

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

The Blake Church of England Primary School	
Address	Cogges Hill Road, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 3FR
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
<p>Loving, Learning and Flourishing in Community I have come that they might have life in all its fullness. John 10 v 10</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the Christian vision is life-changing and transformative, especially for pupils with additional needs and the most vulnerable. • Leaders at every level model authentic and inspirational Christian-based living which is radically inclusive, resulting in exemplary flourishing of all. • There is a rich culture of deep reflection and an outworking of aspiration and love. This is supported by a dedicated and harmonious governing body and exceptional links with the local church, the diocese and the Trust. Pupils are now ready to explore courageous advocacy beyond their local area. • Collective worship is a joyous outworking of a deeply-held Christian vision. Acts of worship provide powerful, spiritual nourishment for all ages. • Religious Education (RE) provides a safe space for pupils to reflect and explore their own beliefs. Pupils' knowledge of Christianity is stronger than their knowledge of the range of other religions and worldviews studied.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance pupils' knowledge of world faiths and world views other than Christianity, so that they gain a deeper understanding of the major faiths and views studied. • Develop further opportunities for courageous advocacy beyond the school and local community in order to widen pupils' experience of being agents of change nationally and globally.
Inspection findings



This exceptional school is driven and underpinned by a lived Christian vision and values that permeate all it seeks to achieve within its rich and vibrant curriculum. All pupils, regardless of background, needs or ethnicity, truly flourish in a community where love and wisdom are the watch words.

The inspirational headteacher and senior leaders are supported by an equally-committed staff team who are relentless in championing the needs of the pupils and families in their care. The school community values each member as unique and loved by God. Staff know their students extremely well and create innovative and imaginative ways to meet individual needs.

Parents and pupils alike are warmly welcomed and demonstrably loved. This is a school of second chances, where, every day, staff model authentic Christian values. Forgiveness and compassion are the hallmarks of school life and routines. Pupils are secure in the knowledge that there is a consistent interest in their lives and character development. Behaviour in the school is calm and respectful. Adults and pupils alike are cared for with dignity and sensitivity. Great and small acts of kindness are the norm and, even in times of challenge, there is a deep and genuine sense of nurture. School governors fulfil their role with integrity and diligence. Their careful monitoring and evaluation enable the school to keep pressing forward in their desire to provide the very best education for The Blake pupils. School leaders are highly reflective practitioners, and their humility and servant-hearted leadership motivates a united team.

The school values its vibrant partnerships with the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust and the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education. This rhythm of supportive partnership between school, trust and diocese, enables a mutual relationship of shared priorities which helps the school live out its vision.

The Blake Educational Trust and the congregation and clergy of St Marys, Cogges, play a vital role in enabling pupils at The Blake to thrive. There are excellent and exceptional pastoral structures in place which support the school in the breadth of its offer and provision for families. The tireless work of the head of inclusion and home-school key worker provide a level of support and encouragement to families which results in renewed hope and aspiration for the future. Parents receive timely advice and practical help where needed. Pupils thrive in the knowledge that school is a safe and nurturing space where they are valued and understood. The school is generous in its relationships and encouragement of other schools locally. Their vision to 'flourish in community' extends beyond the immediate school and inspires the headteacher in his role as a school improvement adviser within the trust, and in collaborative work with other schools, such as the recent maths day.


Collective worship at The Blake school is at the heart of the spiritual life of the school. Monthly values unpack the outworking of the vision in a way which is practical and accessible to all. Vulnerable pupils are supported to participate as they feel able, and pupils are able to articulate the ways in which the value for that month has helped them to live out the distinctive Christian vision. The acts of worship are biblical in content. Led by the headteacher or a member of the Cogges team, much emphasis is placed upon 'How then shall we live?' Pupils and adults are active and enthusiastic participants but there is no compulsion. Pupils have a strong voice in the school, and improvements to collective worship were made as a direct response to pupil feedback. Class collective worship has been re-envisioned in the current school development plan, and pupils speak sincerely about the value of prayer in the life of the school and for them as individuals.

Leaders, at every level, model courageous advocacy to the school community. Pupils respond passionately to needs in their locality and within the families of the school. They understand the priority in Christian teaching to speak out about injustice. They are concerned to work collaboratively with the local community to care for the physical world as stewards of all God has made. Outreach beyond the local area is less-well developed.

The distinctive Christian vision drives improvements in RE. Much work has been done by the RE leads to improve the sequence and provision of RE since the last inspection. Staff are well supported with thorough planning and resources, and the RE leads train staff and evaluate outcomes effectively. The RE leads are closely supported with effective monitoring by the link governor for RE. Taking bold and far-reaching decisions to ensure adults and pupils flourish together, has reaped rich rewards within the school. One powerful example of this was the provision of a sabbatical year for a valued member of staff who served on mission in the majority world. Through learning about these first-hand experiences, pupils gain an enhanced understanding of Christianity as a living, world faith. It has also resulted in a deeper insight into different cultures and religious traditions world-wide and an impactful model of courageous advocacy.

Pupils leave the Blake with a lived experience of Christian flourishing that supports those of all faiths and none, to make the transition to their next phase of learning with confidence.

The school is highly respected in the wider community, and past pupils and parents continue to value the relationships and affirmation that has created a deep and lasting legacy of wellbeing and hope.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good
	<p>Pupils find RE lessons exciting and talk confidently about the Christian faith. Their knowledge of theological concepts is less secure. In the summer terms, they study other major world faiths. Their ability to speak fluently about a diverse range of beliefs is less developed. Regular reflection opportunities at the beginning and end of a learning enquiry, demonstrate clear development in pupils' understanding and their ability to apply learning to their own lives and experiences.</p>		
Information			
School	The Blake Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	29 March 2023
URN	141840	VC/VA/Academy	Academy inspected as VA
Diocese/District	Oxford Diocese	Pupils on roll	360
MAT/Federation	Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust		
Headteacher	Timothy Edwards- Grundy		
Chair of Governors/ Trust Board	Andrew Newham		
Inspector	Ruth Williams	No.	c.21/22