

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

### Monks Risborough Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

A school family where everyone thrives in every way.

Jesus said, 'I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.' John 10:10

At the heart of our school is family where all are welcome. We celebrate being part of God's family where everybody respects others, the world around them and also themselves. Guided by our Christian values, it is our ambition to motivate and inspire everyone to be lifelong, resilient and enthusiastic learners. We aspire to equip every child to meet the challenges of an everchanging world, and to reach out to the wider community.

Monks Risborough 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 school's Christian vision is central to all its work. Leaders' actions flow from the vision and decisions are measured against it. It enables leaders to make difficult decisions with the best of intentions for their pupils and staff.
- Pupils, parents and staff are supported by the strong sense of community which leaders have built over time. The sense of family is perceptible throughout the school.
- Highly effective support is available to pupils who need it, both long and short term. Vulnerable pupils and those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) thrive due to the dedication and determination of staff.
- Leaders place the utmost importance on enabling everyone to live well. Pupils know that each one of them is a unique child of God. They actively value, respect and celebrate difference.
- Religious education (RE) across the school is strong. Learning is well planned and sequenced to enable pupils to build on their knowledge over time. Training for staff is prioritised, enabling pupils to achieve through a variety of learning activities.

#### Development Points

- Enhance opportunities for reflection in classrooms. This is to support pupils to experience personal spirituality more deeply.
- Develop pupils' understanding of justice beyond their immediate community. This is to enable them to be more outward looking and become effective advocates for justice.



## Inspection Findings

Monks Risborough is a welcoming and inclusive church school. Leaders have successfully created a strong sense of family in which adults and pupils are enabled to flourish. The school's Christian vision, created by the whole school community, is understood and owned by pupils, governors and staff. It is securely rooted in John 10:10, with leaders firmly focused on providing opportunities for all to thrive. Governors know the school well. They use the school's vision to make strong strategic plans and evaluate their effectiveness. This ensures the focus is always on enabling all to succeed. In times of difficulty, leaders return to the vision to support their decision making. Sometimes this means making courageous strategic choices on behalf of pupils and families. Governors regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the vision, ensuring it continues to be appropriate to the community the school serves. Staff development is carefully nurtured, with leaders identifying potential and supporting a wide range of training opportunities. As a result, adults are enabled to develop their professional skills for the benefit of pupils.

The curriculum on offer at Monks Risborough is carefully constructed to be accessible and relevant to all. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils who have SEND. Consequently, learning activities are carefully adapted and scaffolded to enable pupils to access learning regardless of their needs. As a result, parents and carers rightly believe their children are well-supported and pupils recognise and value each other's achievements. Leaders have made arrangements to support pupils' emotional needs, recognising these needs must be met to enable effective learning. Additional well-trained staff have been deployed to teach pupils to manage their feelings using a variety of strategies. This enables individual pupils to regulate their emotions and return to learning calmly. Leaders are continually seeking to develop and refine the curriculum on offer. Spaces are provided to engage pupils in spiritual reflection within classrooms. However, these are not fully utilised. Pupils are not given enough support within these spaces to help them engage deeply with their own spirituality.

Collective worship is the daily heartbeat of the school. Planning worship over time has a high priority and leaders are well supported by members of the parish clergy team. Carefully chosen core values provide monthly themes around which are built 'big questions' for pupils and adults to ponder. Consequently, pupils can talk about the importance of values and how they have used them for themselves. They share these values at home and enjoy 'teaching' their parents and challenging them to answer the big questions. As a result, in-school worship reaches beyond the school gates and into the wider community. Adults and pupils enjoy worship and appreciate the time to come together as a whole school. Leaders are creative in their approach, with 'knitted Jesus' being a firm favourite. A whole school prayer station gives pupils the opportunity to write their own prayers in response to each act of worship. 'Whisper prayers' enable even the youngest pupils to participate. Pupils know their prayers will be blessed in church, further strengthening the links with the parish. Pupils are invited to lead some aspects of worship, such as beginning the Lord's Prayer. Leaders work hard to ensure praise is inclusive. Leaders ensure worship is inclusive. Makaton signs are used by the whole school to complement their singing which adds another element to their spiritual flourishing.

Leaders have worked hard to create a community in which pupils and staff are valued for who they are. Throughout the school, pupils' show a great deal of respect for one another. They understand that each one of them is a unique child of God with individual strengths and areas of need. As a result, pupils recognise their friends may access support or opportunities which they don't receive. Those who receive additional support value the time and effort adults give them, creating a culture of mutual support and appreciation. They know they can rely on adults to support them when things go wrong. Consequently, they challenge each other confidently and disagree peaceably.



The wellbeing of adults and pupils is a high priority. Leaders clearly understand the challenges to mental health and how to support members of their community. When planning school development, workload is considered and kept manageable. This encourages staff to feel valued and able to flourish both at work and at home. As a result, the community benefits from the expertise of several long-standing members of staff.

Pupils at Monks Risborough have a strong sense of justice. In keeping with the school's vision, the sense of family fosters strong relationships at all levels. Pupils actively take responsibility for themselves and each other in age-appropriate ways. They confidently give examples of situations they perceive as unfair and give eloquent suggestions for change. The school actively participates in charitable giving, supporting carefully chosen charities such as Comic Relief and the One Can initiative. Pupils know they are making a difference to the lives of others through their fundraising. Currently there are limited opportunities for pupils to consider and challenge injustice beyond their immediate experience. Consequently, pupils are not able to consider ethical questions beyond their locality.

RE has a high priority within the school. Learning is carefully structured and sequenced to allow pupils to build up their knowledge over time. Thoughtful decisions have been made about which religions and world views will be studied over time. Pupils learn about religious traditions, such as Holi and Diwali through carefully planned theme days. Inter-faith weeks are a strong feature of the school's work, incorporating faiths not included in the curriculum, such as Buddhism. Parents are invited to share their customs, giving pupils memorable, first-hand learning experiences. Leaders prioritise trips to places of worship for each class, ensuring everyone is included. As a result, pupils recall a great deal of knowledge from visits to mosques and synagogues. Pupils enjoy finding out about different faiths and understand how this knowledge will be beneficial to them in the future. Learning is recorded in different ways. This allows all pupils, including those with SEND, to flourish.

## Information

Address	Aylesbury Road, Monks Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9LZ		
Date	21 March 2025	URN	110434
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	210
Diocese/District	Oxford		
Headteacher	Amy Robinson		
Chair of Governors	Jane Curry		
Inspector	Victoria Burgess		