



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Wychwood Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Milton Road, Shipton-under-Wychwood, OX7 6BD

School vision

Our vision is taken from Philippians 2.15 'Shine as Lights in the World'
At Wychwood we aspire to shine as lights in the world, fostering a life-long love for learning. Building a strong community through loving relationships, together we are curious about the world with an understanding of our responsibility to care for it and in doing so promoting respect for people and the planet.

School strengths

- Leaders have created a powerful, well-articulated vision that is clearly understood. This ensures that pupils and adults can 'Shine as Lights in the World' and flourish.
- Partnerships and relationships in this loving community are strong. Opportunities for professional development for adults empowers them to foster a love for learning in pupils and consequently they thrive.
- The Christian vision has ensured that worship is inclusive and inspirational where individuals show a deep respect for each other. This enables pupils and adults to flourish spirituality.
- Wellbeing and mental health are a priority for leaders. The support given enables pupils and adults to feel valued, loved and cared for.
- The strong vision has shaped the Religious Education (RE) curriculum ensuring that it is well-planned and taught. Consequently, pupils learn well in the subject.

Areas for development

- Review the current definition of spirituality so that it is personal to the school. This is in order to strengthen and deepen the spiritual experiences offered to all.
- Further develop pupils' use of RE vocabulary, so they can explore and reflect more deeply on the key concepts studied.
- Strengthen the opportunities for pupils to be advocates for social change. This is to enable them to recognise the positive impact their charitable actions have on others.

Inspection findings

The Christian vision of enabling all to 'Shine as Lights in the World' is central to life at Wychwood School. Pupils are extremely confident at expressing how it is relevant to them. They proudly say, 'it means we aspire to be the best version of ourselves that we can be.' This clearly articulated vision provides a solid foundation through which pupils and adults can flourish. Governors effectively monitor and evaluate the implementation of the vision and Christian values. Leaders know their school well and are making astute decisions that lead to improvement. Highly effective partnerships



with the diocese and church are enabling individuals to thrive within this loving community.

The vision inspired by 'Shine as Lights' is deeply embedded throughout the school's bespoke curriculum. Staff are passionate about the experiences they offer and promote a love for learning. Carefully chosen resources and adult guidance, ensures that vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities succeed. Enriching activities and sporting partnerships with Burford schools are beneficial enabling all to shine and flourish. International weeks and cultural experiences are advantageous in developing pupils' understanding of their place in the world. Activities to deepen spiritual development such as outdoor lessons are built into learning. The recent Year 6 residential gave opportunities to try new activities and demonstrate their values. This further developed their life-skills, resilience and cooperation. The outside quiet space and classroom reflection areas provide places for stillness and contemplation. Spiritual growth is enhanced as pupils contribute their own prayers to the classroom book. Reflection area monitors ensure these spaces and displays are meaningful and inspire others as seen in their 'resilience stars'. Although there is an agreed understanding of spirituality it is not personal to the school community and learning experiences offered.

The school's Christian vision is at the heart of collective worship. All are welcomed to join in and recognise that it is a special time together. Worship begins by lighting a candle and saying three responses that remind them of their commitment to the school vision. Everyone is welcome to join in with The Lord's Prayer allowing time for stillness and individual reflection. Spiritual flourishing is further deepened by pupils' enthusiasm for singing, as evident during an uplifting rendition of 'Shine Jesus Shine'. All are invited to shake hands to demonstrate friendship and leave worship with a values linked reflection to consider. A range of visitors enrich the worship and motivate all individuals to 'Shine as Lights'. Services and visits to the local churches are valued and support the pupils' understanding of Christian festivals. Pupils have a strong knowledge of Bible stories which reflects the inspiring and memorable worship provided by the church community. They can explain the meaning of stories they have heard and how they relate to their everyday lives.

The vision enables leaders to create a loving and respectful environment with a strong sense of community. Individuals treat each other with respect and dignity and consequently they feel appreciated and cared for. Pupils are well-behaved and polite. They talk with respect for the different views and faiths of others celebrating these differences. They have strategies to help them live well together and resolve disputes if needed. They demonstrate values of resilience, friendship, and empathy and therefore feel safe, included and valued. Pupils are clear they could approach any staff member with concerns knowing that these would be dealt with respectfully. The Christian vision empowers leaders to prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of all. Adults clearly enjoy working at the school and support each other. Staff recognise leaders look after their wellbeing and workload with compassion. This enables them to create a nurturing and loving environment for pupils. The wide range of networking and training provided, ensures that staff, including leaders, can flourish professionally. As a result, adults are knowledgeable and committed to ensuring all pupils can aspire to shine and reach their potential. The wider community are welcomed to joint events such as the annual fireworks, village fetes and scarecrow trail. These strong relationships ensure that the Christian vision continues to be a living reality.

Adults support pupils to help charities such as Children in Need and Katherine House Hospice. At Harvest they donate to the foodbank. However, they do not fully understand the impact their fundraising and donations can have on others. Pupils relish the chance to be responsible citizens as reflection area, sports or language leaders. They aspire to become members of the school or eco council. These opportunities give them a keen sense of responsibility and support them in challenging injustice. Encouraged by the vision, pupils are keen to care for the environment. By litter picking and recycling their rubbish they understand small actions can make a difference to the

planet. Their work on single-use plastics and water testing on the River Evenlode is promoting an understanding of global issues. This contributes to helping pupils to speak out about the effects of pollution and to be advocates for change.

Driven by the vision, RE has high priority across the school. The diocese scheme and enrichment weeks provide a curriculum that is well-sequenced. Leaders ensure teachers are well-supported through diocesan training that is up-to-date and relevant. Pupils are passionate about their RE learning. They rightly say, ‘we learn about different religions so we respect each other and don’t upset people.’ They are curious in their learning and challenging big questions are explored through debates, drama, art and thought-provoking activities. Pupils study a balance of Christianity and other worldviews and gain a thorough knowledge of these. They talk with understanding about major festivals such as Easter and Diwali. Visits that include the local churches and Islamic art at the Ashmolean Museum, enhance teaching and learning. Flashbacks in RE support the recall of previous learning and accurate assessment informs future planning. Pupils are less confident using subject specific language to demonstrate their knowledge. Teachers know how well their pupils are doing in RE and leaders have a clear action plan. The recent work on improving expectations has had a positive impact and consequently pupils flourish in their RE learning.

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

Information			
Inspection date	28 February 2024	URN	123176
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	302
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Joseph Rubba		
Chair	Danielle Wilden		
Inspector	Paula Shaw	No.	2245