

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

Watermoor Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Kingshill Lane, Watermoor, Cirencester, GL7 1SY

School vision
<p>‘The smallest of all seeds... grow and become the largest of plants’. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mark 4: 30-32)</p> <p>We live out our vision, enabling all to grow and flourish, through the teaching of our Christian values of compassion, courage, forgiveness, responsibility, respect and hope.</p>

School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A deeply embedded and transformative Christian vision holistically infuses the life of the school. Pupils and staff readily refer to the vision and values which drive all the school does.</li> <li>• Driven by strong leadership, guided and supported by the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT), there is a strong sense of Christian community. This continues to support and sustain everyone.</li> <li>• There is exceptionally strong provision to ensure the needs of all learners are met in line with the vision. This is especially seen in the work with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those with pastoral needs.</li> <li>• Collective worship is welcoming to all, engaging, well-planned and fully resourced. Biblical messages inspire pupils to act.</li> <li>• The vision motivates pupils to behave very well and demonstrate dignity and respect towards their peers. They are caring and support each other's wellbeing.</li> </ul>

Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and extend a shared vocabulary and language of spirituality for each school phase so pupils fluently articulate its meaning to aid spiritual growth.</li> <li>• Ensure pupils, inspired by their vision, are given greater opportunities to choose and engage with social action globally. This is to increase involvement and understanding of injustice and inequality.</li> <li>• Embed the new assessment systems in religious education (RE) in order to highlight gaps in knowledge and enable all pupils to know their next steps in learning.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings
<p>Watermoor has been through a time of challenge and change. Nonetheless, through dedicated and relentless leadership, it has emerged confidently as a happy and caring school. The school's vision permeates and inspires all that is planned at Watermoor. It is woven through the curriculum, within all policies and strategic plans. New governors, DGAT members and diocesan advisors fully understand the needs of the school. Together they support staff in creating an environment based on love and growth. With the coherently aligned vision statements, Watermoor and the Trust work effectively in partnership to enhance outcomes for pupils and staff. Consequently, staff feel</p>

empowered and have embraced the changes that have had a positive impact on all community members. Robust monitoring and evaluation of Watermoor as a Church school is embedded into the school improvement cycle. As a result, leaders and staff make bold choices for change, leading to pupils and adults flourishing.

Worship unites and nourishes the whole school community because leaders inspire pupils and staff to engage with it. The vision and values of the school are at the heart of each act of worship. Explicit connections are made between the vision linked value, biblical messages and theme which help to shape pupils' lives and decisions. Carefully chosen worship resources are used to engage all. For example, using video clips of topical events empower pupils to change behaviour such as forgiving a friend who has hurt their feelings. Pupils enter the school hall quietly and calmly, leading to a reflective and spiritually uplifting gathering. Year 6 worship welcomers relish their role. Lighting three Trinity candles, saying the greeting and expressing the value strengthens an understanding of the Anglican nature of worship. Pupils are confident in reciting the vision-inspired school prayer, which promotes a sense of belonging. Carefully planning reflection time enables pupils to grow spiritually by opening their hearts and minds to God, should they wish. Staff talk of worship as a time for coming together as the school family, a time to pause and reflect.

The school's Christian vision is intrinsic to the curriculum. Subject leaders plan to ensure the mustard seed approach, starting small then blossoming to flourishing, is the essence of learning. This deepens knowledge and expands thought year on year and prepares pupils for secondary school. Pupils have a good understanding of their strengths and know that staff are there to 'nourish' them. Spiritual opportunities, alongside the vision, weave through every subject. Pupils are encouraged to think about the awe and wonder of the world through their rich school experiences. In Fireflies nursery class, a candle is lit at lunch time to create an atmosphere of calm during which they reflect on their day. Older pupils are reflective when learning about artists such as Henri Rousseau and create stained glass windows capturing their thoughts of life. Pupils are less confident in using appropriate language to reflect their spiritual growth.

Pastoral care and support for children with SEND has high priority. Any barriers to learning are soon overcome through careful, timely interventions. As a result, individuals grow in confidence and flourish. Leaders ensure that staff are well informed about trauma and bereavement through specialist training. Consequently, support for this aspect of mental health and wellbeing is highly effective. Trust lead practitioners model teaching and support staff, so subjects continually improve and staff are supported and feel valued. This, coupled with the love and care shown to each staff member, nourishes them and results in good mental health for all. Pupils' behaviour is calm and respectful. It continually demonstrates care for others because the vision and values are embedded within policies and underpin practices. Pupils come into school happily because they enjoy learning and as a result attendance has improved.

Pupils at Watermoor develop a deep sense of responsibility towards others. The vision approach helps them understand how they grow and flourish. Furthermore, how to nurture others with their gifts. At social times, pupils demonstrate their care and forgiveness for others in their play and games. Older pupils sit alongside younger children to guide them in worship.

The school relishes partnerships as part of their outreach service. Close links with church members, such as 'Open the Book', allow pupils to enjoy the company of others as well as learning Bible stories. Affiliation with the Diocese and DGAT gives support to staff, thus benefitting pupils with experiences such as prayer projects and cathedral visits. Working with local churches makes a significant contribution to local organisations such as the food bank. The school council is active in charitable work with fundraising days and community projects such as litter picking. Furthermore, sparked by reading about slavery and guided by their teacher, pupils write letters to celebrities

asking to help stop child exploitation. This demonstrates they are learning to be responsible citizens and make ethical choices. However, they have yet to embrace what it fully means for them to initiate social action globally.

There is a strong commitment to RE expressed by the headteacher and the governors. RE lessons are well planned and sequenced. The RE leader encourages good use of a range of resources and teaching styles to engage pupils. Younger children enjoy the use of 'Broccoli Spears' a puppet who helps them to learn about Christianity. Consequently, they can talk about a range of Bible stories and are curious about faith. Older pupils engage in deep philosophical debates thus ensuring they can relate world events to their daily lives. Everyone's opinions are valued in class. Pupils enjoy RE lessons because they challenge their thinking and widen their experiences. Visits to a range of places of worship extends their knowledge. Therefore, all pupils talk confidently about a range of world faiths. This supports the school vision by preparing pupils to grow into flourishing, responsible citizens. The new assessment system to track individual attainment is in its infancy, however RE progress is clearly evidenced.

After an unsettled time of challenge, the school vision and associated values have given all school community members hope and stability. The school is alive with the vision, enabling everyone to grow, blossom and flourish.

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

Information			
Inspection date	16 November 2023	URN	149142
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	179
Diocese	Gloucester		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT)		
Headteacher	Lois Smith		
Chair	Brian Senior		
Inspector	Carol Dougill	No.	2116