

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barton Church of England VA Primary School

Vision

Our vision is taken from Matthew 7:12 “Do to others whatever you would have them do to you”, following Jesus’ example. This is in order that we work together to believe, nurture, grow and flourish together in our learning and in our relationships, exemplified in the Parable of the Sower. We do this through our six core values: love, respect, integrity, justice, thankfulness and determination. Inspired by our vision, we want our pupils to make good choices academically and socially, to become creative and independent thinkers, evidencing a love for learning and a thirst for knowledge.

Barton 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.

Strengths

- The Christian vision is clearly stated and understood by members of the school community. This creates an environment where there is support for each other to experience, nurture and grow.
- The school has a positive climate for learning in which members of the school treat each other as they would wish to be treated. This enables pupils to fulfil their potential.
- Pupils are able to fulfil a range of responsibilities as they grow through the school. This enables them to understand how their actions can make a positive difference to themselves and others.
- Collective worship is inclusive, engaging and uplifting. Members of the school community are actively involved and offered the opportunity to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, singing and reflection.
- The well-structured religious education (RE) builds on prior knowledge and is carefully planned so it is relevant. This impacts positively on pupil knowledge and understanding.

Development Points

- Develop the extent to which RE (religious education) curriculum supports pupils’ understanding of Christianity as a world-wide faith. This is to enable them to appreciate the rich variety of Christian beliefs, practices and worship.



Inspection Findings

The school has taken considerable time to develop a vision that is deeply rooted in biblical tradition. It is appropriate to the school's foundation and current context. The bible verse underpinning the vision encourages human behaviours that are essential to living harmoniously. Consequently, the school's core values of love, respect, integrity, justice, thankfulness and determination are embraced by members of the school community. These values are characterised by positive pupil teacher relationships. As a result, pupils make good choices academically and socially. They become creative and independent thinkers showing a love of learning and a thirst for knowledge. Decisions made by leaders and governors are bold, courageous and aspirational so that the vision is enacted daily. Governors effectively monitor and evaluate the school's strategic plans. Decision making is therefore based on how best to serve the needs of the community.

The way that the curriculum is designed reflects the Christian vision, and pupils display their love of learning and their thirst for knowledge. Teachers effectively use assessment to identify vulnerable pupils and to plan and implement appropriate interventions. This provision is often bespoke to individual needs so that pupils are able to flourish. Staff are well supported by a comprehensive programme of training. This enables them to develop their skills and expertise. The curriculum is enriched by an impressive programme of visits, visitors and workshops, for example 'Faraday Kids', 'Church Schools of Cambridge' and a visit to Ely Cathedral. These experiences have impacted upon pupils' understanding of Christian worship and the relationship between science and religion. Pupils understand issues relating to fairness and the importance of integrity in their own actions. They have numerous opportunities to demonstrate these values. These include inter-generational work and ecology projects that develop their understanding of the world as precious, needing cherishing through careful stewardship. There is rich array of extra-curricular activities for pupils to take part in which enriches their lives. Personal, academic and outside successes are acknowledged in Friday's collective worship which parents and families regularly attend. In addition, pupils' achievements are celebrated through reward cards and 'Golden' and 'Subject' certificates which recognise the enactment of the school's values. These rewards have a positive impact on pupils' self-worth and appreciation of each other's achievements. Pupils have a clear understanding of what spirituality means to them and can talk openly about 'awe and wonder' moments both within and outside the classroom. This has a positive impact on their perceptions of the diversity, complexity and brilliance of the world in which they live.

Daily collective worship at Barton is a time of joy, spirituality and community engagement which promotes the school's vision. It includes a wide variety of activities which results in those present being able to be part of the experience. The relationship with local Christian churches is strong and members of the clergy regularly deliver acts of worship within school with pupils attending services in local churches. Their involvement and that of parents and families fosters the sense of community. Collective worship and weekly attendance at church, alongside other local festivals, such as Harvest, help pupils to become familiar with the liturgical cycle and links to the rural heritage of Barton village. The school responds to national, local and school needs. This allows the opportunity to reflect on the impact of significant events. It enables pupils to look through a spiritual window to the outside world. To open doors to new experiences and knowledge and to reflect inwardly. These contribute greatly to the spiritual growth of both adults and pupils. The Bible stories are aptly used to explore the relevance and importance of faith in the modern world. For example, the use of parables, such as the Good Samaritan and the Sower. Collective worship also allows times for moments of quiet reflection, for stillness and for prayer. Consequently, pupils are deeply aware of the ways in which they have lived out the school's values. A wide range of pupils are enabled to plan, deliver and review collective worship. This broadens their contributions to collective worship, for example in their role as members of the school council, young leader, house captains.

Positive relationships are a striking characteristic of the school. The 'Barton's B's': be safe, be respectful and be learners stem from the school's values. They are clear statements of how pupils and adults are expected to behave and are enacted every day. Consequentially, when any issues arise, they are dealt with in accordance with the



fundamental value of love. This creates an environment where every individual is cherished for their unique worth. Inspired by the Bishop's Lent Challenge the School Council initiated the 'Living Barton Values' project. Focussing on a school value each half term pupils were able to demonstrate the value in practical, everyday behaviours. Staff wellbeing is a priority and leadership decisions are made in the context of the impact on workload and wellbeing. Barton is a school that understands the strength in working together with consideration and kindness.

Pupils' understanding of justice and responsibility is developed through an impressive range of initiatives. The support of charities and the Archbishops' Young Leaders programme for example. Advocacy projects focused on deforestation, fairtrade and food waste have resulted in pupils being more mindful of what they eat. As well as being grateful for their own good fortune. The behaviour policy has justice and responsibility at its heart and was developed in conjunction with pupils. They can, therefore, describe how this influences them to know the difference between right and wrong. The concept of the 'Barton rucksack' is well understood. It is a bag packed with the Christian values of the school. It serves as a moral compass which aids pupils in their decision making.

A thoughtfully structured RE programme is well sequenced and develops pupils' knowledge and understanding over time. RE is given prominence in the school curriculum and pupils benefit from the extensive time dedicated to this area. Teachers are supported to teach engaging lessons. The school has worked closely with Ely Diocesan Board of Education to inform curriculum planning and associated teaching materials. These have increased staff subject knowledge and confidence. There is extensive monitoring and review of RE by staff and governors. This ensures that the delivery is consistent with the school's values and is both relevant and topical. The RE curriculum is supplemented by days of enrichment activities. These provide thought provoking experiences which facilitate pupils to consolidate their thoughts and feelings. However, there is little opportunity for exploration of Christianity as a diverse faith. This limits pupils' understanding of the diverse ways in which Christians practice their faith.

The quality of the teaching in RE is of a high standard. This gives pupils a sound awareness of Christianity and a range of religions and worldviews. Pupil understanding of those who have no faith is also comprehensive and has been aided by recent visits by a Christian and humanist with engaging questioning by pupils. The use of floor plans, by which pupils can document their understanding and ask questions is impressive. They allow pupils the opportunity to consider what is most important to them and deepen their understanding of their own unique place in the world.

Information

Address	School Lane, Barton, Cambridge, CB23 7BD		
Date	30 April 2025	URN	110829
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	119
Diocese and Methodist District	Ely		
Headteacher	Julie Martin		
Chair of Governors	Caroline Parsons		
Inspector	Helen Birch		