

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Batheaston VC Church School	
Address	School Lane, Northend, Bath, BA1 7EP
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	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
<p style="text-align: center;">Dream Aspire Achieve</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Underpinned by 'That they may have life, life in all its fullness.' John 10:10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our vision encompasses the idea of our children, staff and school community living and enjoying life in all its fullness.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inspirational leadership of the headteacher and staff have created a culture of exceptional care and support which lives out the school's Christian vision. Through this, pupils grow in love for learning, each other and the world around them. • The strong partnership between the school, diocese and Bath and Wells multi-academy trust (MAT) has created a vibrant learning community promoted by the vision. However, the process of evaluating the impact of the vision across the life of the school is not sufficiently rigorous. • The school is developing an understanding of spirituality. Consequently, the way it intentionally enriches the curriculum and daily life are not yet explicitly planned. • Collective worship has a good impact on the life of the school reflecting the vision. However, the roles of pupils in planning and leading collective worship are underdeveloped. • Religious education (RE) is very well-led and reflects the school's vision enabling all to flourish. As a result, pupils enjoy the subject and recognise its prominent role at the heart of school life.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Church school self-evaluation process is sufficiently robust so that opportunities for all to flourish are not missed. • Embed the school's understanding of spiritual development which staff use for deepening experiences across the curriculum and throughout the school. • Enhance meaningful opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship. This is to increase their active engagement in worship and the spiritual development of all within school.



Inspection findings

The school's Christian vision is deeply rooted in the exceptionally strong links with its school and local community. It is fully embedded in every aspect of daily life at school. Pupils describe with passion and animation how they aspire to fulfil their dreams. They recognise the vision's very positive impact on their attitudes and behaviour. Leaders have the highest aspirations for their pupils. Priority is given to the central role of collective worship and RE. Relevant training is provided for all staff. Through the investment in staff by leaders, all feel valued highly as individuals and as a team. The school's links with the diocese, the multi-academy trust and particularly local Church schools have a very positive impact. Since the arrival of the new minister the school's partnership with the local church is developing very well. Governors including the local clergy, monitor the impact of collective worship and RE. However, several governors are newly appointed and a structure for Church school self-evaluation is not yet fully in place. Consequently, the impact of the vision across all aspects of school life is not sufficiently monitored. As a result, opportunities to further enhance flourishing within this Church school are not always identified. Parents highly value the school's open friendly culture and provide exceptional support to support pupils' learning.

The school's creative curriculum is an expression of its vision enabling all to flourish. Opportunities across the curriculum are maximised to develop pupils' wide range of talents and interests. In this way, pupils are empowered to aspire to dream of possibilities that they might achieve. Pupils understand that this may not be easy and they will need to persevere in their endeavours to succeed. The curriculum is inspiring, engaging and fully focussed on meeting the needs of all pupils, including those identified as disadvantaged or vulnerable. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and value their time at school. A strong feature of the school is the way the grounds are used exceptionally well for a wide variety of enriching learning activities. Examples of these include quiet calming reflective spaces, highly imaginative play areas, dipping in the large pond and outside learning. Highly engaging visits to places such as the old prison at Shepton Mallet and an overnight stay at Folly Farm have a very positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils learn about difference in very positive ways such as from an inspirational Paralympic swimmer. Consequently, diversity is embraced and highly welcomed. Staff and pupils are developing a shared understanding of spiritual development. However, opportunities for developing spirituality are not explicitly recognised and planned.

This is a community where relationships across the age groups are strong. A culture of caring for one another is embedded by an enhanced system of 'special friends'. Older pupils enjoy their responsibilities of caring for a much younger pupil. These include settling them into school and organising events for them such as their Christmas party. Consequently all ages play very well together. The school's value of respect is strongly promoted and has a good impact. As a result, pupils engage in exploring the big questions about life, listen to one another's views and learn to disagree well. Pupils' understanding of social action against injustice is enhanced by the lived examples of this such as the life of Martin Luther King. They have worked with the local community in creative ways taking action to reduce plastic and in support of Ukrainian families. Strategies for promoting pupils' wellbeing, raising their understanding of their feelings and those of their peers have a good impact. Healthy relationships are promoted well by the school's relationships education curriculum which reflects the vision. Leaders support for staff wellbeing creates an open culture where all are supported in practical and compassionate care. As a result, staff morale is high.

Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and central to daily life at Batheaston. This is because it promotes a deep sense of community which sustains and inspires all aspects of

daily life. Worship themes root the school's Christian values in biblical teaching and the life of Christ. Anglican practice is embedded in the school's own Christian greetings promoting peace and harmony within the school community. Another greeting said by a child demonstrates their understanding of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Adults and pupils alike enjoy the joyously vibrant singing as well as contrasting moments of quiet and calm reflection. Topical themes such as the imminent change of 'moving on' at the end of the school year are explored very well. These are good example of the ways that worship very effectively promotes spiritual development. Leaders are varied and include the local minister who supports worship very effectively. The school visits the church for the key Christian festivals as well as the recent Easter experience which have a positive impact. Pupils lead aspects of worship as well as a class at whole school level. However they do not plan and lead independently on a regular basis. They provide valuable feedback on ways to improve worship.

RE is an engaging and inspiring core subject at Batheaston. Pupils understand that it reflects the school's vision and values by promoting respect and diversity. The well balanced curriculum enhances pupils learning in RE. Following a review of the curriculum a year ago, changes have been made which have a positive impact on learning. Staff planning is supported very well by the RE subject leader. She uses training from the diocese very effectively to embed the new schemes of work. As a result, the new systems for teachers to understand and implement pupils' next steps in learning have a good impact on their learning. The use of 'big questions' enhances pupils' engagement in RE stimulating powerful discussions. Consequently, pupils are encouraged to reflect and think deeply about their beliefs and those of others. They recognise its relevance to their lives and develop a good understanding and respect for people from a range of faiths. As a result, pupils enjoy RE because they find the curriculum inspires learning which is challenging and motivating. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity as a living and diverse faith. A varied programme of visitors, including parents, has enhanced pupils' good levels of interest and respectful understanding of a range of faiths. Consequently RE makes a substantial contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

Information			
School	Batheaston VC Church School	Inspection date	5 July 2023
URN	145512	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Bath & Wells	Pupils on roll	185
MAT/Federation	BWMAT (Bath Hub)		
Headteacher	Sally Jefferies		
Chair of Governors	Wendy Jacobs and Jonathan Lunn/Nigel Daniels		
Inspector	Daphne Spitzer	No.	37