

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Standlake Church of England Primary School

Vision

Light of the World - Matthew 5: 14-16

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on a stand, and it gives light to everyone's house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven.

Standlake 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 and values are acted out by the school community. They are the driving force shaping school life so that pupils and adults flourish.
- The curriculum inspires pupils to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge. Staff adeptly foster curiosity and encourage pupils to think deeply.
- Collective worship is valued and a poignant time in the school day. It contributes significantly to the spiritual growth of pupils and adults.
- Leaders ensure that the school is a place where pupils and adults are cared for and treated well. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of justice and responsibility. They express this through their behaviour in school and their involvement in the local community.

Development Points

- Expand pupils' understanding of spirituality and the way that this is planned through the curriculum. This is so that pupils understand and express their spiritual thinking.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Leaders use the vision to guide, strengthen and support the school in their work. They and the staff team are deeply committed to serving pupils and their families. The school lives out its vision. People's acts of kindness and good are visible to others, encouraging one another to act in the same way. Consequently, the culture of high aspiration motivates pupils and staff to be helpful, successful and thrive. Leaders' decisions are anchored in the vision. This ensures pupils, regardless of needs or abilities, have opportunities for inspiring experiences. For example, pupils learn about an 11-year-old in Sierra Leone who teaches himself engineering from discarded materials. Leaders, together with staff, support pupils to understand the vision. Pupils are encouraged to persevere and taught to be reflective, kind and compassionate. Pupils respond by using their understanding in their actions, words and friendships. As a result, pupils show respect towards one another, younger pupils thoroughly enjoy knowing and being supported by older pupils. Senior leaders, committed to the staff team, provide bespoke training for individual needs. The vision inspires and challenges adults and pupils to 'shine brightly', helping to rise to their potential. Consequently, this caring school is described as 'sometimes hard, but helpful'.

Vision and Curriculum

Shaped by the school's vision, the curriculum is broad and rich. Leaders ensure it simultaneously responds to both the needs of pupils and the school's context. As a result, pupils are fully supported and do well. For example, the school supports pupils to be outward-looking in the texts that pupils study. Pupils read books that represent diversity. There are effective links made between religious education (RE) and other subjects that make pupils curious. For example, learning about a range of world faiths is reflected in the art curriculum. The school develops and grows pupils' understanding of spirituality. However, it is not fully embedded within the curriculum, limiting its impact. Extracurricular activities, including the arts and sports, further enhance pupils' learning. These opportunities enable them to explore and enjoy new and existing talents and interests. The attendance at enrichment clubs is tracked closely. This makes certain that if a pupil wants to join a club they will be supported to take part.

Worship and Spirituality

Leaders plan collective worship so that it is an impactful space for spiritual growth and reaffirms the school's vision. Responses, rooted in Christianity, support pupils' understanding of the Christian faith and bring a shared sense of togetherness and community. Worship provides an opportunity to pause and be still, and an occasion to join in prayer for those who wish to. Leaders ensure that worship is a time to reflect on Bible stories, but also to think about global issues. This gives pupils the chance to deepen their understanding of the world around them. Worship is valued by adults and pupils and is a catalyst for a positive start to each day. Praise, through singing, is uplifting and joyful. Pupils take a lead in worship and help to shape it through contributing to its design. For example, pupils regularly write and say prayers that are a centre piece of worship. Pupils work with the rector to support a range of services that are held in the parish church. The trust supports the school's work as a church school actively and effectively. The trust has appointed a chaplain for all of its schools. The chaplain and trust leaders work well with the staff to enrich the school's spiritual life, providing guidance and reflection.

Vision and School Culture

This is a school where genuine care meets high aspiration. Pupils and adults treat each other well. There are warm and respectful relationships within this kind and cohesive school community. Wellbeing is prioritised. As a result, leaders champion pastoral care, which is a major strength. Pupils and adults are known, valued and accepted as individuals. Consequently, the school provides highly personalised support to pupils. Parents appreciate this approach, where school staff understand their children. The school's policies in relation to aspects of its work, such as promoting good relationships and behaviour, reflect the school's vision. Staff value



the care that leaders show towards them. They feel supported to complete their roles successfully and personally. This includes making time to pause. There is a commitment to good mental health and wellbeing for different stakeholders. Senior leaders and staff demonstrate this in the additional support that people within the school community receive in difficult times. The school is highly welcoming. As one pupil said, very precisely capturing the views of others, 'all different, all welcome.'

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The school actively commits to and is successful in promoting a strong understanding of justice and responsibility. Leaders expect people to act with respect. There are many opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles such as a reading ambassador, school councillor and wellbeing champion. This helps them build confidence, develop responsibility and contribute positively to the school community. For example, pupils visit a nearby care home, befriending residents. Pupils speak clearly and knowledgeably about what justice is and its significance. They explain that there can be positives and negatives resulting from the choices that people make. Pupils are highly involved in fundraising. Through raising money for charities, they learn about being socially responsible and doing something meaningful and practical to help others. For example, pupils support and understand the work of a charity that aims to break the cycle of poverty in Kenya.

Religious Education

The RE curriculum is effective and pupils have a positive view of their learning. Leaders check that the subject is sequenced well and has a high profile. As a result, pupils develop a secure knowledge and understanding of Christianity, a range of religions and world views. The curriculum provides powerful opportunities to explore belief, ways of thinking and what living out a faith looks like. The well-resourced curriculum, that includes the use of a range of religious books and artefacts, supports pupils' understanding well. This enables pupils to grasp more deeply how religious people practise their faith. There is a visit cycle focused on places of worship to additionally support pupils' understanding in RE. The leadership monitors the curriculum closely to confirm that pupils gain the essential and intended learning securely.

Information

Address	Church End, Witney, OX29 7SQ		
Date	10 December 2025	URN	140983
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	107
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT	Eynsham Partnership Academy		
MAT Chair	Julian Soanes		
Headteacher	Penny McCarthy		
Co-chair of Governors	Louise Weldon and Mark Barnard		
Inspector	Richard Blackmore		