



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St James Church of England Primary School, Hanney	
Address	The Causeway, East Hanney, Wantage, OX12 0JN

School vision

Learning together with courage and kindness 'for the good of all' 1 Corinthians 12. Pauls' letters talk about how we should treat each other; how the Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all. Although we are many and unique we are part of the one body because we were all made by one Spirit. Coming together for the benefit of everyone enables all to flourish to be the best they can be.

School strengths

- All leaders ensure that the vision is rooted in biblical teaching and inclusive. It is at the heart of all decisions. This is beginning to enable all children and adults to flourish as unique individuals within the school.
- There are strong partnerships which enhance the vision of the school, supporting the wellbeing of children and adults. These provide a secure foundation for leaders when making courageous decisions.
- The vision underpins the decision making of leaders. This inspires and supports all pupils, enabling them to feel cherished and successful.
- Collective worship provides moments to reflect or pray. Pupils enjoy learning about stories from the Bible and can make links with the school's vision and values.
- The curriculum for religious education (RE) is rooted in the vision of the school. Consequently, pupils celebrate diversity and are developing their awareness of the variety of religions and world views. Leaders provide access to professional development to ensure an effective curriculum.

Areas for development

- Embed the vision through the curriculum so that pupils develop a wider understanding of worldwide diversity and inequality.
- Provide opportunities for spiritual enrichment so that pupils are able to experience moments of stillness, awe and wonder.
- Monitor the implementation of the new locally agreed syllabus for RE so that pupils develop a richer knowledge of the range of religious and non-religious world views.

Inspection findings

The Christian vision at St. James Church of England Primary School is relatively new. It is being ably promoted by the new leadership team and governors, but it is too early to establish the impact of this. Their communication of the vision is enhanced by the values of the Vale Academy Trust, of which the school is a member. This partnership of church and community schools is mutually beneficial because there is a deep commitment to nurturing the lives of all. The trust supports the

leaders at St. James so that they feel empowered to make courageous decisions. It is clear there is a shared determination to ensure the vision has an impact on pupils' abilities and character. As a result of school and diocesan partnerships, the school benefits from collaborations and the sharing of ideas.

In line with the vision, all leaders consider the wellbeing of pupils and adults as a matter of great importance. They take their inspiration from St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians, working hard to ensure individuals feel 'part of one body.' The trust provides learning events that enable vulnerable pupils to come together for activities. These build confidence and relationships for those who require support with their wellbeing. As part of her role, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is working with families to improve the lives of the most vulnerable pupils. Similarly, by choosing to employ a homeschool link worker, the governors have prioritised the welfare of families. Due to this focus, there has been an improvement in attendance and engagement in learning. The early toast club provides a soft start for those who find leaving home overwhelming. Such care is an example of the vision at work, helping all reach their potential. Trust leaders, along with governors, support all adults in performing their roles well. Consequently, the staff team feels cared for and has good access to high-quality training. Leaders engage with the diocesan programme 'Performance and Resilience' which provides time for them to reflect and re-energise, helping them live the vision of the school.

The staff team expresses the vision through the curriculum. Consequently, this remains true to the vision of 'learning together with courage and kindness.' Pupils benefit from the ambitious trust principles of learning in this way. Teachers identify what needs to be taught and collaborate with other colleagues in the trust to help pupils achieve their best. The school is on a journey as they weave their vision through their curriculum planning. In response to the increasing number of pupils with additional needs, leaders plan support carefully to create learning opportunities. Individual pupils who require specialist activities are guided to learn and valued for their uniqueness. Leaders promote inclusion and equality for all pupils, reinforcing the vision of all being part of 'the one body.' Currently there are not enough opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to celebrate diversity.

The school benefits from the strong relationship with the parish of St. James the Great. The clergy team provides weekly 'Open the Book' inclusive worship that shares a variety of Bible stories. As a result, pupils are able to name their favourite stories and how they relate to being kind. Pupils can recall some key events from Jesus' life and why he is important for Christians. Collective worship is also valued by the staff because it is time to come together. Adults are thankful for the pastoral care provided by the clergy team. Leaders ensure that the vision is shared as part of worship, and pupils join in readily. For the most part, they behave respectfully during prayers or times of reflection. Pupils are able to experience the 'Space Makers' activities as part of class worship. This provides them with opportunities to be spiritual when still or considering passages from the Bible. These inclusive, contemplative activities are still being developed within the school. Leaders think creatively about providing opportunities for pupils to be spiritual. For example, the peace garden allows groups to gather together. It is not yet evident what impact this space is having on the spiritual development of pupils.

Pupils are provided with some opportunities to live the school vision by helping others. Through engagement in the trust's Character and Citizen Award, pupils develop a knowledge of themselves and how they can be courageous advocates. Pupil leadership is strongly encouraged, which develops kindness between ages. For example, new reception children delight in seeing their 'Year 6 Buddy.' The pupils of St. James contribute to local or well-known national charities. However, there are limited opportunities to engage with more global initiatives.

Religious education (RE) is valued within the curriculum because teachers encourage pupils to make

links with their own lives and beliefs. For example, pupils studied Jesus as a role model and thought of those who inspired them. The subject leader for RE is clearly determined to provide all pupils with opportunities to learn about a range of world religions and views. Through a study of pilgrimage, pupils develop some understanding of its significance and explore their own special journeys. Pupil learning is recorded in class floor books, which chart the sequence of lessons. These are a good record for teachers assessing whether pupils are 'building bridges' between their lives and the concepts taught. Diocesan advisors and the trust have provided timely support for the school to support the planning of RE. This has provided teachers with confidence to teach RE creatively. There is limited monitoring to establish the impact of RE on the flourishing of pupils.

St. James Church of England Primary is clearly a place where all are cherished to enable them to flourish. The vision of 'being one body' provides all with the strongest possible foundation.

The inspection findings indicate that St. James Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	13 October 2023	URN	142664
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	185
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation	Vale Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Lucy Ottaway		
Chair	Alan McPherson		
Inspector	Helen Crolla	No.	918