

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Whitminster Endowed Church of England Primary School

Vision

A FAMILY, A FOUNDATION, A FUTURE

Our vision begins with Jesus' commandment 'to love one another, just as I have loved you'.

We are a family, loving and caring for each other; our own family, our friends, our neighbours, our school, our local and global communities. We all flourish because of these relationships.

We ensure children have a firm foundation built on Christian values enabling all to develop an inner strength to live courageously and love as Jesus did.

We aim to ensure that all have a future where they embrace uniqueness, look outwards and become the very best they can be to live life to the full.

Whitminster Endowed 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 long-held Christian vision, 'Love one another' (John 13:34), gives strong roots for this school family. It has held the school secure through times of turbulence and is now enabling it to embrace the future.
- Religious education (RE) is a significant curriculum strength. As a result of insightful leadership, pupils and staff are inspired by RE, discovering in it both meaning and reward. Pupils' opinions are valued and their suggestions have enhanced provision by releasing creativity.
- The deeply-embedded loving culture ensures that caring relationships form the bedrock of this school. Motivated by the vision, people habitually treat one another with honour and grace.
- School leaders make sure that there is carefully planned support for pupils and families deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged. This results in an exceptionally inclusive environment where individuals flourish.
- Adults and pupils appreciate the meaningful moments for personal reflection during collective worship. The invitational and thought-provoking nature of worship ensures that opportunities for spiritual development extend beyond this moment in the day.

Development Points

- Deepen pupils' appreciation of the interconnectedness of the Christian values so that these can be lived out to even greater benefit.
- Further enable pupils to respond to matters of injustice so that they see themselves as agents of change.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision emanates a powerful energy that nourishes and upholds this school community. Inspired by God's love, the school lives out its Christian calling. Investment in the vision has created the capacity for governors to reflect purposefully and support people through challenging changes. It is enabling the recently appointed senior leadership team to continue the school's very effective work. Christian values, such as courage, peace and joy, support the vision, informing worship themes, school policies and the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of individual values but their appreciation of how the values interconnect is less well developed. Leaders evaluate the effectiveness of the vision through whole school focus days, ensuring it retains its relevance. The deep-seated commitment to loving one another translates into a vibrant culture of care. Pupils at Whitminster know they are loved by the staff. As a consequence, they become confident and self-reliant, demonstrating gentle respect towards one another. Staff help pupils to explore their spirituality, encouraging them to look both inwards at themselves and outwards at the world. The quality of relationships in the school gives rise to flourishing.

The school's commitment to its Christian vision infuses its curriculum. Staff ensure learning provides the knowledge, skills and confidence pupils need to succeed. The importance of love is given prominence in RE and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) in particular. Curriculum fun days, such as 'buddy days' bring personal and social aspects of learning to life. Extra-curricular clubs, including mindfulness, music and sport, are popular and enable pupils to develop their talents and skills. Many take part in external competitions, building their ambition and courage. Staff create inclusive opportunities for those who are deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged. For example, some pupils take part in shopping and cooking lessons to develop essential life skills. Teachers have ensured that spiritual development is intrinsic to the curriculum. Pupils are taught the language of spirituality, as 'ows', 'wows' and 'nows'. Through this, they learn that difficulties can bring personal growth and appreciate that life can offer awe and wonder too. Pupils use reflection journals to record their responses to events and experiences. This gives time to pause and consider their emotions and also brings validation to their feelings.

Collective worship is carefully planned to deepen pupils' understanding of the Christian faith. The termly theme, such as community, links the vision, values and key events in the Christian calendar. The local churches work in proud partnership with the teachers to enrich the worship and spiritual life of the school. Biblical stories and music invite participants to learn, respond and reflect together. Ethos leaders in Year 6 enjoy their part in opening and sometimes leading worship. They regularly collect pupils' views about the quality and extent of learning and enjoyment. This feedback is shared with the teachers who modify or adapt their planning accordingly. In worship, staff create a safe space for contemplation. Pupils appreciate that the invitation to prayer or reflection allows them to respond in ways that are comfortable to them. High quality training from the diocese has helped staff to deepen the impact of worship. Take away reflection points and activities offer pupils ways of engaging with the themes back in the classroom.

A dignifying culture is the hallmark of Whitminster school, amplifying the Christian vision. Adults create an inclusive environment where people are valued. Pupils with additional needs and/or those from diverse cultural groups are very well integrated. Staff actively address barriers to progress and wellbeing for pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work proactively with families to improve attendance. Trained wellbeing leaders provide pastoral support for pupils and families who need additional assistance. Staff and governors have created beautiful spiritual and wellbeing gardens which pupils use daily as nurturing spaces. As a priority, the headteacher sensitively supports the mental health of staff. This enables them to give of their best,



leading to individual and collective flourishing. Pupils see the school's strong vision as the inspiration to behave with exemplary consideration towards one another. Consequently, relationships thrive. However, if ever friendships do go wrong, staff work patiently with individuals to help them. The 'new day, new start' motto means pupils are quick to apologise and show forgiveness.

Staff are deeply committed to their diverse community. This culture of justice and responsibility is reflected in pupils' interactions. In living out the Christian vision, staff help pupils to develop the inner strength that enables them to act with generosity to others. The school buddy system means pupils naturally and spontaneously support one another. Pupils consequently embrace diversity and new pupils are welcomed wholeheartedly. Through their connections with the local elderly residents' home, pupils experience the joy of making a difference to others. Strong mutual partnerships with the local churches mean that the school is now viewed as the worship centre for the village. The recently introduced 'Courageous Advocate' award celebrates individual actions for justice, such as speaking up on behalf of others. This motivates pupils to notice how they can be of help to one another at school. Pupils' awareness of how they can influence wider matters of equality and justice is less well developed.

RE is cherished at Whitminster. Governors and staff work together to guarantee it has a high profile across the school. The subject leader ensures staff benefit from regular professional development. Careful monitoring and evaluation by leaders mean the school provides a well-balanced, meaningful and diverse subject offer. As a result, the curriculum is engaging and challenging for pupils. It includes high-quality resources to enable pupils to investigate big questions and use transferable skills. The curriculum is designed to enable good knowledge of different faiths and non-religious worldviews. Furthermore, it incorporates the appreciation of Christianity as a diverse and global faith. Pupils' own feedback has directed developments in this subject so that it is more relevant for them. For example, art now used much more in learning tasks. Some pupils were successful in a RE art competition as a result. Moreover, pupils love the fact that their views have been acted upon and see RE as an exciting and rewarding subject.

Information

Address	School Lane, Whitminster, Gloucestershire GL2 7PJ		
Date	13 March 2025	URN	115660
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	103
Diocese	Gloucester		
Headteacher	Alison Parry-Jones		
Chair of Governors	Graham Braidford and Kim Seth		
Inspector	Bridget Knight		