

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Piddle Valley Church of England First School

Vision

‘Trust in each other, respect one another and shine for yourself.’ At Piddle Valley CE First School, we envision a nurturing environment where every child feels valued and empowered to reach their fullest potential. Guided by our core values of trust, respect, and the spirit to shine, we strive to create an inclusive community where learning is a joyful journey. Together, we inspire curiosity, foster creativity, and celebrate individuality, ensuring that each child's unique gifts are cherished and developed. In partnership with families and the wider community, we are committed to cultivating a safe and stimulating space where every child can thrive, learn, and grow into confident, compassionate leaders of tomorrow.

Jesus said: Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

Piddle Valley Church of England First 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 Christian vision inspires leaders to make continuous improvements to address the needs of pupils. This changes attitudes, grows aspirations and raises self-esteem.
- The vision is well understood by pupils, staff and families. It gives clear direction to improvements, raising the impact this Church school has for pupils and families.
- The school's outreach to families is impressive. Together, trusting relationships are established, enhancing the importance of learning and raising attendance.
- Collective worship plays a significant role. It shows what the Christian vision and values look like in daily life. Pupils sing with enthusiasm and enjoy coming together.
- Staff and pupils draw on a common language of values, that are woven throughout school life. Pupils and staff treat one another with a high degree of dignity and respect. There is a distinct sense of being part of a caring, equitable community.

Development Points

- Ensure opportunities for spiritual flourishing are an integral part of curriculum planning. This is to enable pupils to express their ideas, so the impact of these experiences enriches how they flourish spiritually.
- Refine planning in RE so key skills, such as, interpretation and enquiry, are progressively developed. This is so pupils can explore questions at greater depth.
- Create a rigorous plan to evaluate the impact that the Christian vision has on all aspects of being a Church school. This is so there are ongoing foci for improvements.



Inspection Findings

Leaders, at Easter 2024, refined the school's Christian vision, so pupils and families understand its significance and take ownership of it. The vision is the heart of the school, giving clear strategic direction. The language of the vision and associated values are woven throughout daily life. This allows pupils to see their importance in a range of areas. For instance, the vision promotes trusting relationships between staff, families and pupils. This nurtures pupils' self-esteem and aspirations. The Christian vision drives improvements. This is particularly evident in extending the provision to meet diverse needs and enhancing the profile of collective worship. As a result, rapid progress has been made as a Church school, raising the impact it has for pupils and the community. Leaders bring energy and enthusiasm to developments, that are infectious. A cohesive, dedicated staff team know the importance of the vision and model the difference it makes. School leaders make astute, ongoing evaluations. They identify and prioritise next steps, drawing on best practice from the Wessex Multi-Academy Trust (trust). Expertise from trust leaders make a significant contribution, notably in monitoring. This results in well-focused initiatives, such as raising the quality and enjoyment of collective worship. However, local governors lack a clear plan that ensures the evaluation of all aspects of being a Church school. The contribution governors make is growing where their support for new initiatives enhances the impact they make. This is evident in trusting relationships being made with the community.

Leaders are inspired by the way Jesus reached out to those facing challenges on life's journey. Recognising the growing diverse needs of pupils, leaders have been relentless in seeking best practice to address these. This includes supporting pupils to effectively communicate ideas in a variety of ways. Pupils feel cherished and trust adults to listen and nurture them. They confidently share their emotions with staff, agreeing individualised strategies that help them to be calm. Drawing upon research, new approaches encourage pupils to reflect on their actions and identify ways to manage these. This nurture is where the vision is lived out daily. Expertise from the trust facilitates the sharing of effective practice to address identified needs. The vision is increasingly shaping learning experiences. Visits and residential enhance pupils' understanding of the wider world, whilst extra-curricular activities lead them to discover their talents. The forest school is a fine example, where pupils learn new skills and work collaboratively. A thoughtful awareness of diversity is shown by pupils. Reading texts explore stories from other countries and cultures, stimulating discussions, for instance on poverty. The importance of spirituality is growing. Pupils use an approach which guides their thinking, with time to reflect on their ideas. However, experiences to develop pupils' spiritual flourishing are not an integral part of the curriculum. Therefore, pupils' spiritual flourishing in this area is less well developed. In addition, it is not always clear what impact these experiences make.

