

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Edburg's Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Pioneer Way, Bicester, OX26 1BF

School vision
<p>But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.’ Luke 2:10. At St Edburg’s all are valued, all are loved.</p>

School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vision is securely rooted in Christian teaching. It empowers pupils and adults, so that all are valued and loved as precious individuals. Consequently, pupils are positive about their learning and delight in their personal and academic growth. St Edburg’s is a highly inclusive community that supports its more vulnerable members with genuine devotion. Pupils and adults share the joy of the angel’s message through demonstrating profound empathy for others. There are rich and plentiful opportunities for spiritual development through worship. This is a result of the commitment for all to flourish spiritually. Pupils take action on local and global issues of concern. They campaign with passion to alleviate food poverty and the impact of climate change. Religious education (RE) is exceptionally well led and taught as a curriculum subject. Pupils express their learning with considerable maturity and insight into how belonging to a faith tradition impacts on believers.

Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the current work on spirituality across the curriculum so that adults and pupils are more confident to articulate their spiritual growth. Consider ways to ensure worship is fully invitational and respects the views of all who attend.

Inspection findings
<p>The Christian vision brings hope and spiritual nourishment to all ages at St Edburg’s. Leaders fully understand the needs of their local community. They harness the power of the Christian vision to support strategic decisions. For example, the expansion to three form entry, now secured in the Reception classes, and in the major building work on the second site. Leaders, staff and governors work together to live out the vision and make even more explicit the key message of its relevance to all. Leaders are inspired to act with great clarity of purpose. The Christian origins of the school are a constant reference point, epitomised by the building designed in the shape of an angel. The vision acts as a touchstone, shaping the daily life of the school. Leaders capture its impact through their monitoring of school developments. Consequently, they are confident to explain how they know the Christian vision ensures that all ages thrive in personal and academic terms.</p>



The curriculum allows pupils and adults to aspire to be the best that they can be. A culture of creative expression is married with high expectations of work and effort. Pupils are excited to learn and to access the wide range of extra-curricular offer. The school has an enviable reputation for sporting prowess, particularly in championing girls' football. Pupils know they are making progress through the curriculum, and this motivates them to aim high. Staff are actively encouraged to pursue their own interests and talents, and this means pupils benefit from extensive enrichment activities. Stunning displays around the school showcase the high quality of work across the curriculum, particularly in art. Staff guide pupils to reflect and to express their views. The school has a policy with guidance on spirituality, however this is at an early stage of expression though the curriculum. At this time, pupils and adults are not confident to articulate their understanding of spiritual flourishing.

The curriculum also supports pupils to look beyond themselves. They support several local charities, like the local food bank, and are keenly aware of environmental issues. Righteous anger is expressed in letters to those in authority. David Attenborough replied with words of encouragement. Pupils at St Edburg's have a keen social conscience. With staff support, they reach out into the community to involve others. The 'climate carnival' united school, church and local neighbours in one voice of concern.

Daily collective worship provides time to share 'good news', to listen to Bible examples, to reflect and to offer thoughts in prayer. Worship is central in the life of the school as a Church school. Singing is joyous and tuneful. It cements the positive relationships across the school. Worship is planned to be relevant and engaging to younger and older pupils. It is linked to monthly Christian values, and this leads to an extensive range of Christian teaching being explored. Regular time to reflect or pray, as individuals choose, makes worship a special time that is eagerly anticipated. The youngest pupils effervesce with joy when talking of how they are thankful, for food, families, friends and even lawnmowers! Some language used in worship suggests that all present are Christian and so the experience is not fully invitational. Older pupils contribute to planning and leading aspects of worship and this gives them a sense of being bringers of good news. The school site and parish church are no longer adjacent. However, it is very much to everyone's benefit that links remain strong. Classes visit church on a weekly rota for a parish communion service. Increasingly, pupils lead elements of this, offering prayers and helping with the solemnities. Parishioners delight in having the company of pupils and some join in the actions to the Lord's Prayer, led by the school. These warm and friendly relationships demonstrate how the school shares the message of Christian-based love for all.

Partnerships between school, parents and family members are built on mutual respect and trust. It is clear that parents hugely appreciate the care offered so generously to them as well as to their children. This is particularly so for those families where children have additional needs. To that end, leaders make courageous provision for pupils with complex special educational needs. It is very much to leaders' credit that the extended provision of Picasso class supports pupils who require more bespoke nurture. Unsurprisingly, St Edburg's has the reputation of providing exceptional care. This is recognised by the local authority and diocese, who provide practical support and use the school as an example of best practice to others. Those pupils with profound needs make progress and develop as cherished individuals. One grateful parent commented, 'my child doesn't want to go home at the end of the day'.

RE is a significant strength of the school as a Church school. The subject has high status and is led with passion and great expertise. Teachers are well-supported to plan and deliver engaging lessons. Pupils know that the subject helps them to understand their place in our multi-cultural world. 'RE is fascinating, the subject expands our knowledge' is a view expressed by many. A young pupil



explained eloquently, ‘in the story, the sheep are really people and Jesus loves lost people too’. Working with the diocesan specialist adviser, the RE curriculum includes creative use of ‘big books’ for pupils up to Year 3. These capture the breadth and depth of learning of different religions and worldviews studied. Progress in the subject is secure and carefully assessed. The school has been invited to contribute units for the new diocesan scheme of work. Thus, the ‘good news’ from St Edburg’s is more widely shared.

The inspection findings indicate that St Edburg’s School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	5 October 2023	URN	123188
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	489
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Andrew Terrey		
Chair	Jane Clements		
Inspector	Allyson Taylor	No.	768