

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Nether Stowey Church of England VC Primary School

Vision

Nether Stowey Church of England Primary School inspires a love of learning in all of us with Christian values at our heart. Our school community is a safe, caring friendly place where everyone is welcome. We give all children and staff the opportunity and encouragement to aim high and develop their strengths and interests. We strive to understand, respect and value each other, our school, our community and the world we live in. We are caring. We are active. We are our best. 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself'. Matthew 22:3

Nether Stowey Church of England VC 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

- The distinctive Christian vision is the heartbeat of the school, where it permeates and shapes daily life. Leaders are inspired by the vision, consistently creating initiatives that make a difference for pupils.
- Pupils have a real understanding of Christian values. They shape attitudes and actions, so pupils see the variety of areas where they make a difference. Staff are role models to the community as they live out the vision day by day.
- The nurture and care for pupils with special needs and/or a disability (SEND) is strong, raising aspirations and growing self-esteem. Pupils talk of becoming the best they can be.
- Collective worship deepens adults and pupils' understanding of the significance of the vision. As a result, they treat one another with a high degree of dignity and respect.
- The school is a warm, inclusive place where pupils feel part of a family. Relations with the local community enrich lives. The church plays a major role in enhancing worship and nurturing staff and families.

Development Points

- Make explicit opportunities in curriculum plans to strengthen opportunities for spiritual development. Support pupils to grow a language of spirituality that helps them to express their thinking clearly.
- Identify key questions for pupils to explore in the religious education (RE) curriculum. This is to enable pupils to use a variety of approaches that allow them to think at a deeper level.
- Enable pupils to develop the skills to raise awareness of injustice and become independent agents for change.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision is the school's heartbeat, it permeates daily life, shaping actions and attitudes. Leaders use it to drive improvements, giving clear strategic direction. They see their role as serving God's children. Pupils articulate the parable of the Good Samaritan in considerable depth, making links to each aspect of the vision. They talk about being the best person they can be. Pupils perceive that the associated Christian values enable them to live out the vision. Increasingly, they use the language of values. For instance, resilience encourages pupils when meeting challenging learning. Kindness is recognised as growing and nurturing friendships. They are confident to indicate different situations where values make a difference, appreciating their importance. Leaders bring an enthusiasm that is contagious, leading by example. They create new initiatives that effectively address pupils' needs. For instance, personal development lessons provide diverse experiences that extend understanding of the world. These range from autism awareness day to national tree week and Diwali. As a result, pupils understand that they are part of a global community. The staff team are cohesive and well established. They see their role as living out the vision so the difference it makes is clear. Evaluations by the leadership team are ongoing, shaped by daily conversations. These lead to training in spirituality. Governors are dedicated to their role. Their evaluations lead to new approaches being introduced for pupils going through difficult times, so they are effectively supported.

Vision and Curriculum

Leaders draw on Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan to show everyone deserves support when they face challenges. Leaders for SEND have significant expertise, enriching provision, creating a culture where meeting diverse needs is a priority. For instance, a range of new initiatives strengthen memory and retention strategies. There is a real emphasis on removing any barriers to learning. Pupils work with staff creating a toolkit of ideas that effectively support them. The local authority uses these leaders to train others. The support for parents of SEND pupils is strong. Raising aspirations and celebrating successes are central to this. The curriculum provides numerous opportunities to discover and grow talents, including music and sport. Staff set personalised challenges that lead to pupils aiming high, growing self-esteem. The curriculum is shaped to show where values make a difference in various contexts. Recent developments raise the importance of spirituality. Staff are aware of some experiences that nurture spiritual flourishing. However, these opportunities are not an intrinsic part of the curriculum. Pupils are at an early stage of expressing their thinking about spirituality.

Worship and Spirituality

Leaders nurture a positive culture of curiosity and questioning. At the close of worship pupils often have opportunities to raise issues and clarify their thinking. Question boxes encourage them to share thoughts which are then explored, so worship addresses current issues. For instance, pupils wondered what happens when people die. These opportunities for discussion make a positive difference to their spiritual flourishing. Worship progressively enriches understanding of the vision, values and their significance. Worship themes are discussed in greater depth in class worship, where reflection culminates in ideas recorded in reflection journals. Leaders explore the impact worship has through discussing these ideas in class. Worship can be inspiring, for example, leading pupils to do random acts of kindness. It is inclusive and enables those of different beliefs to contribute with integrity. Leaders are exploring ways to enrich spiritual flourishing, using questions, music and time to reflect. Using an agreed approach helps pupils to organise their thinking and consider how they might respond. An understanding of spirituality is growing, notably as they draw on ideas from the natural world. Governors' reviews led to a change, resulting in a greater understanding of Remembrance Sunday and its significance. Partnerships enrich the impact worship makes. The diocese provides well-focused training in spirituality, leading worship and the new nature connection initiative. As a result, planning for worship is more detailed, guiding staff to use questions that deepen understanding.



Vision and School Culture

The vision stands out in the pervasive culture of care and inclusion, where everyone is seen as special. Pupils make strong relationships built upon the values, that last beyond the school. They treat one another with dignity and respect and behaviour is exemplary. Trusting relationships allow staff to work in diverse ways with families going through difficult times. This includes daily practical support as well as involving specific care from other agencies. This brings hope, so they feel valued. Experienced leaders for mental health establish wellbeing days, so pupils know approaches that help them to be calm. Pupils value the opportunities offered by forest school.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The vision promotes a responsibility of caring for others. Pupils have a growing appreciation of injustice. Literature books, carefully chosen, raise awareness of issues, such as refugees or poverty. This is reinforced by an initiative to protect God's planet, motivating some to undertake litter picking. However, pupils are less confident to raise awareness of injustice or become agents for change. The school plays a major role in the life of the community. Strong relationships with local groups lead to sharing meals and stories. Pupils work with a conservation group planting trees, so they see how they might care for God's world. The relationship with the local church stands out, clergy support for school families makes a real difference. The Journey to Bethlehem experience on a farm brings to life the Christmas story and its importance for Christians. Church led flourish day workshops deepen pupils' understanding of the vision and its meaning.

Religious Education

A broad, diverse, challenging and progressive RE curriculum is established. The subject has a prominent role in the life of the school and is appropriately resourced. It meets the requirements for the subject as a Church school. Planning is secure, giving key objectives to explore. A detailed guide to RE key skills shows what these look like in each year group. These enhance pupils' appreciation of their importance. Their understanding of core religious concepts is growing. The curriculum offers opportunities to explore big questions. However, these are not used across the school. Neither do pupils have opportunities to use different approaches to these questions, such as philosophy. This limits opportunities to confidently explore the different views people have. The RE curriculum enables pupils to talk with confidence about worldviews. They use specific vocabulary accurately, aware of its significance. This provides opportunities for pupils to make insightful comparisons of what this might mean for them. RE is generally enjoyed, notably through drama allowing them to explore beliefs at a deeper level. Leaders draw on best practice from the diocese, leading to staff knowledge of Christianity being extended.

Information

Address	Mill Close, Nether Stowey, Bridgwater, Somerset. TA5 1NX		
Date	24 November 2025	URN	123789
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	145
Diocese	Bath and Wells		
Acting Headteacher	Terry Luke		
Chair of Governors	Zoe Hicks		
Inspector	David Hatrey		