to build confidence and believe in themselves.

### Development Points

- Embed the religious education (RE) curriculum and provide targeted, subject-specific professional development for teachers. This is to enhance teachers' confidence and expertise in delivering RE.
- Continue embedding the language of spirituality in the curriculum and collective worship to deepen pupils' understanding of spiritual concepts.



## Inspection Findings

The refreshed vision and values ignite the school's purpose and direction. Peter the Fisherman inspires the vision of 'Nurturing Excellence' through the values of courage, compassion, and community. These principles provide a clear framework for guiding pupils' and adults' thoughts, words, and actions. The school logo, including the 'Northbourne North Star,' effectively represents the vision and values reinforcing their significance. The Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST) vision of 'A common vision for the common good' resonates with the Northbourne vision. Leaders understand pupils' and staff's educational, spiritual and wellness needs, ensuring a supportive and purposeful environment. Dedicated governors ensure stability by visiting the school, evaluating the Christian vision's impact, and engaging with staff, pupils, and parents. This support is especially appreciated during periods of change.

Leaders ensure the curriculum aligns with the school's vision, emphasising inclusivity and excellence for pupils. This approach reflects a commitment to fostering an environment where every pupil can thrive, regardless of starting points or challenges. The school promotes a growth mindset in all areas, emphasising the 'Power of Yet' to inspire continuous learning and improvement. This approach helps pupils understand that challenges are growth opportunities, encouraging resilience and perseverance in their learning journey. Staff uphold the vision of 'Nurturing Excellence' by celebrating achievement for pupils, no matter how small. This emphasis on recognising individual achievements highlights the school's dedication to supporting individual pupil growth and success. Leaders are developing a shared understanding of spirituality across the school. Opportunities are provided for pupils to think about 'ourselves, others, the world's beauty and the world beyond.' Using the language of 'windows, mirrors, and doors' is becoming more common, encouraging reflection and exploration among pupils. However, this practice is not yet consistent in every classroom.

Collective worship is the school's heartbeat, driving its Christian vision and values and shaping its culture and ethos. It is inclusive, invitational and inspiring, providing a sense of belonging to the whole school community. Collective worship is meticulously planned, with themes woven into daily acts of worship. A sense of ceremony is created when pupils carry lanterns representing the light of Christ into worship. The lanterns are placed with the Bible, cross, candles, and value boats, providing a focus for reflection. Pupils collect and carry the lanterns out as reminders to reflect on the collective worship message and consider personal change. This act encourages them to carry the light with them in their lives. The 'Thoughtful Thursday' worship allows pupils to dig deeper and reflect on the week's big question. Parents talk positively about being welcomed into Friday worship, where pupils receive 'stepping out of the boat' awards. These awards are directly linked to Peter's story and the school's vision and values. Northbourne Church of England School has ties with the local church, St. Peter's. Key religious and school events are celebrated at the church throughout the year. Collective worship greatly impacts the spiritual flourishing of adults and pupils, fostering growth, reflection, and a shared sense of purpose.

The school fully embraces its vision of 'Nurturing Excellence,' creating a community where everyone is valued and supported. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of both pupils and staff, fostering an environment of care and mutual respect. Parents and carers feel confident sharing concerns, knowing they will receive help and understanding. Staff are deeply aware of individual needs, addressing them through personalised approaches. Vulnerable pupils receive tailored support, ensuring they feel safe, valued, and cared for. Respect and kindness toward pupils reflect the school's dedication to celebrating the uniqueness of every member of its community. Staff feel supported by leaders and empowered by the school's vision and values, which guide their daily actions. Team members actively



support one another, recognising when someone may need encouragement or assistance. This culture of care strengthens the bonds among staff and enhances their ability to support pupils effectively. The school empowers individuals to thrive at every stage, supporting parents, teachers, and leaders in their growth. In partnership with the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST), Northbourne prioritises staff development, cultivating a culture of continuous progression.

Pupils at Northbourne have a strong voice and recognise their power to educate others and create positive change. They showcase this by sharing experiences, raising awareness, supporting campaigns, and organising fundraisers for local and global issues. Their actions reflect a deep sense of responsibility and commitment to improving the environment and the lives of others. The school council amplifies the voices of their peers, advocating for their school, local community, and the wider world. Pupils take their collective responsibilities seriously and are confident that their views are heard. They have tackled food waste in school and help to address food poverty in their local community. Their thoughtful actions include improving school playtimes by prioritising sustainability. They chose to recycle, source second-hand or purchase sustainable equipment instead of replacing it with new plastic items. They are revitalising 'Molly's Garden' into a sensory space for quiet reflection. These initiatives highlight their dedication to making meaningful and sustainable changes within their environment.

RE is valued in the curriculum and beyond. It is taught weekly by class teachers and enjoyed by pupils. The curriculum balances Christianity with other worldviews, promoting inclusivity and giving students a broader understanding of diverse faiths. Pupils confidently identify similarities across religions. They feel safe and supported when sharing their views, beliefs and faith with others during RE lessons. They recognise that faith and religion are personal rights and respect individual beliefs. Pupils demonstrate a strong sense of empathy and moral responsibility towards others. The RE leader stays up-to-date with national developments and research. Lessons centred on big questions promote curiosity and encourage deep thinking. Teachers use 'I wonder...' prompts to extend reflection, helping pupils explore ideas further through meaningful discussions. A training programme, developed in partnership with the local diocese, is in place to embed the curriculum. This will build upon the existing good practice and strengthen teachers' understanding of RE, improving lesson planning and delivery. As a result, pupils will build upon previous learning, gain a deeper understanding of RE and retain knowledge more effectively. Northbourne and the ODST share a deep commitment to educational excellence, focusing on the growth of each individual. Together, they aim to serve pupils, staff, parents, and the local community with dedication and care.

## Information

Address	Cockcroft Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 8JL		
Date	3 December 2024	URN	144688
Type of school	Academy (formerly VA)	No. of pupils	342
Diocese/District	Oxford		
MAT/Federation	Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust		
Headteacher	Andrew Denham		
Chair of Governors	Kate Woods		
CEO	Anne Dellar		
Chair of Trustees	Kathryn Winrow		
Inspector	Pamela Howell		