

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Great Finborough Church of England VC Primary School

Vision

Rooted in Faith; Enriching Young Minds

Developing every child through a curriculum enriched with opportunities, experiences and Christian values at its heart.

Matthew 13 verse 8:

‘Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.’

Great Finborough 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.

Strengths

- Leaders have a clear understanding of the Christian vision that underpins the strategic direction of the school. This results in compassionate actions and decision-making, enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- The vision strengthens the curriculum and the ambitious wider learning programme. It offers creative and inspiring opportunities. These include a variety of educational visits that are a rich part of the school living out its vision.
- Collective worship experiences, springing from the vision, are well-planned and provide opportunities for spiritual development.
- A culture of being a caring community enables the school to create and maintain an environment in which pupils and adults are valued. The priority for staff wellbeing means that they feel confident and well-supported.
- Leaders foster partnerships that enhance provision, which are an expression of the vision. For example, those with the church, parents and the diocese deeply enrich school life.

Development Points

- Ensure a school-wide approach to spiritual development within the curriculum. This is in order to deepen pupils' spirituality.
- Develop opportunities for pupils to be outward-looking and demonstrate service and compassion for others. This is so that pupils are empowered to act as change-makers.



Inspection Findings

The school's vision has its biblical roots in the Parable of the Sower. This foundation is deeply understood and expressed in the school's development and provision. It drives leaders, including governors, to ensure that the vision shapes the experiences in school for staff and pupils to grow and flourish. Pupils are given ambitious learning opportunities, rooted in 'good soil', which enables them to thrive. This is through nurture and care, as well as a broad curriculum. Committed governors are actively engaged in school life through their monitoring and support. As part of their role, they prioritise the flourishing of the school community. Staff feel cared for, both personally and professionally. For example, the vision is seen in leaders' compassionate help and training for teachers new to teaching. Consequently, staff feel valued and enabled in their roles.

As an expression of the vision, leaders ensure the curriculum provides rich growth opportunities and learning experiences. There is highly inclusive support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are vulnerable. The prioritising of positive relationships with families is central, ensuring that these pupils' needs are met. Bespoke care provided by leaders and teachers guarantees that they receive the right help. This enables them to access and enjoy broad experiences. The curriculum offers many exciting and inspiring educational visits. For example, the practical study on rivers, from the source to the estuary, brings to life learning and promotes flourishing. These ambitious, wide-ranging experiences, in line with the vision, develop pupils' confidence and their understanding of the world. They include a range of outdoor activities and enriching cultural visits. Likewise, the varied sporting opportunities and engagement in the performing arts enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. While there are many aspects of the curriculum that support the spiritual flourishing of pupils, currently, there is no shared language with which to discuss spirituality. Therefore, this limits the depth of pupils' spiritual development.

The breadth of collective worship experiences reflects the vision. Pupils are given many opportunities in worship that enrich their spiritual lives. Collective worship is carefully planned and delivered with varied activities, including singing, Bible stories, prayers and classroom-based worship. It is invitational, offering moments of personal reflection that positively impact spiritual flourishing. The collective worship team has a thoughtful role in leading parts of worship. The school benefits from a strong partnership with the local churches of St Andrew's and St Mary's. Weekly visits from the local clergy mean that they have a positive role in school life. This includes supporting the spiritual wellbeing of staff. Regular fortnightly visits from parishioners leading worship through drama are another example of this partnership. The school values the times when collective worship takes place in the local church for key moments in the Christian year. These include Harvest, Remembrance, Easter, and Christmas. Pupils take an active part on these occasions, developing their leadership skills and confidence, while enjoying different experiences of worship. Pupils also have the opportunity to plan and lead school worship in church. Pupil feedback is sought and valued in shaping whole school worship so that it is inclusive and cultivates a sense of belonging. Prayer is an invitational and important part of the school day, nourishing pupils spiritually. These include the Lord's prayer, personal prayer and a prayer said at the end of the school day.

The school is highly inclusive, and a place where pupils are loved and accepted. It has developed an ethos that focuses on creating a school community where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, compassion and care. Those who are deemed vulnerable and pupils with SEND are given specific support to develop their confidence. Parents recognise the strong sense of community that the school offers. They appreciate the broad opportunities that their children are given. Careful planning decisions are made to build pupil self-belief and to support their



mental health and wellbeing. Staff feel supported at the school. They have compassion and empathy for each other. Modelled by leaders, the school has created a culture in which staff are given the right care and provision to enable them to develop professionally. This includes close work with partners such as the diocese. The school is committed to enhancing the social, emotional and physical wellbeing of staff. This is exemplified in leaders choosing to hold a training day in Thetford Forest. This supported both the staff's professional development and personal wellbeing.

There is a clear sense of justice and responsibility. School partnerships are rooted in the Christian vision. These include working with a local language school, hosting students from Thailand, Spain, and China. This helps to develop and build cultural understanding. Enriching partnerships include the highly effective role of the diocese. Their compassionate support in developing staff contributes to the flourishing of the school community. The relationships with the local churches are important to the school and deepen the vision. Pupils support the church in different ways, such as by helping to prepare Christingles for the annual service. Fundraising demonstrates a sense of responsibility, such as supporting the local food bank. There is a clear culture of pupils looking after each other in school. They take on active roles caring and helping younger pupils. However, opportunities to be outward-looking and be agents of change are missed.

The high-quality RE provision is an exciting and well-developed curriculum that offers an in-depth knowledge of religions and worldviews. Leaders have made thoughtful decisions to ensure that it has a high profile and is a rich expression of the vision. The expertise, ongoing training, support and time given by the diocese positively impact on the quality of the curriculum and development of staff. The RE curriculum is well-balanced, developing knowledge and understanding about difference and diversity. It provides robust challenge by focusing on 'big questions' that enable pupils to explore a range of faiths and beliefs. Leaders have made decisions to ensure the careful resourcing of RE. As a result, there are many practical activities that make the RE curriculum meaningful. These include using interesting artefacts to promote enjoyment and curiosity as part of the curriculum design. Video clips are also used so that pupils can appreciate diversity in Christianity and develop a clear understanding of other faiths. Interactive, seasonal workshops organised by the local church include 'Experience Christmas' and 'Experience Easter'. These events enable pupils and staff to grow spiritually.

Information

Address	High Road, Great Finborough, Suffolk IP14 3AQ		
Date	8 July 2025	URN	124732
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	107
Diocese	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich		
Headteacher	Stephen Dodd		
Chair of Governors	Liam Page		
Inspector	Claire Gibson		