

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ibstone Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Ibstone, High Wycombe, HP14 3XZ
School vision	
<p>Nurture, Inspire, Grow</p> <p>Our vision is to nurture our community enabling all to grow through our Christian values. We inspire everyone to be resilient, confident and courageous whilst developing a lasting love of learning.</p> <p>‘Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am.’</p> <p>Philippians 4:13.</p> <p>Our Values: Love, Courage, Respect, Community and Perseverance.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders, including governors, show an unwavering commitment to ensure that the school’s vision has a transformative effect. Their strategic decisions and day to day interactions reflect a deep Christian care for the school community. As a result, adults and pupils know that they are valued. • The school’s vision and values are lived and breathed throughout the school community. They influence, for the good, all aspects of the behaviour of adults and pupils. This results in a community where people are kind and reflective. • Collective worship is central to the life of the school. It is relevant and inspirational for both pupils and adults. The school’s inclusive approach enables those of different faiths and none to grow spiritually. • The curriculum, with its focus on big questions, actively promotes pupils’ spiritual development. They have a common language to express their spirituality and use this in a natural, unforced way. • The religious education (RE) curriculum is challenging, relevant and expertly delivered. Pupils enjoy the opportunities that RE lessons give them to engage with important religious ideas and use complex terms with understanding. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the leadership skills that pupils develop to include greater opportunities for engagement with ethical issues. This is in order to enable pupils to grow as agents for change on a wider stage. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>The school’s Christian vision is the product of careful thought and discussion involving the whole school community and the diocese. It directly addresses the needs of the school community. Parents, pupils and staff understand, value and embrace it. While being distinctively Christian, the vision is fully inclusive of the different perspectives represented in this small, cohesive rural community. The school is actively engaged with the work of the local parish church. This partnership</p>	



contributes significantly to the flourishing of pupils and staff. Expressions of Christian life and faith are natural and unforced in a way that is unconscious but nonetheless exceptional. They both demonstrate and contribute to a culture of spiritual wellbeing.

Leaders ensure that the school's vision and Christian values are a living reality in a variety of ways. Each day during collective worship, the whole school sings the Bible verse from Philippians. This and the Christian values are prominently displayed in every classroom. Most significantly, adults and pupils naturally refer to the vision and values in everyday conversation. As a result, people are nurtured, challenged and inspired to be the resilient, caring learners that the vision would have them be. Parents readily confirm that the school is transformative for their children, building confidence and instilling self-belief.

Leaders, supported by governors, consciously give priority to living out the vision and values. They consistently make brave choices that bring the vision to reality. Their decision to adapt the curriculum to enable vulnerable learners to access it at their own pace allows them to thrive. The consistent use of the outdoor learning space ensures that pupils in all year groups achieve a rounded education, promoting their wellbeing. The purchase of a minibus broadens pupils' educational opportunities significantly. Spiritual development is prioritised across the curriculum by the widespread use of big questions. These engage pupils in spiritual enquiry and self-reflection. The school has a shared language for understanding spirituality. This means that pupils and adults naturally reflect on their day to day experiences from a spiritual perspective. This plays a significant part in the flourishing of members of the school community.

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. Pupils and adults find the daily act of worship inspiring and speak of it as a highlight of their day. It is palpably a special time for the school community. Collective worship themes build on and illustrate the vision and values as well as following the church year. Many pupils are actively involved in acts of worship. They contribute spontaneous prayers with enthusiasm and sensitivity. The lessons learnt in collective worship clearly have a profound impact on both pupils and adults. They speak of the way particular worship times have spoken to them and helped them grow spiritually. Weekly 'Family Time' provides an additional opportunity for older pupils to lead younger ones in imaginative activities that reinforce Ibstone's values. The partnership with the parish church greatly enhances collective worship. The local clergy lead worship once a week and the school worships in the church on festivals and other significant occasions. As a result of this close link, pupils feel that the church is 'their church'. They thrive because they feel part of the Christian community of the village. The annual Nativity plays that pupils perform in the church and at school are an example of this bond. This underlines the richness of local partnerships, which enhance worship and spirituality at the school.

Relationships are caring and supportive. It is a community where people are known, cared for, given a voice and afforded respect. All Year 6 pupils are 'buddies' to those joining in Year R. They write to them before they start school and support their settling in with active care during their first terms at school. Adults and pupils alike, following leaders' example, refer frequently to the Japanese craft of Kintsugi. Here beautiful ceramics that have been broken can be repaired with gold to become even more beautiful. Adults and pupils use this metaphor widely and usefully to characterise the mending of lives and relationships. There are also numerous examples of the peer support that this encourages. For instance, an older pupil, who himself had experienced difficulties, now regularly supports a younger pupil who finds school attendance challenging. Leaders use the school dog, Zog to give pupils space to talk over difficult feelings and issues. Pupils welcome the opportunity that Zog gives them to sustain their mental wellbeing. Adults know that leaders and governors give their wellbeing high priority, offering appropriate practical help when they need it.

Pupils relish the opportunities to take leadership roles within the school. These include being

buddies, ambassadors for one of the school values, leaders of Family Time and worship leaders. These roles are shared widely, so that all volunteers are offered responsibilities. As a result, pupils develop in confidence and rightly see themselves as agents for change in their school and local communities. Pupils are also active fundraisers for a local charity supporting families in need and an international aid organisation. They speak articulately about the difference they want to see as a result of their actions. However, they are less actively engaged in broader issues of justice. Therefore, they do not have the same capacity to be agents for change in the wider world.

RE has high status within the school. Leaders ensure that all teachers are well trained in the subject. Each classroom has prominent, lively and up to date RE displays. The curriculum is challenging and relevant. It includes a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews. Christianity features prominently. There are frequent opportunities for enrichment, including visits to the parish church and a mosque. The recent performance of an Easter play in the streets of the village brought the story to life for pupils and enriched the RE curriculum. The school makes excellent use of diocesan resources, which support the depth and variety of the curriculum.

High quality assessment and monitoring support teachers' planning. Like collective worship, RE is central to the life and culture of the school. Pupils take immense pride in their work. They use religious language accurately and demonstrate a secure understanding of complex ideas. Pupils refer to what they have learned in everyday conversation, making clear that they find the subject important and interesting. Consequently, they make good progress in RE.

The inspection findings indicate that Ibstone Church of England VA School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	16 July 2024	URN	110464
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	87
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Louise Long		
Chair	Ben Randall		
Inspector	Andrew Wilcock	No.	2112