

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Weare Academy Church of England First School

Vision

Our mission is to instil a lifelong love of learning; empowering our pupils to develop into aspirational and resilient individuals, who are kind, respectful and responsible members of society. We strive to deliver high-quality education in a safe and inclusive environment with Christian values at its core. Our pupils are taught to be curious about themselves, others and the world. Together these values enable children at Weare Academy Church of England First School to flourish and achieve their full potential. We believe values help define our character and ethos and by doing so affect our behaviour, beliefs and actions. They are our guide for living a life that will help all flourish.

Weare Academy Church of England First 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 distinct Christian vision is at the heart of this school. It drives improvements and gives clear strategic direction to this Church school.
- The Christian vision shapes the curriculum. Christian values are woven throughout learning, so pupils are immersed in the language of aspiration, kindness and resilience. Pupils use this vocabulary throughout the day, recognising where it informs positive attitudes and actions.
- The school is a caring and inclusive community. Staff live out the Christian vision and values so the difference they make is clear. As a result, pupils and staff treat one another with a high degree of dignity and respect.
- Pupil chaplains increasingly play a major role in improving collective worship, shaping developments and planning. This is enabling more pupils to flourish spiritually.
- Leaders, at all levels, are dedicated to developing this Church school, their enthusiasm stands out. Monitoring, linked to the vision, consistently leads to improvements that make a significant difference.

Development Points

- Make explicit opportunities in curriculum plans to enable spiritual development. Support pupils to develop a language of spirituality that helps them to express their thinking clearly.
- Enable pupils to explore questions in religious education (RE) using a variety of approaches. This is to enable them to think at a deeper level and understand the different views people have.
- Deepen pupils' understanding of injustice. This is to enable them to develop the skills needed so they can respond to issues and make a difference for others.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision is at the heart of this school and inspires its development. Pupils articulate how the vision 'boosts' or 'encourages' them to be the best person they can be. It gives clear strategic direction for leaders to drive improvements. Pupils understand, at an age-appropriate level, how the Christian values enable them to live out the vision. They are immersed in a community where the language of values permeates throughout. Staff and pupils consistently use this vocabulary, especially when learning and making friendships. Values have a high profile, with staff celebrating where pupils use them. Pupils recognise the difference they make. For example, pupils articulate how the value of resilience encourages them, shaping attitudes to tackle new ideas. Pupils share where they use values outside of school, enhancing their importance. Leaders refreshed the values, so these address pupils' current needs, adding aspiration. This is effectively raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence to tackle more challenging questions in their learning. The Wessex Learning Trust (trust) effectively nurtures new leaders, as a result they are enthusiastic and dedicated, and lead by example. Staff perceive their role as modelling Christian values so the impact these make is clear. They feel valued, giving examples of where the school enables them to flourish. School leaders' monitoring is rigorous and systematic. It frequently culminates in well-focused new improvements that consistently make a difference. Local partners act as critical friends, effectively reviewing all aspects of being a Church school. Partners' evaluations about the impact the vision makes are shared with the ethos and values committee. They challenge the trust regarding improvements that are needed. For instance, in collective worship, which led to the introduction of class worship. This gives pupils more opportunities to discuss and respond to ideas raised. In addition, a new Christian distinctiveness leader has been appointed. He is beginning to enhance provision by designing bespoke training. This is at an early stage of development.

Vision and Curriculum

Leaders draw on Jesus' example of reaching out to those who face challenges on the journey of life. This is evident in the provision to enrich pupils' social and emotional development. Pupils are supported to recognise and talk about their feelings, identifying strategies they know help them. The trust network enables the dissemination of expertise through leaders for special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). This ensures good practice is shared. Trust advisers facilitate well-focused individual plans to address specific needs. These enable pupils to flourish and grow self-belief. Leaders recognise communication skills are a barrier to progress. As a result, a drama specialist leads groups, extending vocabulary and raising pupils' confidence to share ideas well. Staff subject leaders plan a curriculum ensuring there are rich opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding of Christian values. The profile of spirituality has risen following diocesan training. Staff are aware of some experiences that nurture spiritual flourishing. However, this is at an early point of development and experiences are not recorded in planning. Pupils are not confident to express their thoughts or have a language to use.

Worship and Spirituality

Pupil review days are an integral part of approaches to evaluate the impact collective worship makes. Greater leadership in worship was requested by pupils. Subsequently, the school is pioneering, for the trust, the role of pupil chaplains. They lead aspects of worship and make suggestions for questions to explore. This ensures that worship is relevant to pupils' current thinking. Pupil chaplains champion and model Christian values and shape class reflection areas. Pupils find these areas helpful, where they can pause and pose a question. These are enhancing spiritual flourishing. The introduction of class worship is enabling pupils to discuss themes in greater depth. Planning for worship ensures progression, so pupils explore different aspects of a Christian value and its significance in different contexts. Adults



and pupils' understanding of the Christian vision is significantly deepened through worship. It is inspiring and inclusive. It enables pupils of all faiths to contribute with integrity. Leaders are beginning to consider how collective worship can nurture spiritual flourishing. These include times to pause and reflect, the use of music and questions that stimulate discussions. Partnerships extend the impact that worship makes, with good practice shared amongst trust schools. The relationship with the local church is strong. Church leaders make nurturing relationships with pupils, adding depth to their understanding of Anglican traditions. The main Christian festivals are celebrated so pupils appreciate their importance.

Vision and School Culture

The school's caring, inclusive culture stands out, the Christian vision and values are lived out in positive relationships. Friendships are made that extend beyond school. Pupils treat one another with a high degree of dignity and respect; they want to come to school. The provision for mental health is well developed, led by knowledgeable staff. Pupils talk of strategies they use and when these have been helpful. Forest school makes a good contribution to wellbeing. Staff feel valued and supported, with dedicated time for their own wellbeing. Specifically trained adults work with families when they face challenges. This can lead to a range of support that makes a difference, so they feel valued.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Partnerships make an influential contribution to school development. The trust brings expertise, enriching the curriculum, leadership, monitoring and meeting pupils' diverse needs. This creates a rich culture of growing together and recognising everyone's talents. The diocese supports this with well-focused training. Leaders have begun to create a culture of responsibility and justice. They weave questions into the enquiry curriculum and link ideas to the diverse range of reading texts pupils explore. This has led to some pupils talking about protecting local trees, culminating in letters to their Member of Parliament. However, pupils' understanding of injustice is not fully developed, nor are they confident on how to challenge it or raise awareness for others.

Religious Education

A balanced, diverse, progressive and relevant RE curriculum is established. Planning identifies the key vocabulary to be explored for each unit. This enables pupils to effectively develop subject knowledge. The RE leader ensures the subject has a high profile. Monitoring leads to staff subject knowledge being enhanced. For instance, training has deepened staff's understanding of Christianity. New approaches from other trust schools have been introduced, such as drama. Pupils enjoy this approach, raising interest and engagement in their learning. Increasingly, older pupils contribute to discussions and value sharing their ideas. Pupils' understanding of key RE skills is growing. They show a real interest in learning of worldviews, which is enhanced by visits to places of worship and visitors. However, pupils can lack an appreciation of the variety of religious beliefs and their impact on the way people live. This is because they do not have the opportunity to explore philosophical questions in depth.

Information

Address	Notting Hill Way, Weare, Somerset. BS26 2JS		
Date	12 November 2025	URN	136601
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	121
Diocese	Bath and Wells		
MAT	Wessex Learning Trust		
MAT Chair	Paul Jacobs		
Interim Headteacher	Oliver Laken		
Chair of Governors	William Fox		
Inspector	David Hatrey		