

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Archbishop Benson Church of England School</b>			
Address	Bodmin Road, Truro, Cornwall. TR1 1BN		
Date of inspection	28 February 2020	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary
Diocese	Truro	URN	137258

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	The impact of collective worship	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### School context

Archbishop Benson is a primary school with 415 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. The school is part of the Truro and Roseland Learning community and Penair Partners' cluster with whom there are strong links.

### The school's Christian vision

With fun and learning, hand in hand, all things are possible.

'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.' Philippians 3:13

Within our school family and beyond we have a calling to be witnesses to Christ in all that we do. We seek not to impose our faith but to offer it as a gift to all. We strive to live the teachings of Jesus, to grow towards full humanity through our relationship with God and others and to help transform lives.

### Key findings

- A distinctive Christian vision is well-established which informs and shapes the school's strategic direction and daily life. Pupils consistently attribute their excellent behaviour and respect for others to the vision.
- Leaders are passionate and dedicated about the work of this Church school. They create innovative approaches to meet the needs of all learners so that they can flourish. However, partnerships with global communities are less well developed.
- The vision is reflected in the school's creative provision for the care and support it offers for vulnerable pupils. This has a transformational impact on their lives and learning.
- Collective worship is the heartbeat of the school, enabling pupils to understand what the vision and values look like in daily life and the difference these can make. At present not all pupils have the opportunity to plan and lead worship.

### Areas for development

- Extend pupils' knowledge of the work of the Anglican Church worldwide so they deepen their understanding of how it addresses disadvantage and deprivation.
- Create an agreed progression of knowledge in order to enable pupils to develop a deeper understanding of key Christian concepts so they can achieve the higher levels of attainment.
- Extend opportunities for more pupils to plan and lead worship regularly so that they develop their sense of ownership in this area.

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**

Leaders astutely recognised the need to review the vision following significant changes to the local context. All members of the community shaped the vision so that they had genuine ownership. The vision is inspirational to driving the school's strategic direction and daily life. Improvements to the school's provision directly link to the vision, enabling pupils to flourish. Leaders confidently articulate an extensive understanding of biblical principles underpinning the vision and Christian values. They talk of sharing God's love, which staff perceive as their calling, enabling pupils to fulfil their God-given talents. Pupils explain that this is visibly shown by the red thread of God's love weaving across daily life. Within the school, each pupil is considered to be precious to God. Leaders are passionate and dedicated to the work of this Church school. They consistently seek to provide exciting new initiatives which enable all to flourish.

The vision inspires staff to create innovative approaches to meet the needs of all. Leaders make bold decisions to welcome pupils who have a high degree of needs or who need a second chance. A dedicated space, the Rainbow Cove, led by skilled staff, effectively meets the diverse needs of pupils and enables them to flourish. Working closely with special educational needs experts, the best practices are in place. This is having a transformational impact on pupils' lives and their self-esteem. Pupils make huge gains emotionally and socially, which they readily explain. The school's exceptional quality of inclusion is recognised by the local authority who identified the school to support a refugee family. This family shared information of their culture and faith with the school which deepened pupils' understanding of diversity. Staff go beyond expectations by their support. Innovative approaches to celebrating the termly Eucharist make this a rich experience. Pupils play a major role in this celebration, enabling them to see where Christian values are integral to this. They have a real understanding of the importance of this for Christians and feel it strengthens their sense of community. The depth and quality of pupils' spiritual reflections is impressive. High quality experiences are planned and woven across all subjects. Pupils have opportunities to respond to 'giant' questions which engage them in vibrant discussions. They confidently express their ideas which demonstrate a depth of thinking. This inspires pupils to take action about caring for God's world. Spiritual questions arise spontaneously and are explored enthusiastically. Pupils explain what spirituality means to them and why they find this valuable. Staff have agreed what spirituality could look like for each year group, so are proactive in enriching pupils' thinking. Pupils explain that they see the vision clearly in the exciting CHAIN curriculum. They say learning is fun with stand-out wow experiences. The curriculum is informed by key Christian values such as hope, which deepens the significance of these for them. Innovatively, learning provides experiences which inspire pupils to become advocates for change. Visits to the local foodbank and homeless shelter inspire pupils to action, raising awareness and leading class initiatives. This has created a rich culture where pupils passionately and independently take action. There are excellent examples of pupils challenging local companies and the National Trust.

Collective worship is the heartbeat of the school. Pupils develop a deep understanding of the vision and Christian values and what these look like in daily life. Pupils who profess no religious faith or a faith, confidently articulate the impact values make and how these shape their community. Pupils respond imaginatively to the Monday worship challenge. The importance of these ideas for pupils is deepened by cross curricular work. Pupils share their responses in the following Friday worship, offering rich possibilities of how each could respond. This enables pupils to understand how Christian principles can have a relevance for daily life. The depth of planning is exceptional. Teachers are excellently supported with resources to make class based worship varied and challenging. Pupils have a very well developed understanding of prayer and give numerous examples of where it helps them to share worries or be calm. The pupils Worship Buddies team play a major role, planning and leading worship, making suggestions for improvement. However, the possibility of leading worship is only open to this group.

Pupils talk about an enjoyment of learning, which they link strongly to the vision. There is a culture of high expectations which staff have developed through ongoing feedback. Pupils are confident to tackle the most difficult learning aims, which require the use of higher order thinking skills. The language of learning is well established, pupils might say, 'I can't do this yet', but plan how they can achieve this. Numerous opportunities for pupils to grow their talents in various areas stand out. These effectively raise pupils' self-belief. Standards in

attainment have risen and are now in line with national expectations. Pupils' progress is good, particularly in Key Stage 1. Vulnerable pupils are individually supported and make good progress from their starting points.

Influential partnerships with local schools allow excellent practice to be shared, notably the work on creative curriculum design. The diocese offers focused training which clearly influences work in RE. Local churches enrich worship through Open the book. Workshops allow pupils to explore the main Christian festivals in considerable depth, extending their significance. Pupils' knowledge of global communities comes from responses to current issues, such as supporting the relief efforts in Australia. There is a very well developed understanding of disadvantage and deprivation within the local area. However, it is not fully developed in relation to global communities. Governors are dedicated to their roles. Monitoring and evaluation is exceptionally detailed with prompts of what governors should be looking for. Governors' conference with pupils using prepared questions to evaluate the impact of what the vision means for them. This led to improving class reflection spaces so that they had a higher profile.

Pupils consistently attribute their impressive behaviour and relationships to the vision and Christian values. Pupils treat everyone with the dignity and respect. The established Fellowship Code gives strategies to deal with disagreements. These, alongside reflection and other approaches, enhance pupils' well-being.

Religious education offers stimulating opportunities to explore questions of meaning. Pupils are challenged and inspired by these discussions, reasoning through their ideas, listening and changing their thinking. Pupils make informed comparisons between a range of world faiths, showing a depth of insight. Whilst pupils' knowledge of religious vocabulary is advanced, they found it demanding to explain some of the key Christian concepts such as incarnation. The subject leader is enthusiastic and dedicated. He effectively shares his depth of knowledge of the Cornish RE programme, Curriculum Kernewak, with other schools.



**The effectiveness of RE is Excellent.**

The quality of feedback and support to staff by the RE subject leader is outstanding. Staff are given opportunities to develop their teaching through observing the excellent practice of colleagues. Teaching is at least good and rising, with examples of excellent practice. Standards are at least good and rising significantly. More pupils are now achieving the higher levels due to their knowledge of biblical stories. Assessment systems are robust. Staff judgements on attainment is secure, informed by examples which show expectations for each year group.

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