

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bures Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Vision

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1: 9

At Bures, we dare to dream big, embracing the adventure within.

Bures Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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.

Notable Strengths

- The school's thoughtfully chosen Christian vision inspires courage and strength in strategic decisions. Its deeply embedded core values bring this vision to life, creating a culture where pupils and adults flourish together.
- Compassionate and proactive leaders model respect and equitable practice across the school. This ensures that the school serves its families with integrity and care. Pupils and adults experience a deep sense of belonging because they are consistently seen, heard, and supported.
- The school's strong partnerships with local churches bring its Christian vision to life. These relationships offer rich insight and thoughtful guidance, supporting pupils' growing understanding of faith and intrinsic diversity. As a result, pupils and adults grow and flourish together with shared hope and purpose.
- Pupils develop a strong sense of responsibility as they progress through school, undertaking a variety of meaningful roles. Through these experiences, they learn that their actions have the power to positively influence both their own futures and the wellbeing of others.
- Religious education (RE) is clearly prioritised and highly valued across the school. The curriculum offers a challenging and well-sequenced exploration of a diverse range of religious and non-religious worldviews. This enables pupils to think deeply, ask thoughtful questions, and value different ways of seeing the world.

Development Points

- Embed the school's spirituality statement so that it is clearly understood and consistently applied across the curriculum for all key stages. This is to ensure that a shared approach informs planned learning and broadens pupils' opportunities to encounter and enrich their spiritual development.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Rooted in a Bible verse from the book of Joshua, the school's vision inspires pupils to be bold and to embrace learning as an adventure. Pupils are encouraged to strive, reflect, and learn from mistakes. They gain recognition through values awards that celebrate the qualities the school wants to see lived out. These qualities include reflection, positive relationships, responsibility, teamwork, kindness, and thoughtful decision-making. The awards highlight and reinforce behaviours that shape a compassionate and respectful school culture. They help pupils understand that character and choices matter as much as academic achievement. Leaders have fostered strong, purposeful partnerships which enrich the life of the school. The long-standing relationship with the diocese provides a strong foundation for its life together. Leaders have fostered a community where pupils and adults are cherished, allowing the Christian vision to be seen and felt in everyday interactions. Because leaders and staff are deeply committed, this vision influences how people behave, how they feel, and how they experience school. Their thoughtful and relational approach to supporting pupils has gained recognition beyond its own community, with others seeking to learn from its practice. This is a clear expression of a vision that is both relevant and transformative.

Vision and Curriculum

The curriculum reflects the school's Christian vision by encouraging pupils to grow in confidence, resilience and a sense of being supported as they explore new learning. Classroom materials are chosen carefully to represent people from a wide range of backgrounds, needs and cultures, ensuring that every child feels seen and valued. Rich curricular and extracurricular opportunities help pupils discover strengths, develop talents, and step forward with courage. These experiences broaden horizons and enrich pupils' understanding of the world. However, the school does not have a shared, embedded understanding of spirituality. This limits how confidently pupils and adults recognise and deepen spiritual development within planned learning.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is prioritised and valued as an integral part of daily school life. There is a welcoming atmosphere that offers meaningful opportunities for participation, leadership and quiet thought for pupils and adults alike. It draws on Bible stories and connects with wider events to help pupils to reflect on the world and their place within it. An exploration of the importance of stories highlights how shared narratives can help pupils to understand themselves and others. Weekly celebration worship provides a meaningful moment to recognise those who have lived out the school's vision. Parents, carers and other adults value the opportunities to join celebrations held in church and in school. These occasions strengthen the sense of belonging across the community. Song and music play an important role in collective worship. It helps pupils to feel connected and ready for the day. One pupil shared, 'Being bold and strong and knowing God is with me helps me to be courageous in my learning.' Such experiences support pupils' spiritual development, ensuring that collective worship offers a distinct opportunity for encounter, reflection, and spiritual growth.

Vision and School Culture

The school's vision shapes a culture centered on dignity, respect, and care. This helps to create an environment where pupils and adults flourish. Leaders prioritise pupils' wellbeing through play, outdoor learning, and pastoral support such as forest school, buddying initiatives, and dedicated reflective spaces. These approaches help pupils to become increasingly confident, happy, and engaged in their learning as well as developing social interactions. Pupils considered vulnerable receive tailored support that is rooted in compassion and justice. Equitable support helps pupils feel more secure in life in school. It also promotes positive social development and helps them to build resilience when facing challenges. Staff wellbeing is equally highly valued. The creation of shared spaces helps staff to connect, reflect, and draw strength from a supportive, professional community. The offer of supervision provides protected time to think through challenges with care, helping staff to feel



confident in their work. Likewise, having opportunities to innovate and be creative in their practice enables staff to build resilience and feel increasingly self-assured. Collectively, these approaches nurture adults and reflect the school's commitment to helping staff feel encouraged and equipped to thrive in their roles. Parents, carers and other adults are connected through purposeful opportunities to come together. Clear and responsive communication strengthens trust and reinforces partnership with pupils and adults across the school.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Leaders are intentional in their actions to broadening pupils' horizons. This is so that they grow in knowledge and understanding of their responsibility to others in the wider world. This endeavour includes an established climate action plan as part of a broader sustainability project. Furthermore, their decisions reflect the school's vision of 'embracing the adventure within' in practical ways. They encourage pupils to step forward as playground leaders, lunch hall assistants or house captains. These roles help pupils to collaborate and make a positive difference. This mission is supported by the school's restorative behaviour policy. The approach teaches pupils to address injustices with reflection and care. Pupils also understand responsibility as a commitment to represent their school with their best possible effort. They commit to practising sporting techniques and recognise that disciplined preparation helps them and others to flourish.

Religious Education

RE is highly valued across the school and is taught as a core subject from Reception to Year 6. Staff subject knowledge is sustained through ongoing continuous professional development. The school draws effectively on curriculum support through diocesan training opportunities. Key questions and links to the church calendar help pupils to appreciate a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. Older pupils explore where people seek answers about life and why ideas about God differ. This strengthens their ability to think critically about belief. Younger pupils consider what or who they devote themselves to, helping them to recognise what shapes their choices and values. Talks from a range of visitors enrich the RE curriculum and give pupils direct insight into diverse worldviews. Visits to local churches deepen pupils' understanding of lived belief and show how faith communities express their convictions. Visiting Bures Baptist Church as well as St. Mary's Church, helps pupils to develop their understanding of diversity within a single faith tradition. Pupils enjoy these experiences, which help them to consider different beliefs and reflect meaningfully on their own views. They show respect for a range of perspectives and demonstrate the ability to agree and disagree well. Exit surveys for Year 6 pupils indicate that RE is frequently identified as their favourite subject. This shows the positive impact that the curriculum has on pupils' engagement and growing confidence in discussing faith and belief.

Information

Address	Nayland Road, Bures, C08 5BX		
Date	03 March 2026	URN	124692
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	162
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich		
Co-Headteachers	Michaela Harris and Rhian Stewart		
Co-Chairs of Governors	Tim Fairbairn and Simon Knight		
Inspector	Pamela Gough		