

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

<b>Sherston Church of England VC Primary School</b>	
Address	Knockdown Road, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 ONJ
School vision	
<p>Learning, Caring and Achieving Together</p> <p>Underpinned by Mark 2:1-12 which tells the story of individuals coming together with a shared purpose to bring a paralysed man to Jesus.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspirational leaders have strengthened the impact of the Christian vision enabling the school and wider communities to come ‘together’. This strongly affects pupils’ learning, behaviour and wellbeing.</li> <li>• The school’s exciting and highly engaging curriculum reflects the Christian vision by explicitly enabling pupils to ‘learn’ and ‘achieve together.’</li> <li>• Worship is central to daily life at Sherston. It provides meaningful moments in which all can flourish spiritually. This is due to the powerful impact of the vision.</li> <li>• The school creates a culture of exceptional support and encouragement. This is inspired by the vision of ‘caring together’ which reflects Christian care for its community. This ensures that adults and pupils are treated well.</li> <li>• Very effective leadership in religious education (RE) has established a challenging and relevant curriculum which enhances pupils’ learning. As a result, pupils enjoy learning RE. This has a positive impact on their understanding of a range of faiths and world views, including Christianity.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the way the Christian vision drives the work of the school by formally identifying areas for development.</li> <li>• Embed the school’s shared understanding of spiritual development and deepen experiences across the curriculum. This is to enable opportunities that can have a positive impact on pupils’ spiritual flourishing.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>A deeply Christian vision has been embedded at Sherston. The story of one of Christ’s miracles as told by St Mark, creates a vision which is the unifying force at the heart of this community. This powerful narrative of friends acting together to bring a paralysed man to Jesus, promotes aspiration and hope. Pupils fully understand the meaning of the vision and how it impacts them at a personal level. Consequently, it has a very positive effect on their learning and behaviour. Relevant professional development through the diocese enables leaders and staff to flourish and has beneficial outcomes on pupils’ learning. The church has a strong presence in school. As a result, this partnership profoundly enriches the life of the school. Governors have ensured that the school’s</p>	

vision has provided strategic direction over the recent period of transition. They know the school's strengths very well. However, their monitoring of the impact of the vision is informal. As a result, areas for development have not been formally identified.

The school's curriculum provides a great breadth of rich and creative experiences enabling the vision to be a living reality. It explicitly encourages all pupils to learn together in an exciting variety of collaborative ways. Consequently, the curriculum is inclusive, inspiring and motivating. There is a concerted approach to provide a stimulating, relevant and engaging curriculum which meets the needs of pupils. Extra-curricular activities, such as drama, art and young engineers provide experiences which strengthen pupils' interests and talents. Exciting visits and visitors enhance their learning. Pupils frequently participate in local charitable events such as picking crab apples and the playing boules festival. Fun events such as the leavers' 'Eurovision Party Day' are much anticipated. As a result of far sighted and energetic school leaders' actions, the potential of pupils identified as disadvantaged is being transformed. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and greatly value their time in school. Staff and pupils have a developing shared understanding of spirituality. This now has a greater impact on learning and wellbeing. However, there is not a structured plan in place to develop spiritual and ethical awareness across the curriculum.

Collective worship is the heartbeat of the school community, enabling all to flourish spirituality. This is because daily themes link explicitly to the Christian vision and permeate the day. Worship embeds the vision and associated values in their biblical roots. For example, all are invited to reflect on the way David showed ambition in defeating the giant Goliath. The weekly contributions of church leaders to worship and to the celebration of Christian festivals in church are highly valued. They contribute significantly to spiritual flourishing. The school's Anglican foundation provides formal moments which promote love and service for others. In this way, the vision promotes a deep sense of spirituality that sustains all aspects of school life. It empowers and inspires pupils to feel confident and secure of their place in this loving community. Children say that music helps them 'learn about God', promoting spiritual flourishing. Pupils' heartfelt and inspirational singing contrasts very effectively with moments of quiet, prayer and stillness. Reflection spaces are integral to daily life and are used well at a personal level by pupils.

Sherston is a warm, caring community where pupils and adults are treated well. The vision has a profound effect on the way that pupils and adults care for one another. Strong, supportive relationships are central to life. These are promoted very effectively by the use of a wide range of class 'talking partners' who change frequently. Consequently, pupils feel they are helped to learn by the care of their peers as well as their teachers. Heartfelt positive comments from other pupils are included on awards for individuals showing caring behaviour. In this way, pupils' feelings of self-worth and confidence are enhanced. Older children encourage younger ones during social times when all ages mix well together. They show empathy for new arrivals enabling them to gain friends and settle quickly. A high priority is placed on the mental health and wellbeing of all. A range of strategies are used to create a calming school environment highly valued by pupils. Staff form a stable and cohesive team, encouraged and supported by each other and by leaders.

The school's vision creates a respectful culture of justice and responsibility. As a result, school is a place where interactions are based on mutual respect and trust. This strengthens the sense of a cohesive community. Pupils understand the need to show responsibility by their behaviour within school and beyond. Consequently, the school's partnership with this vibrant, highly active village enriches all involved. Pupils participate in a huge variety of events led by the community. In this way, much time and support is provided by local residents for the pupils. An annual 'thank you' concert given to volunteers by the pupils is much appreciated. These strong partnerships widen pupils' understanding of their immediate community beyond school and affirm their vision of caring and achieving together. Themed learning includes the world's rainforests and black role models. As a

result, pupils feel empowered to make ethical choices and raise issues of injustice. They lead the school's actions on reducing waste including the use of single use plastic. They have written to their local MP supporting the village's fight against the closure of the local surgery.

RE is highly prominent at heart of this Church school curriculum. It is an inspiring, motivating and enjoyable subject which has a very positive impact on life at school. The subject leader ensures that the RE curriculum is well planned and effectively balanced. It is fully focused on meeting the needs of all pupils as they progress through the school. Whole school themed weeks on world religions and worldviews include visitors, such as one recently from the Sikh faith. These events have a powerful impact on pupils' engagement. In this way, they recognise the relevance of RE to their lives. Good use is made of the village church as a resource for learning about Christianity. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and think deeply about their own beliefs and those of others. Consequently, discussions provoke insightful responses from pupils and so make a substantial contribution to spiritual development in RE. Up to date training from the diocese has a beneficial impact on the subject leader who ensures staff are supported well.

The inspection findings indicate that Sherston Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church School.

Information			
Inspection date	11 June 2024	URN	126356
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	115
Diocese	Bristol		
MAT/Federation			
headteacher	Tommy Towers		
Chair	Belinda Robinson		
Inspector	Daphne Spitzer	No.	37