



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John the Evangelist Church of England Infant School & Nursery, Newbury	
Address	Old Newtown Road, Newbury, RG14 7DE

School vision
<p>For the good of all - through curiosity, creativity and love.</p> <p>Everyone within our federation works for the good of all. “The spirit’s presence is shown in each person in some way for the good of all.” 1 Corinthians 12:7. Our vision is underpinned by the values of curiosity, creativity and love, which are at the core of our schools, our learning and our care for each other. Our vision was established with support from the full community on federation of the two schools in October 2021</p>
School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision recognises that ‘the spirit’s presence is shown in each person.’ This underpins the life of the school within the wider federation. As a result, all feel loved for their uniqueness as individuals and are nurtured accordingly. • The curriculum is thoughtfully crafted and monitored by all leaders. In this highly inclusive and diverse school, staff enable all pupils to learn well and to flourish. Dedicated additional support nurtures vulnerable families, providing children with stability and love. • Partnerships enable the school to provide inclusive and creative worship for all who gather. Whole school collective worship provides valuable time for the community to come together for prayer, spiritual reflection and celebration. • The Christian vision empowers staff to support the mental wellbeing of pupils and their families. In turn, school leaders ensure that all staff are cared for and developed professionally. • The curriculum for religious education (RE) is carefully planned to meet the needs of the richly diverse community. Children are able to explore big questions and make individual responses. Learning activities are enhanced by visitors from the community sharing their beliefs and religious practices.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed the shared and consistent language of spirituality through curriculum planning and collective worship. This is so that children can fully express their experience of awe and wonder. • Enrich the curriculum with further opportunities to develop pupils’ awareness of injustice in the world. This is so that they can make a positive difference by acting as agents of change. • Develop the system for assessment in RE to ensure that all children can make the best possible progress.
Inspection findings
<p>The Christian vision inspires all to recognise the ‘spirit’s presence’ in each other. The school community is enriched through its federation with St Nicolas Junior School. The shared Christian vision provides a strong foundation through which children and adults can flourish. This has sustained the school through challenging times, enabling all to feel secure and hopeful for the future.</p>



The curriculum is expertly crafted so that children experience a variety of rich opportunities to be curious and creative. Children are provided with models of learning styles that instil confidence and resilience. Governors regularly evaluate the impact of the vision within the curriculum. Through their established link governor roles, dedicated monitoring informs future strategic planning. Children thrive when engaged with creative opportunities, such as visiting the Argyles Home to share their poems. Children also shine when singing as part of the community 'Advent Doors' event. The school's thoughtful definition of spirituality recognises that everyone has spontaneous responses 'every day'. For example, a visit to Highclere church inspired children to be moved by the beauty of the stained glass windows. Children are gently encouraged to express their spiritual encounters within relationships or by being curious. However, teachers do not plan discrete opportunities in order to determine the impact of spiritual flourishing within learning activities. The vision inspired 'for the good of all' is woven throughout the curriculum and support for families. Leaders nurture those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) through well-chosen provision. Skilled staff provide emotional and learning support through high-quality activities such as 'Real Play'. The pastoral team skillfully lives the vision through their dedicated service to the community. Coffee mornings offer support and links with specialist agencies, building firm foundations to support children. Systematic support for learning underpins the provision for increasing numbers of children with English as an additional language. Consequently, children flourish socially and academically.

The school family is nourished spiritually by collective worship which is considerate of all backgrounds. The strong partnership with local clergy enhances the school spiritually. Leaders are sensitive to the needs of the richly diverse community and plan creatively. Carefully selected greetings to share peace acknowledges that children have a variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds. Children are invited to light the candle, marking that this is a special time in the day. Occasional opportunities to contribute children's own written prayers are provided. However, children do not hold responsibility for planning or leading worship regularly. Everyone is invited to pray allowing all to engage or sit respectfully. Children make thoughtful responses and demonstrate their knowledge of the Lord's Prayer. Virtual celebration worship enables the federation to join together with parents. This special gathering celebrates children's flourishing across the community and strengthens bonds of love. Music chosen by staff enlivens worship with joy and curiosity. Valued visits to the church enhance children's understanding of Christian festivals and the example of Jesus' teaching. The lighting of the St John's candle reinforces the meaningful link between school worship and that in church. Staff have engaged with diocesan 'Spacemaker' training to enhance worship. There is limited use of what was learned.

Inspired by the vision, it is clear that 'everyone works for the good of all.' There is a sincere commitment to ensuring that children and adults experience good mental health. The celebration wall recognises the nominations made to acknowledge staff or children when demonstrating the vision. Where children require significant support or specialist activities, staff expertly ensure they are included and valued. Love threads through the school, maintaining wellbeing and a sense that all are cherished. Children live the vision through their caring interactions and polite behaviour. They are proud of their school and their individual achievements. Older children are encouraged to transition confidently through good links with partner schools. In addition, staff are provided with effective professional and pastoral support. The restoring monthly meetings sustain the resilience of those supporting vulnerable families. Governors are diligent in their responsibility for mental health. Their perceptive insight upholds leaders whilst providing vision-inspired pastoral care.

Teachers delicately weave some age-appropriate activities regarding injustice into the wider curriculum. Through personal and social education, children engage with opportunities to care for the natural world so they develop personal responsibility. Children readily demonstrate that they know how to be a good friend and possess early citizenship skills. The school council contributes to



the local community, proudly decorating the church Christmas tree with handmade decorations. Similarly, the eco council raises awareness of local charities where support is required , for example, fundraising for hospital furniture. There are limited opportunities for children to be agents of change for others beyond their local community.

The leadership of RE is effective because the curriculum is creatively planned to encourage children's curiosity and respect for diversity. The curriculum recognises the rich variety of religious and non-religious views within the community. Teachers are well supported, ensuring that teaching is accurate and inspiring. Diocesan training provides insight when using religious artefacts and provides well-chosen language to reinforce diversity within each faith tradition and worldview. As a result, pupils are able to articulate their early knowledge of religious beliefs and their own emerging responses. Where children experience introductions to religious festivals, they share their enjoyment and knowledge of religious practice. Teachers positively embrace partnerships with representatives from religious communities by welcoming visitors who enrich learning for staff and for children. The process of assessing RE is well linked to planning. Children are able to demonstrate their understanding after each unit of work. Creative activities enable the majority of pupils to make progress. However, current assessment does not address the needs of those who are able to think more deeply within their RE learning.

The inspection findings indicate that St John the Evangelist Infant and Nursery Church of England Infant School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	7 December 2023	URN	110093
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	184
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation	St John and St Nicolas Schools Federation		
Executive Headteacher	Keith Harvey		
Chair	Mike Burroughs		
Inspector	Helen Crolla	No.	918