

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Creech St Michael Church of England Primary School

Address	Hyde Lane, Creech St Michael, Taunton, TA3 5QQ		
Date of inspection	10 July 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled
Diocese	Bath and Wells	URN	123793

Overall Judgement	Grade	Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
Additional Judgement		
The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Creech St Michael's is a primary school with 276 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. Mobility in to the school is higher than average.

The school's Christian vision

Together we love, learn, and grow

'Go and bear fruit, fruit that will last' John 15: 16

All are inspired to fulfil their aspirations through the Christian values of love, care and respect.

Key findings

- The highly regarded headteacher has developed and nurtured a partnership between the school and the two local churches which is exceptionally strong, and is having a tangible impact on the school and church communities enabling all to flourish.
- Pupils talk of how the school's vision and learning values enable them to succeed in their learning and other aspects of their lives.
- Relationships throughout the school community are of the highest quality. Pupils are exceptionally supportive of one another. Staff feel very well cared for and attribute this to the school's vision.
- Worship strongly promotes the biblical underpinning of the school's vision and values in an exceptional manner. However pupils do not yet have opportunities to lead worship independently on a regular basis.

Areas for development

- Enrich pupils' active experience of planning and leading worship by creating new opportunities for them to take a greater lead in its development within the school.
- Deepen and celebrate the new partnership between the school in Wolverhampton and Creech St Michael in order to further develop pupils' understanding of difference and diversity
- Share current practice in governance, spiritual development and religious education (RE) with other schools so that this can be known more widely within the diocese
- Further raise the profile of global issues of inequality and injustice within the curriculum so that pupils are inspired to act as advocates for change and social action projects embed themselves in the whole life of the school.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Creech St Michael is a very strong church school which is well on the road to being excellent. It already has some strong features. It has a vision driven by the headteacher and other leaders which is deeply rooted in the school's local community and biblical teaching. The vision's link to its local semi-rural context is underpinned by the reference to this fruit growing area of Somerset. It is rooted in the core Christian beliefs of community and love which are fully understood and articulated by pupils as well as leaders. The vision is integral to school improvement plans, for instance through the strong links made to staff and pupils mental health and well-being. The school has close links with the diocese. Professional development from the diocese has had a very positive effect on whole school development. This has enabled staff and pupils to flourish. Support from leaders has enabled another local school to make progress. Collective worship and RE are given the highest priority. Governors have established an exceptionally rigorous Church school self-evaluation process through the formation of its ethos committee. This highly pro-active group includes leaders of both Baptist and Anglican churches. They have fully addressed issues from the last inspection in ways that have empowered the school to make substantial progress. This productive partnership with the two churches has grown significantly over the last two years. This has had a significant impact by uniting the community around the school for the benefit of all pupils.

The school's own creative curriculum is a highly innovative and holistic expression of its Christian vision. Pupils recognise that their individual interests and enthusiasms such as with global dimension themes are developed and addressed. In this way the curriculum is continually enhanced and improved in a significant way so that it meets the specific needs of each child. Christian values and spiritual reflection are seamlessly threaded through the curriculum strengthening the impact of the vision. In this way, pupils' behaviour, aspirations and achievement are transformed by the vision. The curriculum is enriched by inspiring visits and visitors as well as a strong focus on sport and art. As a result, pupils' talents are recognised and fully developed enabling them to 'bear fruit' or fulfil their potential. Standards of attainment and progress are high for all pupils including disadvantaged. This is because vulnerable pupils, who might have had adverse experiences at previous settings, are able to flourish at Creech St Michael.

The school has developed its own innovative approach to spiritual development which is shared by staff and pupils. Pupils talk with good understanding of the daily times for reflection which support their developing self-awareness and their learning. These calming times are also valued for promoting peace which supports their mental health and well-being. The vision promotes distinctively Christian learning values of resilience, collaboration and spirituality. These have a significant impact on pupils' personal development and achievement. They say it is due to their vision that they are able to succeed. The use of 'big questions', enable pupils to explore and respond to global, spiritual and ethical issues in a setting where all views are highly valued. As a result, pupils are able to develop and justify their viewpoints with confidence and disagree politely. They are passionate in their adoption and pursuit of causes which support their vision and challenge social injustice. They speak with conviction about the need to counter inequality, and raised funds to send mosquito nets to protect people overseas from malaria.

Staff well-being policies reflect the school's vision and create a culture where all are supported in mutually practical and compassionate care. A strong sense of trust and hope is tangible. As a result, staff are a very strong team and their morale is high. Staff say they feel exceptionally well supported by the prayers of the local church community. The open respectful culture, promoted by the vision, ensures staff and pupils are treated with dignity and respect. The vision creates a strong sense of being 'together'. Relationships between pupils are outstanding, noted by their description of the school as 'a massive big family'. Pupils play a leading role by welcoming, interacting and serving villagers during special occasions such as the annual fish and chip lunch. Pupils' understanding of diversity and difference has been strongly promoted by a new link with a school in Wolverhampton. A recent first meeting between pupils had a very positive impact on their understanding of how 'we are all different and the same'.

Collective worship is central to daily life. The vision is reflected in worship's central theme of the fruits of the spirit taught by St Paul. Innovative Anglican liturgical responses have been developed in-line with these beliefs. The lighting of the three candles has enabled pupils to have a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school song and prayer have recently been composed by pupils and governors which have embedded the vision and the importance of love at the heart of worship. It is affirmed in the pupils' understanding that the most important of their values is love, love of God and love for all in their community. They understand and value opportunities for stillness, prayer and reflection in worship. As a result, worship promotes spiritual

development very effectively. Planning for worship is shared between all leaders. Pupils lead worship in church for major Christian festivals. However they do not regularly have the opportunity to lead worship independently. Religious education is recognised as an inspiring and exciting core subject. It strongly reflects the school's vision by contributing to pupils' respect for others. The curriculum is appropriately balanced in- line with the Church of England Statement of Entitlement. Teaching, which is at least good and often excellent, is motivating and challenging, enabling all pupils to flourish. The use of enquiry skills is highly motivating and challenging. As a result, pupils are fully engaged, reflect deeply and can hold challenging conversations about religion, their own beliefs and those of others. Consequently, RE makes a substantial contribution to pupils' spiritual growth. Pupils show good levels of interest and respectful understanding of a range of faiths. The church community, including leaders, play a substantial role in promoting pupils' good understanding of Christianity as a living faith. This was seen in their recent Experience Church event. Monitoring and evaluation of RE and worship by governors is thorough and challenging. Assessment strategies are rigorous providing a very clear overview of attainment and progress and identifying strengths and areas for development. Members of the ethos committee, including the Rector, often attend and share training with the subject leader and school, strengthening the bond. The school meets the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

Headteacher	Jan McCarthy
Inspector's name and number	Daphne Spitzer No 37