Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Philip and St James Church of England VA Primary School

Vision

'I have come that you may have life in all its fullness.' John 10:10.
Our ambition is for every child at St Philip and St James CE Primary School to receive an enriching, well-rounded education and experience, which enables them to thrive and become the best possible version of themselves in an ever-changing world. Guided by our strong school values of love, compassion and community, Phil and Jim aspires to be a school at the heart of its community, where leaders, teachers, parents and community partners work together to deliver this vision for our children.

St Philip and St James Church of England VA Primary 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.

Notable Strengths

- A powerful Christian vision with associated values guides leaders to make informed strategic decisions. Inspired by 'living to the full', detailed improvement plans promote reflection and development. Leaders' actions respond to the needs of a diverse community. As a result, pupils and adults flourish together.
- Strong and purposeful partnerships with the church, diocese and local authority provide valuable support, guidance and high-quality professional development. These collaborative relationships enrich daily experiences and create a respectful community in which pupils and adults thrive.
- The wide range of curriculum enrichments and expert visitors broaden pupils' experiences. Extra-curricular opportunities enable pupils to live life to the full, develop their talents and become the best version of themselves.
- Leaders have created a culture shaped by the values of love and compassion. This supportive environment fosters positive relationships where differences are celebrated, and pupils and adults live well together.
- High-quality teaching in religious education (RE) strengthens pupils' learning. Accurate assessment and effective monitoring ensure pupils make good progress.

Development Points

- Develop more opportunities for pupils to learn about Christianity as a global faith and to explore diversity within worldviews. This is to enable pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of diverse beliefs, cultures and traditions.
- Embed the school's bespoke approach to spirituality so pupils and adults intentionally notice and explore spiritual experiences. This is to deepen personal reflection and support sustained spiritual growth.
- Expand opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility for initiating and leading projects that benefit others. This is to help pupils understand how their choices can tackle injustice and have a positive impact in their community.

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Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership An ambitious Christian vision, rooted in values, supports the school's diverse community. A sense of purpose and energy is evident as it guides priorities and informs leadership choices. Guided by the vision, leaders use research and evidence to make strategic decisions which have a meaningful impact. For example, refurbishing the Early Years classrooms has created an environment where pupils live life to the full and thrive. Governors and leaders monitor and evaluate the impact of the vision with accuracy and insight. Policies and documents are purposeful, showing clearly how the vision is embedded across school life. They support adults to implement the vision clearly and ensure pupils flourish. Strong partnerships with the church, diocese, and local authority reinforce the vision being at the heart of the school community. As a result, pupils benefit from a Church school where a collaborative approach ensures their needs are consistently prioritised.
Vision and Curriculum Inspired by the vision, pupils benefit from a range of experiences that nurture their potential. Many opportunities including music, art and sport inspire new interests, building confidence. School visits and residentials encourage pupils to embrace challenges, increasing resilience and independence. Local visits to the Ashmolean and Oxfordshire Museums enrich the curriculum. These meaningful cultural experiences allow pupils to have life in all its fullness. Learning is supported through teaching tailored to pupils' needs, adult guidance and thoughtful environmental adjustments. Purposefully organised classrooms and targeted displays improve focus and strengthen engagement with learning. These strategies ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access learning successfully. Classroom spaces and calm areas encourage pupils to pause, pray and consider their actions. Although the school's approach to spirituality is developing, opportunities for noticing and reflecting are not fully explored and understood. This limits deeper spiritual growth across the wider curriculum.
Worship and Spirituality Collective worship is carefully planned to ensure it is meaningful and accessible for the school's diverse community. It centres around the school's vision and associated values of love, compassion and community. As a result, pupils' develop a deeper understanding of Christian values. Pupils confidently recognise key elements of Anglican worship, including the greeting, candle and cross. They engage thoughtfully with the school prayer and relate messages from the Lord's Prayer to their own experiences. They understand that prayer is personal and that participation may also occur through reflection or quiet contemplation. Consequently, pupils and adults contribute in ways that are meaningful and comfortable to them, thus supporting personal spiritual growth. The church team further enriches worship and pupils' understanding of faith through the telling of Bible stories. Pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of these, explaining key messages with confidence. For example, they recognise the Good Samaritan's theme of helping others regardless of background or belief. As a result, pupils deepen their spiritual and moral understanding, identifying how values help shape behaviour and relationships.
Vision and School Culture Driven by the vision, a strong culture of teamwork and mutual support permeates the school community. The values are evident in daily interactions, creating a calm, positive environment where pupils show kindness and empathy. A nurturing ethos fosters strong, trusting relationships and a 'buddy system' helps new starters to the school feel welcomed. Parents and carers rightly value the personalised support offered, including home visits and assistance with language barriers. Greeting families at the school gate strengthens community and belonging, helping them feel known, valued and cared for. A clear restorative behaviour policy helps pupils to reflect on their actions and understand consequences. Enhanced playtime equipment has transformed social experiences, encouraging collaboration and enjoyment in new activities. As a result, pupils build positive friendships and thrive socially and emotionally. Staff know the pupils well, encouraging them to become the

