

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Katharine's Church of England Primary School, Savernake	
Address	Savernake Forest, Marlborough, SN8 3BG
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;">From Little Acorns Great Oaks Grow</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Though it is the smallest of seeds, yet when it grows it is the largest of plants and becomes a tree, so that birds can come and perch in its shade. Mark 4: 30-33</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inspirational headteacher, together with staff, have created a vibrant learning community. This generates a culture of exceptional care and support which lives out its Christian vision. Through this, pupils are enabled to grow in love for learning, each other and the world around them. • School leaders, including governors, ensure that collective worship and religious education (RE) are prioritised in the self- evaluation process. However, they do not sufficiently focus on the impact of the Christian vision on other aspects of the life of the school. • Staff are growing in their understanding of spiritual flourishing. The way spiritual development is embedded in the curriculum is at an early stage. Consequently, leaders have not had sufficient time to assess its impact. • Collective worship encourages deep reflection which has a profound impact on the school community. As a result of this, worship reflects the vision by promoting a highly spiritual dimension to life. • All value RE as an important subject which is enjoyed by pupils. Due to changes of leadership, certain aspects of the curriculum have not been fully implemented impacting on pupils' depth of knowledge. Leaders are aware of these areas and are implementing plans to enhance the curriculum.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the Church school self-evaluation process is sufficiently robust so that the Christian vision enhances aspects of learning across the whole curriculum. • Embed the new definition for spiritual development so that staff can plan for deepening experiences across the curriculum and throughout the school. • Enhance opportunities to engage in RE professional development and embed the new systems for assessing pupils' learning. This is to further develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of world faiths including Christianity.



Inspection findings

St Katharine's Christian vision is deeply rooted in the exceptionally strong links with its school community and rural wooded location. The vision is fully embedded in every aspect of daily life at school. Pupils describe with passion and animation how they grow in learning in the same way as the mustard seed grows to become a tree. They recognise its 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, although opportunities to enhance professional development in RE would extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Through the investment in staff by leaders, all feel valued highly as individuals and as a team.

The school values its links with the diocese and benefits considerably from this partnership. St Katharine's works closely with other Church schools within the trust. The school's partnership with the local church is a constant strength and support. Governors including the local clergy, monitor the impact of collective worship and RE. However, the impact of the vision across all aspects of school life is not sufficiently monitored. As a result, opportunities to further enhance flourishing within a Church school are not always identified. Parents highly value the school's open friendly culture and provide exceptional support. Examples of this, include their involvement in the development of the forest school and new hedge opposite school.

The school's creative curriculum is an expression of its vision enabling all to 'grow' in confidence and learning. Leaders and staff ensure learning is inspiring, engaging and fully focussed on meeting the needs of all pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and highly value their time at school. During the pandemic pupils, and families, were supported very effectively by the school. The headteacher and staff make bold decisions with the curriculum. As a result of their actions, the potential of pupils considered to be disadvantaged is transformed. The school's aspirational Christian vision motivates and encourages pupils to learn well. The weekly celebration worship, often with families present, motivates pupils to achieve their best. The close relationships enjoyed by pupils are evident in the joy and pride they show in the success of others. Difference and diversity are welcomed and celebrated in this inclusive, accepting community. Trips to cities such as Bath and further away to London enhance pupils' understanding of the wider world beyond the Savernake Forest. Staff are developing a shared understanding of spiritual development. Leaders have a structured plan in place to develop spiritual and ethical awareness across the curriculum. However its impact on pupils' learning is unclear as it has not yet been fully implemented.

Pupils show a good level of respect for their peers and a strong sense of equality. Opportunities exist across the curriculum to challenge stereotypes as well as raise issues of injustice and inequality. Pupils' understanding of social action against injustice is enhanced through lived examples of this such as the life of Rosa Parks. Pupils are pro-active in their support for causes which unite their vision and values such as respect for the wildlife around their school. This is evident in their support for the dormouse project led by the local Ramsbury Estate. They also work to reduce plastic in school and follow sustainable ways of living. The house martins which have their nests close to the school are a source of wonder and inspiration. This natural world provides pupils with spontaneous and valued opportunities for spiritual growth. Strategies for promoting pupils' wellbeing are very effective, raising their understanding of their feelings and those of their peers. Pupils say that the branches of the mustard tree reach out to hold, protect and shelter them. They recognise that the vision encourages them to care for each other in the same way. As a result, relationships between pupils and within the whole school community are excellent. Healthy relationships are



promoted very well by the school's relationships education curriculum which reflects the vision. Leaders create a culture where all are supported by encouragement and compassionate care. As a result staff morale is high.

Collective worship is central to daily life at St Katharine's. This is because it promotes a deep sense of spirituality which sustains and inspires all aspects of school life. It provides a calm, peaceful space within the busy school day, highly valued by the school community. Pupils particularly appreciate the opportunities provided to be still and reflect as well as to sing joyously. Worship provides meaningful moments to promote the school's Christian values which it does very well. An example of this, is the way the value of creativity is described by a child as 'feeling free to think'. Collective worship strongly reflects the vision which is evident in the words of the school prayer. Anglican practice is embedded by formal greetings and responses such as for the lighting of the candle representing the light of Christ. However, an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is underdeveloped as no reference is included during worship. The need to care for God's created natural world is very well understood and integral to school life. Pupils' attitudes are very positive because they know their views are valued and they feel included and involved. Evaluations made by pupils during worship often inspire and guide discussions at a later time in class worship. Highly interactive worship is led by the vicar each week using the Open The Book resources. He supports pupils who lead worship in church for special festivals. The decision to introduce the school's vision at their Harvest Festival service enhances the understanding of how worship and the vision link. It sets the vision clearly in its biblical roots ensuring that it is a powerful expression of the Christian foundation of the school.

RE is recognised as an engaging and inspiring core subject. Pupils understand that it reflects the school's Christian vision. The curriculum is planned well using an effective balance in line with Church school education requirements. The use of 'big questions' enhances pupils engagement in RE stimulating powerful discussions. As a result, pupils enjoy RE because they find the curriculum inspires learning which is challenging and motivating. They recognise its relevance to their lives and develop a good understanding and respect for people from a range of faiths. Pupils are encouraged to reflect and think deeply about their beliefs and those of others. Consequently RE makes a substantial contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity as a living global faith. The leadership of RE has undergone changes over the last few years, nevertheless, staff feel well supported by the school and diocese. Systems for teachers to understand and implement pupils' next steps in learning have been developed but not yet fully implemented. Consequently, the impact of these systems cannot yet be identified.



Information			
School	St Katharine's Church of England Primary School, Savernake	Inspection date	25 April 2023
URN	144454	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Salisbury	Pupils on roll	94
MAT/Federation	Excalibur Academies Trust		
Principal	Niki Jones		
Chair of Trust Board	Kim Lydon Strutt/Toby Watson		
Inspector	Daphne Spitzer	No.	37