

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Burghfield St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Vision

I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13)

Our vision is to create a caring Christian learning environment that inspires each individual in the school community to fulfil their unique potential and become a responsible, concerned, and active member of God's world.

Burghfield St Mary's 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.

Notable Strengths

- The school's Christian vision drives many aspects of its work. Its values are deeply embedded. They are understood and valued by pupils and modelled by staff.
- The school's firm commitment to inclusion and wellbeing helps pupils to thrive. Pupils are valued as individuals and supported to achieve their best.
- There are many opportunities for prayer and reflection during the school day. This makes a powerful contribution to pupils' spiritual growth.
- Staff are trusted and supported by senior leaders, which enables them to flourish.
- Pupils know the meaning and importance of justice and are well-informed about issues of national and global importance. They benefit from a wide range of activities that help them explore how to make the world a better place.

Development Points

- Develop a sharper understanding of spirituality and how this can be reflected across the curriculum. This is to maximise opportunities for pupils' spiritual development through all aspects of school life.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The school's Christian vision is reflected throughout school life. Pupils are valued as individuals and supported to realise their potential. The belief that anything is possible with Christ's strength is an encouragement to pupils and staff alike. The school's Christian values of faith, hope and love are deeply embedded. These values are reflected in seven expectations for pupils, which they know, understand and can articulate. This has created a welcoming, nurturing and happy school community that pupils and staff are grateful to be part of. Pupils of different age groups interact well together, with older pupils taking responsibility for those younger than them. Leaders demonstrate an unwavering commitment to inclusion and wellbeing. This has had a transformational impact on a number of pupils. There is a strong partnership between the school and the local parish church. Governors know the school well. They regularly visit and seek feedback from pupils and staff as well as attending collective worship. This enables them to evaluate the impact of the vision and values on pupils' spiritual growth.

Vision and Curriculum

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is engaging and motivating for pupils. The termly topics help pupils understand the links between different subjects and themes. They enable pupils to study in depth and to experience working together in mixed age groups. There are rich learning experiences beyond the classroom. These help ignite pupils' curiosity about the world around them and create a sense of awe and wonder. The school also provides a range of extra-curricular activities that develop pupils' talents, confidence and character. There are parts of the curriculum that could contribute to pupils' spiritual development and understanding of different worldviews. However, the guidance for teaching staff about how to do this is not clear.

Worship and Spirituality

Daily collective worship and prayer are at the heart of school life, reinforcing the school's Christian vision and values. One pupil explained that worship 'helps us feel that God is near us and can help us'. Each day begins with whole school worship led by senior staff or local church leaders. Stories and passages from the Bible, along with songs and prayers, help pupils learn about, and reflect on, important Christian themes. On a half-termly basis, a school service takes place in the parish church. This helps pupils, families and staff to feel part of the local church community and experience Christianity as a living faith. With support from the diocese, one of the school governors facilitates times for calm, guided reflection for Key Stage 2 pupils in small groups. This enables pupils to explore their faith or feelings about the world on a personal level within a safe space. Pupils describe how different aspects of collective worship, such as prayer, contribute to their spiritual life. They are invited to write prayers in their own words that are then compiled in a classroom prayer book. This helps them experience the encouragement that can come from personal prayer. Year 6 worship leaders contribute to collective worship in a number of ways. These include lighting the candle, saying the welcome and leading the closing prayer. This helps increase pupils' engagement in school worship and contributes to their spiritual flourishing.

Vision and School Culture

The wellbeing of pupils and staff is a high priority for school leaders and governors. Staff model positivity and healthy, supportive relationships in their interactions with each other and with pupils and their families. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, collective worship and during social times is exemplary. Pupils care for each other, and they say that unkindness is rare 'because we respect each other'. The positive behaviours are reinforced through the charter that each class compiles and agrees to. Working with specialist external agencies, the school provides strong and effective pastoral care, regardless of the complexity of pupils' individual needs. Pupils are encouraged to believe in their own potential, reflecting the school's vision. This helps them to flourish in terms of their learning and personal development. Leaders are committed to providing support for pupils' mental health. This is particularly helpful for the large number of pupils from service backgrounds. Each classroom has a 'worry box' and a 'wonder box'. Pupils use these to share concerns or questions, anonymously if they wish, which their teacher then addresses with the class. This reassures pupils that their anxieties and uncertainties are taken seriously. Staff also appreciate the positive, caring and collaborative working



environment that leaders have created. Leaders are approachable and staff are trusted. As well as investing in their professional development and work-life balance, leaders support staff during times of personal challenge.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Leaders provide a range of opportunities for pupils to take personal responsibility for aspects of school life. Year 6 pupils can apply for a number of leadership positions, depending on their interests and aptitudes. This enables them to serve as role models to younger pupils. Pupils in all year groups are appointed to the school council. In line with the school's vision, pupils are encouraged to suggest practical projects to support charities or community initiatives. These include collecting clothes and shoes for refugees, donating food to the local foodbank and litter picking in the local park. Older pupils, in particular, know the meaning and importance of justice. They are well-informed about some issues of national and global importance, such as the causes and consequences of climate change, poverty and political conflict. Pupils can explain the difference between equality, equity and justice. They benefit from a wide range of activities that help them explore how to make the world a better place. Their environmental awareness is particularly impressive as a result of the 'eco curriculum'. For example, pupils can join the school's 'tree council' and plant saplings in a nursery created within the school grounds.

Religious Education

Pupils recognise the importance of religious education (RE) within the curriculum and its value for their future lives. They show respect for, and interest in, different religions. A revised curriculum has been introduced based on updated local guidance. It includes coverage of non-religious, as well as religious, worldviews. Pupils learn about what people believe, how they live and what they think. The curriculum enables pupils to make meaningful connections between different religious beliefs and practices. It also helps pupils to understand that Christianity is a global faith with many different expressions. The nominated member of the governing body monitors the delivery and impact of the RE curriculum. They look carefully at pupils' work as well as seeking their feedback. This helps leaders ensure that the curriculum is of a high standard and is relevant and motivating for pupils.

Information

Address	Theale Road, Reading RG30 3TX		
Date	21 September 2026	URN	109956
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	201
Diocese	Oxford		
Headteacher	Karen Carmichael		
Chair of Governors	Jane Bell		
Inspector	Andy Yarrow		