

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

### Wistow Parochial Church of England VC Primary School

#### Vision

Faith is all around us. We have to have faith in ourselves in order to be the best that we can be. We are a small school, with big hearts and together we beat as one. Sowing seeds of knowledge and faith, with nurture and love, we thrive, we grow.

Wistow Parochial 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 faithful Christian vision underpins everything that happens at Wistow. Embodying the Parable of the Sower, the school provides the good soil that ensures pupils and adults thrive and grow beyond the academic.
- The vision of being a small school with a big heart creates a culture centred on Christian love. Transformative pastoral and practical care is prioritised in this school community.
- Emphasising an aspiration to be the best you can be inspires action. Pupils and adults express how the vision helps them to make positive choices about how they live and can make a difference in the world.
- Collective worship fosters and enhances the spiritual flourishing of pupils, providing regular opportunities for reflection.
- Strong subject leadership of religious education (RE) supports a well-balanced curriculum, enabling pupils to make good progress.

#### Development Points

- Refine evaluation processes to allow sufficient time to reflect deeply on the school's next steps as a Church school.
- Embed the revised RE curriculum. This is to further develop pupils' knowledge, vocabulary and breadth of understanding of religions and worldviews.



## Inspection Findings

Everyone who enters this school is greeted by a loving culture that stems from a deeply held Christian vision. Pupils know the vision well and have an understanding of the Bible story that underpins it. A corridor display of the Parable of the Sower reminds pupils that they grow in God's love. A young pupil explained, 'The school is the good soil, the children are the seeds, and the teachers are the farmers.' Pupils and staff feel proud of their school. Pupils trust staff to provide unwavering support. Staff describe the environment as a welcoming and affirming 'family.' They care for each other, professionally and personally. A determined, compassionate senior leadership team and a committed board of governors drive the vision of the school. Leaders encourage professional development and enable staff to flourish through training and qualifications. They monitor the vision and Christian-based aspects of the school well. Time set aside for evaluation could be used more effectively to deepen the school's religious character.

Leaders successfully use the vision to encourage pupils to be the best that they can be. This is expressed through a broad and rich curriculum that makes the most of every opportunity. Extra-curricular opportunities are chosen carefully to develop and discover talents and inspire. These are celebrated through Shine Bright Awards. Events such as sports weeks, night time concerts or outdoor learning sessions all contribute to pupils' love of learning. A culture of high expectations is evident in the school environment, which celebrates the flourishing of pupils and staff. Spiritual development is integral to daily life. The school uses reflective approaches, using language such as windows, mirrors, and doors and ows and wows. This helps pupils and adults articulate an understanding of and foster meaningful opportunities for reflection. In line with its vision, close links are maintained with pupils and families. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and individually supported with a wide range of interventions. The impact is carefully monitored. Families benefit from additional help, reflecting the school's commitment to ensuring everyone thrives. Staff go the extra mile to demonstrate care, for example by attending external appointments with families when needed.

Collective worship takes place at the end of each day and is central to school life. Leaders explain that this is so the messages about God are taken home. Worship is seen as an important time to come together. Pupils enjoy worship and staff that attend value these special times too. Worship is invitational, inclusive and planned around a cycle of Christian values. Those who lead worship, staff, local clergy and pupils all inspire spiritual growth. Reflection and prayer are important to the pupils. The school prayer, lunchtime grace and pupils' own prayers feature daily in school life and contribute to their spiritual understanding. Calm corners and safe spaces in every classroom encourage quiet reflection. Pupils are familiar with Bible stories and parables, drawing meaningful lessons from them. For instance, one pupil shared that Noah's story taught him to 'be open to listening.' Strong relationships with the local Anglican Church and Methodist Chapel enrich the school's faith journey. The school, families, church, parish and village, work closely together as one. For example, the school initiated a Christmas tree festival, held in the church, bringing together a wide range of community organisations. Pupils visit the church and worship at major festivals when parents are invited to join them. The parish successfully organises extensive 'experiences' in the church. These help pupils to explore more deeply the Bible characters and traditions of the festivals such as Christmas and Easter. The school makes effective use of diocesan support.

Pupils have a voice and influence. This is a strong feature of the school. Pupils are enabled to make a difference through an impressive range of responsibilities and opportunities. Every pupil takes on a role. Groups, such as wellbeing ambassadors or eco-warriors, are inspired to care for the world around them through their actions.



Examples include supporting Water Aid, creating bird feeders to encourage wildlife in the village or litter picking at the local football pitch. The vision and associated values, in turn, influence behaviour at home. Courageous advocacy awards celebrate those who independently provide practical and charitable support beyond the school community. This includes when a pupil and staff member got their hair cut and donated it to the Princess Trust.

Religious Education makes a meaningful contribution to pupils' development. Pupils enjoy the subject and show enthusiasm for learning. Leaders ensure that the carefully sequenced curriculum is well-resourced and supported by staff training where necessary. Opportunities for visiting places of worship or to host visitors from a range of faiths into school are limited. A recent review of the subject has improved the long-term curriculum plan. Pupils say how RE provides a safe space for them to express the views they are developing. The curriculum enables them make connections between a wide range of different religions and worldviews. However, pupils are less aware that Christianity is a diverse world faith.

Leaders care deeply about staff, pupils and their families. Good mental health and wellbeing are fundamentally important to all and a key to the school's success. The school effectively uses an approach inspired by emotion coaching to enhance pupil wellbeing and behaviour. Pupils are welcoming, polite and caring towards one other. All are effectively encouraged to practise forgiveness and respect. The school is calm and focused on joyful learning. Attendance is good. As a result, academic progress for most is beyond national expectations. Inclusivity remains at the heart of the Christian vision, offering a place of belonging for all. Care and support is extended to parents. They appreciate this saying that they recognise that they are truly part of this extended school community. Parents overwhelmingly support the school, with surveys consistently showing that they would recommend it. They express gratitude for the school's role in nurturing their children into kind and thoughtful individuals, who are well prepared for life beyond Wistow.

## Information

Address	Church Hill, Wistow, Selby, North Yorkshire. YO8 3UU		
Date	4 December 2024	URN	121596
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	119
Diocese/District	York		
MAT/Federation	N/A		
Headteacher	Carla Cox		
Chair of Governors	Allen Blake		
Inspector	Darren Dudman		