

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Horspath Church of England Primary School

Vision

‘You are the light of the world. A city standing on a hill cannot be hidden. Let your light shine in front of people, so that they might see the good things you do and give praise to your Father, who is in heaven.’ Matthew 5:14-16

Horspath C of E Primary School’s vision is to strive for excellence in all that we all do. We want to let our light shine - as pupils, colleagues and members of our local communities. We have high expectations for every learner, regardless of their circumstances, and we promote this in every area of school life. We want our pupils to achieve exceptionally, without exception.

Horspath 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

- Leaders, including governors, are deeply committed to ensuring that the vision is central to the work of the school. As a result, staff and pupils are empowered to flourish by ‘letting their light shine’.
- In this small, cohesive community, leaders foster a culture of care and kindness. Consequently, both adults and pupils go out of their way to help one another.
- Those who are considered vulnerable or going through difficult times are noticed and nurtured. This means that both adults and pupils actively enjoy being part of the school community.
- Leaders have forged strong and fruitful partnerships with the parish church, River Learning Trust and parents. As a consequence, pupil and staff wellbeing is promoted.
- Collective worship plays an important role in reinforcing the vision and values. It enhances the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults.

Development Points

- Develop the emerging understanding of spirituality. This is in order for pupils’ spiritual growth to be fully supported by curriculum opportunities.
- Embed and enrich the new RE curriculum. This is so that pupils access a breadth of experiences to deepen their learning in the subject.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Horspath's Christian vision emphasises the importance of people 'letting their light shine'. It stands alongside four Christian values of kindness, courage, responsibility and justice. These guide people in how to translate the vision into their attitudes and actions. As a result, the vision is a powerful tool in forming a deeply caring and cohesive community. It reflects the school's context. Leaders, including governors, are determined that pupils should grow as people who choose to make a difference. The vision is effective as it is understood, valued and acted on by adults and pupils alike. Pupils want to let their lights shine and Horspath's systems and processes encourage this. Leaders habitually measure their actions against the vision and make principled decisions based on it. For instance, their committed support enables particularly vulnerable pupils to share in the experience of letting their light shine.

Vision and School Culture

Leaders, inspired by the vision, sustain a culture characterised by kindness and consideration. In this small school, people treat each other well and experience a strong sense of belonging. Pupils, even the youngest, understand that letting your light shine involves care for others. As a result, relationships between pupils are good. When friendships falter, the emphasis on forgiveness and restoration contributes importantly to amicable resolutions. Adults are adept in assisting pupils in managing their emotions. Leaders ensure that pupils should both be and feel included, irrespective of learning need or disadvantage. Training for staff and effective systems promote the widest possible inclusion. Adults know pupils well and provide the help they need, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Appropriate specialist support means that even the most vulnerable pupils learn and participate with dignity. The link with parents is remarkably strong and fruitful for pupils. Parents welcome their invitations to share in their children's learning and celebrate their achievements. This close involvement makes a significant contribution to pupils' flourishing. Adults thrive because they know that their wellbeing and mental health are important to leaders, who habitually offer practical assistance. They also value leaders being accessible and the active assistance they are afforded to develop their careers. River Learning Trust promotes the wellbeing of staff by providing access to external pastoral support. The trust also offers valuable training and resources to facilitate structured play for pupils, which promotes their wellbeing.

Vision and Curriculum

The curriculum is ambitious, reflecting the Christian vision that pupils should be empowered to let their lights shine. It is carefully planned, to make sure that the mixed-age classes offer both the challenge and support that different pupils need. As a result, pupils make progress in their learning. Additional assistance for pupils who struggle to understand the curriculum is particularly well considered. Pupils thrive because they have access to a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, including singing, drama and various sports. Leaders ensure that pupils who are considered vulnerable or disadvantaged are included in all that Horspath has to offer. Leaders make the most of the site so that play is enjoyable, adventurous and purposeful. This promotes the emotional and spiritual development of pupils. The school is developing a shared language for spirituality. A 'big question', such as 'Are heroes ever scared?' is posted on the spirituality display every fortnight. These questions are shared and discussed by pupils, staff and parents. The responses are collated by leaders, so that pupils can see a range of views on each big question. Consequently, pupils' understanding of spirituality is developing. However, opportunities for pupils to make a spiritual response are not an intrinsic part of the curriculum across all subjects. This limits the extent of pupils' spiritual growth.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is rooted in the Anglican tradition and reinforces the vision and values. It is lively, thought provoking and interactive. Prayers are led by pupils and people are invited to join in the responses or observe in



respectful silence. Each Friday's worship celebrates pupils who have lived out the Christian vision and values. Parents are invited and this cements the school's culture into the life of the wider community. Pupils' responses to pictures of rainbows used to illustrate Advent hope shows that they are encouraged to respond with wonder to the natural world. The shared understanding of spirituality gives them the language to articulate this. Adults leading worship are careful to use inclusive language and pupils notice and value this. Pupils sing with enthusiasm during worship, with adults encouraging them and sharing in the celebratory atmosphere. Horspath's partnership with the parish church adds valuably to worship. Clergy regularly lead worship and the church is used to celebrate Christian festivals and other significant events. These are memorable occasions that are important in the spiritual growth of both adults and pupils.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The behaviour code, based on the vision, emphasises the importance of both individual responsibility and the restoration of relationships. Pupils therefore have a deep understanding of their responsibilities to themselves and others. There are many opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership roles and influence the life of the school. A culture of caring for others is embedded in the buddy system, pairing older pupils with those in Year R. Pupils value their buddies and keep in contact long after the role has ended. This has an important impact on pupils' flourishing at Horspath. Because justice is one of the Christian values, pupils see acting justly as an important way of letting their light shine. Their support for the local food bank is an expression of their concern for those who are in need. It also reflects their desire to address what they see as unfairness. Pupils are active in seeking to improve the local environment. They also take initiatives to promote and raise funds for causes that they care about, such as health charities. The school is central to the community of the village as a result of the strong partnerships forged by leaders.

Religious Education

Leaders, including governors, place a high priority on the quality of RE. The new curriculum is engaging and well sequenced. It uses 'big questions' to explore the experiences of people of different faiths and non-religious worldviews. This prompts critical thinking and open discussion about matters of importance. There is an appropriate emphasis on Christianity. Leaders ensure that teachers have access high-quality resources and training. This means that they approach the subject with confidence and enthusiasm. However, the curriculum is in its early stages of implementation. Therefore, there are currently limited opportunities that enhance pupils' deeper knowledge and understanding.

Information

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| Address | 1 Blenheim Road, Horspath, Oxford OX33 1RY | | |
| Date | 02 December 2025 | URN | 144432 |
| Type of school | Academy | No. of pupils | 138 |
| Diocese | Oxford | | |
| MAT | River Learning Trust | | |
| MAT Chair | Jeremy Long | | |
| Headteacher | Serena Courtney | | |
| Chair of Governors | Emily Elias | | |
| Inspector | Andrew Wilcock | | |