

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Willow Park Church of England Primary School	
Address	Park Lane, St Michael's Hill, Bristol, BS2 8BE

School vision
<p style="text-align: center;">“Be the Light!” (Matthew, 5:14) You are the light of the world, like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden</p>

School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is a sanctuary. It is a safe place for the many children and their families who arrive as refugees, or asylum seekers, from across the world. • Staff are much valued by school leaders and the wider community. They work diligently and are committed to supporting the communities they serve. In doing so, they live out the Christian vision: they become the light. • The rich cultural diversity of the school is enthusiastically celebrated. Opportunities to mark religious festivals, share and learn from each other are harnessed, bringing communities together. • Courageous advocacy has been meaningful and impactful for children and adults within the local community. The school regularly raises funds to support both local and wider community needs.

Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders, including governors, do not routinely monitor the impact of the Christian vision. Therefore, appropriate and timely strategic action is not always undertaken as quickly as it could be. • Collective worship is a central part of school life, but it does not yet enable all pupils to flourish spiritually as much as they could. School leaders should ensure that it responds to the needs of all pupils. • Whilst the religious education (RE) curriculum is mapped and carefully sequenced, it is not sufficiently rigorously monitored for impact on all pupils. This, for example, will help to ensure that children are remembering more of what they have been taught.

Inspection findings
<p>Willow Park Church of England School's Christian vision reflects its unique context. It arises out of the amalgamation of two former primary schools: St Michael's and St George's Church of England Primary Schools. Willow Park currently serves a diverse multi-cultural, multi-linguistic community, some of whom do not stay long at the school. Many families arrive as refugees, or as asylum seekers. In this context, the school is 'the light of the world, like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden'. For these families, and many more, the school acts as a shining beacon, offering sanctuary and a new beginning.</p> <p>The Christian vision is underpinned by core values. These are articulated as 'showing dignity, respect and wisdom; growing in wisdom, knowledge and skills.' The school also prioritises character development, with opportunities to develop resilience confidence</p>

and independence. The values are woven into many aspects of school life, from playground behaviour to the school curriculum. They are displayed and referenced in classrooms. Children are taught, through the school's chosen values, how to 'be the light!'. This includes how to live one's life in a moral, purposeful way, in the context of the teachings of Jesus. The school's Christian vision is also expressed through its 'School of Sanctuary' status. This award acknowledges the school's efforts to foster a culture of welcome and belonging for those seeking safety. Both new and established families benefit from the school's status as a sanctuary school. This, in turn, helps adults and pupils to flourish.

In responding to individual and community needs, staff live out the Christian vision in all that they do. They provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment. The parental community talk fondly about how the school has impacted on their lives, particularly as new arrivals to the UK. Parents value the culture of inclusion and the efforts to which the school goes to make them feel welcome. They also speak warmly of the support with day-to-day needs such as school uniform, food or practical advice.

The school creates a culture in which different communities are treated well, both equitably and inclusively. The school celebrates its rich cultural and religious diversity. The conscious efforts to mark and celebrate special religious events are appreciated by parents. They cite, for example, recent celebrations related to traditional Islamic Turkish festivities. These enable pupils and parents to have a sense of belonging and renewed identity. It helps them to flourish in their new country. These special moments in time enrich the lives of many of the children in the school. They create community cohesion and a shared sense of belonging. Staff also talk about being part of something culturally rich and special.

The school has an established link with the local church, and the children have the opportunity to visit for key Christian festivals, such as Easter. There is also an established relationship with the allocated church school worker who visits the school regularly and facilitates a range of activities for the school community.

Collective worship is a key moment in the school day, bringing staff and children together. It is invitational and valued by the staff and children alike, with opportunities for prayer and spiritual reflection. Children confidently create their own prayers, often in their home language, to share with others in whole-school collective worship. The Collective Worship Committee contribute enthusiastically to the prayer life of the school. A three-year planned sequence, based on the school's chosen Christian values, forms the basis for all daily worship. Bible stories help bring it to life in a way that has meaning and relevance to the school community. However, whilst collective worship provides an opportunity for spiritual reflection, not all pupils are able to access it. For example, for some, language is a barrier. Links with the church and the diocese are not as impactful as they could be. Leaders, including governors, do not routinely monitor collective worship and therefore review is not as robust as it could be.

Opportunities for pupils and adults to flourish spiritually extend beyond collective worship. The school's spirituality policy provides a framework for spiritual development. Whilst spirituality is not formally mapped out across the curriculum, staff seek meaningful opportunities to provide spiritual reflection. Such opportunities occur in science lessons or Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). The school also harnesses its unique setting to provide opportunities for reflection, maximising outdoor spaces.

Meaningful and relevant efforts are made to create an active culture of justice and responsibility. Children and staff talk, with pride, about how even small differences have positive impact. For example, a recent charity event raised £86, generated from funds from families who had arrived to the UK with nothing. Whilst their work is, at times, emotionally challenging, staff take comfort in that they are ‘being the light!’.

The RE curriculum ensures that pupils across the school learn about a range of faiths and world views. At Key Stage 2, pupils who have been at the school for a significant period of time talk enthusiastically about their RE learning. They are able to articulate aspects of different faiths and world views. These include, for example, stories from the Hindu tradition, key events in the life of Jesus, and what it means to be a Muslim. KS1 pupils show that they can recount their prior learning of a range of different festivals. Such learning helps provide a foundation for RE learning to come. Newer pupils, many of whom speak English as an additional language, are inevitably less confident at sharing their learning. However, such pupils are quickly given appropriate language support, but this takes time to enable pupils to have full access to the RE curriculum. Despite this, adapted opportunities to explore RE through more practical means, such as through art, enable pupils to explore their own religious identities and raise their awareness of other world views. Whilst RE provision clearly has many strengths, it is not sufficiently or rigorously monitored by school leaders to assess its full impact.

The inspection findings indicate that Willow Park Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
School	Willow Park Church of England Primary	Inspection date	2.5.24
URN	148841	VC/VA/Academy	VC
Diocese/District	Bristol	Pupils on roll	118
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Mr Chris Larke-Phillips		
Chair of Governors/ Trust Board	Mrs Janet Bremner and Dr Mary Benton		
Inspector	Gary Price	No.	C.23/24