Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bidborough Church of England VC Primary School

Vision

Faith in our Future

Matthew 13:31-32 – The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.

Our life together at Bidborough Church of England Primary School is rooted in Christ's words describing how a little faith can make all things possible. With the values of love, hope, forgiveness, courage and koinonia, modelled by Jesus, underpinning all that we do, we seek to prepare all to step out into the world reflecting God's love for one another.

Bidborough Church of England 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 Christian vision is understood and lived by pupils and adults in Bidborough Church of England Primary School. The vision is having a clear impact, enabling pupils and staff to feel valued, grow and as a consequence flourish.
- The vision is intrinsic to the curriculum and responds to the needs of its community. It is tailored to support pupils considered to be vulnerable, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This enables them to develop from their individual starting points.
- Collective worship is an important part of the school day, week and beyond. Inspirational collective worship fosters a sense of joy and belonging, therefore pupils and adults flourish spiritually.
- The school vision has been instrumental in building a culture where pupils and adults feel included, supported and valued. As a result, pupils and adults thrive.
- Religious education (RE) is a priority. The inclusive curriculum is challenging and diverse. As a result, pupils have a deep knowledge and understanding of Christianity and a selected range of faiths and worldviews.

Development Points

- Through the curriculum, develop a deeper understanding of justice. This is so that pupils continue to be inspired to make ethical choices leading to real and meaningful change.

Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision, 'faith in our future' is lived out in the daily life of the school. This is evident through the aspirational curriculum and pastoral care for pupils and families. High expectations from staff coupled with high support, enables pupils to grow and succeed academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. Adults and pupils actively demonstrate the vision through their nurture and care for each other. This is apparent through the weekly recognition of acts of kindness from staff and pupils in celebration worship. Leaders know their community well and place pupils at the heart of decision making. They work closely with families providing support where necessary. This is exemplified through the introduction of the school's own wrap around care, providing consistency of support after school hours. These initiatives have resulted in improved attendance and confidence for individuals. The vision and values are evident across the school through pupils' exemplary behaviour and high quality displays. Pupils' personal responses to the vision demonstrate how it has a positive impact on them. One pupil commented 'we are given every opportunity we need and each child is cared for.' Leaders have devised robust systems to monitor and evaluate impact of the vision to plan next steps. Pupils achieve academic success and develop well personally because they know they are nurtured and can be themselves.

Vision and Curriculum

Inspired by the vision, leaders have devised a curriculum to meet individual needs. Therefore, pupils succeed and make good progress from their own starting point. Pupils are encouraged to be critical thinkers, enabling them to question the world around them and deepen their learning. Inspired by an act of worship, a pupil wrote to the Prime Minister expressing concern about a current conflict. In another class, children also made links with their learning about World War Two and evacuees. Staff value each pupil and celebrates success no matter how small. As a result, pupils are given every opportunity to reach their full potential. Curriculum enrichment such as the locally organised children's university, a variety of trips, visits and clubs enhance the curriculum offer. This helps pupils to develop skills beyond the classroom and a broader understanding of living in a wider, diverse community. Training from the diocese and leaders enables pupils and staff to have an understanding of what spirituality means to them. This has led to thorough planning across the curriculum and opportunities for spontaneous moments during the school day. Pupils write weekly reflections in their school journals. This helps them understand who they are, their connection to others, the wider world and their own beliefs.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is an important and special part of the school day, supporting pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. It is varied across the week, reflecting Anglican traditions and the Christian foundation of the school. Underpinned by the vision and values, high quality collective worship is carefully planned and tailored to the school community. Each class contributes to worship through the creation of their own class cross. Pupils recognise that their cross signifies the start of Christian worship. Singing worship is lively and accessible. Thus, pupils, including those who have SEND are included. Individuals comment on the joy they experience through this worship fostering a sense of belonging for pupils and staff. Moments of quiet time, reflection and prayer supports spiritual flourishing for individuals. The rector regularly leads worship for the school community in the parish church. This inspires pupils and adults to respond to the theme throughout the day and week. There are many opportunities for pupils to lead collective worship. Pupils grow in confidence and self-worth as a result. Individuals are able to reflect on how worship makes a difference to their lives.

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Vision and School Culture

Governors and leaders place high priority on staff and pupil wellbeing and staff workload. Adults appreciate that leaders care for them and support them with the challenges they face. This enables adults to flourish and has a positive impact on staff retention. In line with the vision, staff make every effort to ensure that no one is left behind. Pupils know that adults care for them and empower them to be the best they can be. Pupils, including those who have SEND are treated with dignity by adults and their peers. The behaviour curriculum, underpinned by the school's Christian values, enables pupils to build resilience and respect themselves and others. This is evident in pupils' interactions with adults and through their work and play. Consequently, this enhances the wellbeing and mental health of pupils.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

In line with the vision, staff create a culture where pupils take responsibility for their actions. Pupils demonstrate the school values of love and koinonia through their play and support for one another. There are many opportunities for pupils to lead and have a voice in decision making. For example, Year 5 buddies help the youngest pupils during play times. This fosters a sense of belonging for pupils from the start of their primary years. The vision 'a little faith can make all things possible,' has a significant impact on pupils. For example, one pupil successfully showed determination and resilience by applying for the role of head boy three times. The democratically elected pupils' parliament choose three charities to support each year. This helps pupils to understand their mutual responsibility to care for others. The school is currently supporting another school in the diocese, providing opportunities for staff to develop their leadership and practice. Pupils volunteer in local community events including the church annual harvest donations and singing to members of the community. Opportunities across the curriculum to deepen pupils understanding of justice is not fully embedded. This means that some pupils do not know their actions can have an impact outside of school.

Religious Education

RE is a priority across the school. Effective leadership ensures the quality and relevance of RE for pupils. The teaching of Christianity and other world faiths and worldviews widens pupils' exposure to religious and cultural diversity. Visits to Rochester Cathedral and the parish church enhance pupils understanding of Christianity as a lived faith. Leaders monitor the impact of the curriculum on pupils learning, putting in place next steps to secure improvements where required. This ensures high standards of curriculum is delivery. Training has had a positive impact, supporting staff knowledge and confidence. The use of high-quality resources enhances the curriculum. Pupils speak highly of RE and enjoy their lessons. They are proud to share their learning and realise the importance of RE in society to help them understand others.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	Spring Lane, Bidborough, Kent. TN3 OUE.		
Date	09 June 2026	URN	118598
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	202
Diocese	Rochester		
Headteacher	Julie Burton		
Co-Chairs of Governors	Katherine Cullen and Emma Leitch		
Inspector	Anne-Marie Bahlol		