best version of themselves. These strong relationships help them feel secure, ready to learn and consequently they thrive within a nurturing Christian environment**.** Leaders prioritise staff wellbeing and professional development, enabling many to progress in their careers and flourish. Initiatives such as wellbeing days and flexible working opportunities help staff feel valued and supported. Pupils and adults celebrate the school's diversity, valuing different faiths, cultures and traditions. As a result, staff and pupils feel respected, heard and proud of their inclusive community.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils are increasingly aware of injustice and are committed to being responsible citizens. Leadership roles, including librarians, house captains and play leaders, develop their sense of responsibility. Pupils speak with conviction about being 'up-standers, not bystanders', demonstrating a clear understanding of how they challenge bullying and racism. The eco council leads initiatives such as litter picking and creating greener spaces. Through these experiences, pupils understand that caring for the environment is an important expression of the school's vision. Learning about the school's solar panels and electric vehicles strengthens pupils' insight into sustainability. As a result, they make meaningful connections between environmental responsibility and daily choices. Participation by staff in the Oxford Half Marathon and related fundraising demonstrates to pupils how purposeful action can challenge injustice. These experiences help them to appreciate that addressing injustice is a shared responsibility. As a result, they recognise that positive action can take many forms. However, opportunities for pupils to initiate and lead their own projects are less developed.

Religious Education

Leaders prioritise RE, ensuring it is a high-profile and valued subject that meets the requirements for RE in a Church school. Effective leadership and detailed curriculum planning provide clear progression to deepen knowledge and understanding. High-quality resources support a well-sequenced curriculum, which helps pupils to build on prior learning. Pupils explore religious texts, including the Bible, and engage practically and thoughtfully with complex concepts. Church-led activities and the annual pilgrimage provide meaningful opportunities to explore diverse Christian traditions. However, within the curriculum, opportunities to learn about Christianity as a global faith and to explore diversity within worldviews are less well developed. Strong engagement with the diocese, through networking and professional development, supports staff to update their curriculum knowledge and refine teaching.

The use of 'big questions' encourages pupils to share opinions, justify their views and listen respectfully to others. This grows their curiosity and deeper critical thinking skills. Visits to places of worship, including the local church and Christ Church Cathedral, enrich learning and deepen awareness of faith in practice. As a result of strong learning experiences in RE pupils make good progress. They develop a secure understanding of key concepts. A range of assessment activities provides accessible ways for pupils to demonstrate their knowledge. These procedures are well established and support teachers in making accurate judgments about attainment. Leaders and governors monitor and evaluate RE effectively. This enables them to support ongoing improvement in the quality of provision.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	261 Navigation Way, Oxford, OX2 6AB		
Date	12 October 2026	URN	123214
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	381
Diocese	Oxford		
Headteacher	Paul Atkins		
Chair of Governors	Hazel Shaw		
Inspector	Paula Shaw		

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