

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Chapel-en-le-Frith Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Vision

‘Learning for Life’

“...that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in **love**, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the **knowledge** of God’s mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of **wisdom** and knowledge” Colossians 2:2-3.

Chapel-en-le-Frith 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.

Strengths

- The Christian vision drives leaders' actions and decision-making. In response to the school’s context, caring leaders have a strategic focus that is highly inclusive, equitable and supportive. This effectively enables pupils to flourish.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are deemed vulnerable is a significant strength of the school. Through carefully planned learning experiences, the school enables these pupils to thrive.
- The compassionate school culture has a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing. The individual nature of each pupil is celebrated and treasured.
- High-quality provision and profile of religious education (RE) is evident in the robust curriculum, which is exciting and engaging. It allows pupils rich opportunities to develop a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of a range of worldviews and beliefs.

Development Points

- Deepen the school-wide understanding of spirituality for pupils and staff. This is to ensure it can be explored across the curriculum and enhance the spiritual development of pupils.
- Explore opportunities for pupils to independently make a positive difference in response to the vision. This is to support them in thinking more widely about issues of justice and responsibility and to challenge injustice beyond their own community.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision, is based on being united in love and drives the work of leaders. It is a highly inclusive school that values and cherishes the unique nature of each child. Based on the vision, leaders, including governors, take bold and compassionate strategic decisions in response to a broad range of pupil needs. This includes resourcing decisions to help pupils who are disadvantaged flourish. Close monitoring and evaluation of the impact has led to refinements resulting in a highly effective provision. There is a focus on fostering positive and supportive relationships with each pupil to demonstrate compassion, building trust and respect. This is evident in the calm and purposeful atmosphere around the whole school. The values of “ready, safe, respect” are applied in all aspects of school life. These are lived out by caring leaders. Many staff members feel supported and enabled in their professional development because of the opportunities they are given.

The ambitious and inclusive curriculum, shaped by the Christian vision, prioritises the development of each child. Careful planning and intervention mean that pupils who are vulnerable and those with SEND are enabled to thrive and make progress. In part, this is because of the enhanced resource team of skilled staff. Through carefully planned routine and structure, these pupils are offered bespoke care. One pupil said, ‘We embrace difference here’. Life skills and both a sensory and core curriculum form part of the intervention. Wonderful, well-utilised outside spaces, calm areas, soft starts to the school day and sensory spaces support development. The broad and balanced curriculum builds aspirations through exciting opportunities, visits, residential trips, career events and visitors. Central to the success of the curriculum is understanding each child. There is an emphasis on fostering positive relations with pupils and families, alongside school strategies to support emotional wellbeing. The impact of this is that pupils are given a range of practical approaches that aids their learning experience. Leaders have developed a language with which to express spirituality, called ‘take a moment’. Although staff training has further informed their understanding of spirituality, this is not embedded. Planned opportunities for pupils to consider this wider dimension of their lives is not currently part of the curriculum.

Pupils and staff are highly engaged in daily collective worship, which is invitational and inclusive. It is a joyful time in the school day. This is because it effectively enables the spiritual growth of the school community and is an expression of the vision. Worship activities include singing, prayer, reflection, discussion, and Bible stories. Staff are well supported by leaders and the diocese to effectively deliver worship. The impact of this is a carefully organised worship programme. Services of celebration are held at the local church for Harvest, Easter, Christmas and a leavers' assembly, all led by pupils. These opportunities enrich the experiences of worship. Pupils enthusiastically take on the role of worship warriors. These pupils are enabled to develop in confidence because of the responsibility of these leadership roles. They support worship time by: welcoming, saying prayers, leading a liturgy and lighting a candle. This reminds pupils that the worship time is for their own spiritual nourishing. At the end of collective worship, all pupils are encouraged to think about their personal response and how it has made them feel. This provides an opportunity to pause and reflect and carry the message of worship into their daily lives. The spiritual development of pupils is further enhanced through the importance placed on prayer in school. This is evident in the rich collection of pupil prayer books and the value of prayer in the school day.

Underpinned by the vision, high levels of respect and compassion have resulted in a school culture where pupils are treasured and know that they are loved. Leaders model the importance of connection and nurture in their interactions. This results in a calm and purposeful environment. Pupils are happy to know that they have a voice and that they are listened to. One pupil rightly commented, ‘we all have a voice here’. The school celebrates its



church school foundation through the rich pupil experience. Leaders have taken brave strategic decisions to help pupils, including those who are deemed to be disadvantaged, to flourish. This includes prioritising wellbeing through a wide range of interventions. Pupils understand and can discuss their emotional wellbeing. The impact of this is a culture of compassion with a strong focus on empathy. Physical and mental wellbeing has been prioritised to support and build emotional resilience. Respect and care are evident in pupil interactions. Recognition is given to pupils who readily demonstrate kindness. They are rewarded with hot chocolate on a Friday, the termly Governors' award, and acknowledged in the weekly celebration assembly. The impact of the vision means that many staff are enthusiastic about working at the school as it enables them to flourish professionally and personally. Leaders are mindful of staff wellbeing and make decisions to benefit them. As a result, staff are enabled and equipped to carry out their roles because of the support and training that they receive.

Linked to the vision, there is a culture of responsibility towards others. Meaningful partnerships with families and the wider community have been developed as an expression of the vision. The outworking of 'being knit together in love' is evident in the school's work and support of other schools in the local cluster. The school has benefited from positive partnerships with churches in the local area, which enhance the spiritual life of the school. Beneficial links with the diocese have also resulted in a strong church school foundation. Pupils have the opportunity to engage in some local charitable opportunities, such as Year 3 and 4 visiting residents at a local old people's home. The school council takes their leadership seriously, making decisions and bringing issues to the fore that impact the school community. Pupils are responsible and thoughtful in the way that they show care for others in the local area. For example, litter picking to keep the town tidy. The charitable work of the eco committee demonstrates practical kindness. This is evident in the clothes swap they organise to benefit those in the community. There are, however, fewer opportunities for pupils to independently think about and react to injustice beyond their local community.

Monitored by leaders, the RE curriculum is challenging, vibrant and exciting. Provision has been made so that pupils' knowledge and skills are built through well-sequenced learning. Core concepts and ideas are skilfully revisited, developing pupil understanding and confidence, while building in complexity. The high profile of the subject is further reinforced through RE days to develop pupils' understanding of major world religions. These provide beneficial opportunities to embrace RE topics as a school community and enhance practical ways of learning. The curriculum includes the study of different beliefs and worldviews, including offering pupils an understanding of the nuances of belief within a faith tradition. The Early Years RE curriculum offers highly engaging practical learning activities. Floorbooks, pupil books and prayer books capture a clear sequencing of knowledge. Creativity is central and offers a means of personal reflection as well as an expression of pupil understanding. The school's engagement with diocese training has had a positive impact on the leadership of the subject. This includes hosting RE subject network meetings. Professional development of staff is achieved by regularly sharing good practice. Digital learning is part of the curriculum and pupils are given the opportunity to use iPads as part of their RE research. This brings their learning to life and enhances independent engagement with a topic. Trips, visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. These offer a valuable, practical understanding of both their own beliefs and the beliefs of others.

Information

Address	Warmbrook Road, Chapel-en-le-Frith, High Peak, Derbyshire, SK23 0NL		
Date	20 May 2025	URN	133538
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	502
Diocese	Derby		
Headteacher	Jacquie Barber		
Chair of Governors	Emma Mahon		
Inspector	Claire Gibson		