Collective worship is a vibrant and an exciting start to each day. The vast majority of pupils enjoy coming together, singing with great enthusiasm. This shapes a warm, inclusive culture. Partnerships are influential in developing collective worship. As a result of visits to other trust schools, high-quality practice is identified and trialled. This has seen planning become more detailed, so pupils readily recognise what the Christian vision looks like. The scheme for worship ensures there are opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual flourishing. Themes promote pupils' curiosity to raise questions about the world. There are times to promote awe and wonder and consider, with opportunities given to consider their significance. Christian values are progressively explored and their significance in a variety of areas made clear. Pupils, with a religious faith or none, give examples of where values shape their thinking. Worship is interactive and allows pupils to take a greater role in leading. Collective worship is inclusive and enables pupils to contribute with integrity to their personal views and beliefs. It is inspirational, for instance,



encouraging pupils to consider how they can care for God's world. The vicar leads worship regularly, which is valued. Increasingly, festivals, such as Easter are celebrated in church, so pupils understand the importance of these for Christians.

The school is a caring, equitable community, driven by its vision. This leads to pupils and staff feeling special and important. The school's outreach to families on the fringe of the locality is impressive. Leaders build trusting relationships, raising the importance of learning, enhancing attendance. Pupils from different backgrounds discuss their beliefs and traditions, enriching understanding and respect. They treat one another with a high degree of dignity, driven by leaders' ideas that everyone is precious to God. Mental health has a positive profile, so pupils know approaches that nurture their wellbeing. The care for staff is equally effective, where they feel valued to grow their talents and 'shine'.

The vision shapes a culture where pupils see they have a responsibility to care for others. This is evident in the collaboration pupils show in learning and beyond, with older pupils modelling this. Curriculum experiences raise issues of injustice, both locally and globally. This leads to more pupils becoming involved in issues that make a difference for others. This includes, working with villagers to clear water courses that might lead to local flooding. Pupils maintain their ongoing support for the food bank. Partnerships, notably within the trust, provide essential support. Trust expertise grows leaders, enhances evaluation, provides well-focused training and supports subject leaders to share best practise. This nurtures the school's flourishing.

Numerous significant initiatives in RE raise the profile and impact the subject makes. A well-sequenced, diverse and broad curriculum is being embedded. This supports pupils to deepen their knowledge as they move through the school. Leaders draw on planning recommended by the diocese that provides a clear progression of ideas with helpful resources. This has led to exploring an additional worldview, enabling pupils to perceive how faith shapes actions. Leaders have identified the key vocabulary for each unit that enables pupils to make connections between ideas, extending their knowledge. New introduction pages for each unit of study indicate pupils' prior learning and how new ideas build upon this. Teaching is consistently good and there are examples of high-quality practice. Assessment strategies are in place. These are being improved in order to give further information which guides new initiatives. The subject leader has begun to discuss assessments with staff, identifying how individual pupils can be supported to raise attainment. This is enabling more pupils to work at a higher level. However, key RE skills are not woven into planning, hindering pupils from thinking at greater depth. Pupils generally flourish in RE and talk positively about how they enjoy learning. Each unit poses a big question that pupils explore. Pupils value these discussions, sharing and learning from others. They have a growing knowledge of core religious ideas. The subject leader is the inspiration behind these improvements. This grows staff subject knowledge and skills. Best practice is shared by other trust schools and trialled with constructive evaluations that lead to purposeful next steps. The new planning is a good example of this.

Information

Address	Piddletrenthide, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7QL		
Date	5 December 2024	URN	141804
Type of school	First	No. of pupils	41
Diocese	Salisbury		
MAT	Wessex Multi Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Jemma Moore		
Chair of Governors	Dan Hunwick		
Inspector	David Hatrey		