

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Paul's Church of England (VC) Junior School

Vision

'One body, every person, growing together'

"All of us together are Christ's body, each of us is a part of it" (1 Corinthians 12.27)

Our vision is to provide, for each and every child in the school, a loving, caring environment based on Christian principles, in which each individual can develop their full potential, educationally, morally and spiritually, and to provide the same quality of care and concern for all adults involved within our school community.

Strengths

- The Christian vision 'one body, every person, growing together' is an intrinsic part of school life, bringing everyone together as a loving community. Thoughtfully crafted by different members of the community, it underpins the school's identity.
- Rooted in the school's values of care and kindness, positive relationships are at the heartbeat of this happy, welcoming school. This enables pupils and adults to flourish.
- Underpinned by the Christian vision, prayer is a special expression of the school's caring, inclusive ethos. The school prayer carries great meaning within the school community, bringing comfort in times of difficulty.
- Pastoral support is central to the school's work. This means that pupils and adults feel a strong sense of belonging; they are known and nurtured as individuals.
- Religious Education (RE) is led by a passionate and knowledgeable subject leader. As a result, the RE curriculum is challenging and relevant, enabling pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding, whilst gaining a sense of belonging.

Development Points

- Enhance the use of the vision in the monitoring and evaluation of the school as a Church school. This is to sustain and develop the work of leaders and governors in ensuring that the Christian vision always remains central to the school's ongoing development.
- Embed a shared language and understanding of spirituality. This will strengthen the opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum and collective worship.
- Further enrich the curriculum with wider opportunities to develop pupils' active responsibility. This will enable them to further extend the impact of the school's Christian vision, both locally and globally.



Inspection Findings

Pupils and adults are surrounded by love in this happy, welcoming school. It is a special place of nurture. At the heart of the school's Christian vision, everyone is regarded as a valuable part of the school community; 'one body, every person, growing together'. Thoughtfully woven into all areas of school life, this vision guides leaders and governors in their decisions. An example includes the significant investment made in reviewing and replacing classroom books, enabling pupils to feel represented within the books they encounter. Through the inspiration of the vision, people are known and appreciated as individuals. As a result, caring relationships are at the bedrock of school life. It is a place where adults feel called to serve the school and they feel inspired to stay. While the Christian vision is distinctly reflected in the life of the school, it is not used explicitly by leaders and governors in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's work as a Church school.

Written by pupils and adults, the school prayer brings comfort and togetherness. Pupils and adults find meaning from the words, which they recall from memory. Prayer is an important part of the day, offering stillness and reflection for everyone. When the whole school gathers for collective worship, a feeling of calm and care permeates the hall. As part of their 'governor days' in school, governors cherish the opportunities to monitor and experience the full breadth of worship life. They recognise how worship contributes to spiritual flourishing. Because worship is thoughtfully planned, pupils remember key themes and they gain a deepened understanding of their school values. They appreciate the 'takeaway' element of worship, that enhances their on-going spiritual reflection. This is further enriched by staff, who build on worship themes and moments of awe and wonder. Families attend special services and weekly celebrations; valuing these opportunities for growing together and the relationship with St. Paul's Church.

Driven by the vision, adults foster an inclusive ethos where pupils are cherished and their needs are met. One example is the school's outdoor learning provision; an inspiring initiative that enriches lives. It provides a place for all but especially for the school's most vulnerable pupils. Providing precious time to 'stop, notice, wonder and mend', the spiritual element of outdoor learning is appreciated. Wholly invitational, it is a calming, positive time that benefits everyone. Adults, for example, experience their own personal 'takeaway', and are equipped to develop spirituality within the classroom. Enriched by spirituality training, led by the diocese, staff have a growing understanding of what spirituality means to them and for the pupils in their care. As such, aspects of spirituality are recognised and considered across the life of the school. However, at present, there is not an agreed whole school language and approach to spirituality.

Leaders and staff care deeply about the families they serve. Shaped by the vision, the school's curriculum reflects the lives and heritage of families within the community. Although in its early implementation, pupils speak enthusiastically about topics from their diverse curriculum that empower them to consider justice and equality. Strengthened by the school's values, the curriculum enables pupils to empathise. Because the curriculum equips pupils to explore global issues, such as the slave trade and modern-day war, they are developing their own sense of responsibility. Pupils, for example, care about the lives of refugees and water shortages. The curriculum provides a powerful window into the world. However, at present, the school curriculum, does not promote pupils' active responsibility for issues such as these.

Every effort is made to understand and care for people as individuals. Reinforced by the vision, staff recognise that every person has an important role to play in achieving this. Learning mentors, for instance, are instrumental in supporting pupils to flourish. As modelled by leaders, they offer pastoral support, grounded in compassion. Guided by this ethos, pupils and adults thrive within a nurturing environment. As an example, the school offers a bespoke range of extra-curricular activities and parents appreciate the tailored approach on offer. Entwined in the vision of 'everyone growing together', the school ensures that pupils have access to a full



breadth of opportunities. Leaders and governors prioritise mental health and wellbeing, creating a supportive culture where care is a priority.

Pupils are inspired by the annual visit from the Wokingham Foodbank, which results in an abundance of food donations each year. Leaders take pride in the school's support for various charities; many of which are meaningful to pupils and their families. Caring relationships are central to everything and this is evident in the school's unique approach to transition. 'Big swap' week is a memorable part of the school calendar, enabling pupils and adults to connect as a new class community. This initiative contributes to the calm and positive environment of the school, further upheld by the school's behaviour policy that is rooted in love, with reflection and restoration at the heart. As testament to this, pupils take responsibility for one another and exclusions have reduced significantly.

Serving a diverse community, the RE curriculum is broad and ambitious. Led with expertise, RE is as an important subject where pupils explore big questions about Christianity as a global faith and other world religions. Underpinned by themes of 'believing, belonging and behaving', pupils are challenged to think deeply about different beliefs, practice and traditions. Lessons are thoughtfully planned, enabling pupils to extend their understanding through a range of relevant, fun and interesting activities. Tasks are adapted to support all pupils to achieve well. There is a clear vision for RE, which staff are supported to deliver. This is further enhanced by the leader's and staff engagement in diocese training. Upheld by the vision, the RE unit on Humanism is taught during 'big swap' week, guiding pupils to reflect on their learning from across the year, while considering the school's values. Each class is rightly proud of their personalised 'floor book'; which captures pupils' spiritual reflections.

Information

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| Address | Oxford Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 2YJ | | |
| Date | 18.9.2024 | URN | 109987 |
| Type of school | Junior (VC) | No. of pupils | 374 |
| Diocese | Oxford | | |
| MAT/Federation | | | |
| Headteacher | Julieanne Taylor | | |
| Chair of Governors | Penelope Wallace | | |
| Inspector | Carmella Reece (2301) | | |