

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

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| Bonnars Church of England VC Primary School | |
| Address | London Rd, Maresfield, Uckfield TN22 2EG |

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| School vision |
| 'Inspire and Aspire' - "Inspired by God, we aspire to be the best we can be, so that we can live life in all its fullness." "I have come that they may have life to the full." (John 10:10) |
| School strengths |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's key values of love, kindness and respect are at the heart of relationships across the school. Differences are respected and celebrated, enabling personal confidence and a sense of wellbeing to thrive. Leaders have established an effective approach to supporting pupils. This results in a deeply loving and inclusive culture that enables everyone to belong and flourish. It also drives a strong sense of support, nurture and empowerment, enabling individuals to be the very best they can be. Leaders have developed strong links between the school and the wider village community that are highly valued by pupils, adults and families. Effective leadership has established a relevant and creative religious education (RE) curriculum. This means that pupils develop a secure understanding of a diverse range of religions including Christianity. |
| Areas for development |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the Bible teaching on which the Christian vision is based becomes the main driving force behind the school's decisions and actions. Develop a shared understanding of spirituality based on the school's initial thinking. This is so that collective worship and the wider curriculum are enriched by opportunities for spiritual flourishing. Extend the pupils' sense of justice for national and global issues. This is so that they can respond by making a difference in the world. |
| Inspection findings |
| <p>Leaders have built the school's Christian vision upon the words of Jesus, "I have come that they may have life to the full". They have identified love, kindness and respect as underpinning core values, which are evident in the life of the school. Pupils recognise the importance of these in how they treat one another and approach life at school and beyond. Leaders have also summed up the vision as 'Be the best you can be' to make it accessible to pupils. This and the phrase 'Inspire and Aspire' are widely understood by stakeholders to be the mission of the school. However, there is not a shared understanding of the biblical basis for the school's vision and values. Therefore, a shared understanding of the biblical basis for the school's vision does not yet clearly underpin daily decisions and actions.</p> |

Leaders are passionate and relentless in developing the school for the benefit of pupils, families and the wider community. They engage parents in improving the school through 'Parent Panels', developing solutions to issues raised through parental surveys. This fosters a culture of constructive feedback and partnership that strengthens the school community. Pupils contribute to school improvement by taking part in whole school gather groups and in their roles as pupil governors. They speak with pride of changes brought about such as improved playtime activities and equipment. The sense of community within the school is particularly strong. A buddy system builds long-lasting relationships between the oldest and youngest pupils who value the mutual support it provides. Staff speak powerfully of the support that the school has provided to them during the most difficult of times. Staff follow this example and, as a result, a sense of mutual and practical support for others is tangible. A poignant example was where the whole community united to fundraise for a cancer charity following a staff member diagnosis.

The school is determined to provide a curriculum that aligns with the vision to 'Inspire and Aspire'. This leads to learning that helps pupils to be the best they can be. Leaders focus on pupils as individuals, inspiring them to develop as lifelong learners. Strategies such as skills builders and Philosophy for Children, integrated into the curriculum, help pupils to flourish as learners. Opportunities to think about choices and their impact, woven into the curriculum, develop an understanding of right, wrong and fairness. Pupils regularly consider big questions and, as a result, generate questions of their own. In order to 'Inspire and Aspire' pupils, the school have worked hard to develop the wider school environment. This has enabled enrichment of the curriculum, including the development of forest school for all pupils. Pupils speak of the enjoyment and additional challenge that these opportunities bring. Staff recognise the potential that forest school gives to pupils to engage with nature and be amazed at the wonder of creation.

It is evident that teachers and leaders value reflection as a tool within the curriculum. However, a shared understanding of spirituality and ways for pupils to value and express this is not in place. As a result, opportunities for spiritual flourishing are not consistently embedded within the life of the school. Parents value the way in which the school inspires pupils through special events including safari day, science weeks and visits. As a result, teachers bring learning to life for pupils. Leaders draw on the community, including parents, to help pupils aspire to a wide range of careers. Learning extends beyond the classroom through practical application. For example, pupils sang familiar songs to the Friendly lunch club for older members of the village community.

Collective worship is an important part of the life of the school. Leaders ensure that clearly planned themes unpack the school's vision through carefully chosen bible stories. Strong links between the school and the church support leaders in developing worship and extending this into the community. Worship provides opportunities for pupils to respond through singing songs and using actions. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on questions posed and draw on their understanding to make connections between bible stories. Leaders empower pupils to engage actively with worship, including opportunities to plan, lead and reflect on this time together. Parents recognise and value the connection between the school, the church and clergy. They highly value the way in which the church and clergy enrich the life of the school through collective worship. It is evident that worship at key times in the church calendar brings the school and wider community together.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for by adults. Staff support pupils through a therapeutic approach, tailored to its community, which builds positive relationships and deals with conflict. Leaders, staff and parents recognise this to be effective in dealing with issues and helping individuals to grow. Parents particularly appreciate the practical help, which the school has provided, to enable this work to affect life at home. Supportive dialogue between parents and staff has enabled a common approach to dealing

with behaviour, for the benefit of pupils. Leaders value staff. They recognise the importance of investing resources in them, including time, which enables staff to be the best they can be. Staff appreciate the support and nurture which leaders, including governors and colleagues, provide. They recognise the importance of modelling the behaviours that they expect of pupils.

Leaders provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to be involved in improving their school. Classes elect representatives to be pupil governors. This group of pupils helps school leaders as they develop the school. Pupils and parents recognise the difference that this involvement makes to the daily life of the school. As a result, pupils have identified healthier ways to celebrate birthdays, such as at a special lunch table. Pupils generate ideas of charities and fundraising which can be supported by the school community. However, they have little opportunity to explore national and global issues of injustice and inequality. This means that pupils lack inspiration to act as agents of change on a wider scale beyond their local community.

RE has a high status across the school. The school invests time and resources to ensure that the curriculum has clear breadth and progression. The RE leader supports teachers to provide activities that are accurate and inspiring. Pupils engage actively and thoughtfully in carefully crafted learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning in religious education. They recall lessons that they have particularly enjoyed and talk about people of faith. Pupils use this to reflect on their own beliefs. First-hand accounts from pupils of other faith backgrounds enrich the learning of their classmates.

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

| Information | | | |
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| Inspection date | 18 March 2024 | URN | 114511 |
| VA/VC/Academy | VC | Pupils on roll | 110 |
| Diocese | Chichester | | |
| MAT/Federation | NA | | |
| Headteacher | Ewa Wilson | | |
| Chair | Hannah Froger | | |
| Inspector | Andrew Jervis | No. | C23.24 |