



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barnham Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Mill Lane, Barnham, Thetford, IP24 2NG

School vision

WE INSPIRE, CHERISH AND BELIEVE IN EACH PERSON THAT THEY MIGHT FLOURISH AND FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL

We INSPIRE everyone with a lifelong love of learning and a passion to fulfil their potential.

We CHERISH everyone as one who is precious to God, a part of His loving family here in the school.

We BELIEVE in everyone, encouraging them in their own strengths and talents.

Jesus is the trunk, the heart of our school, with the deepest roots imaginable and with God's help, together we bear our fruits and share them as Change Agents making a positive impact in the world. Jesus said 'I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them, will bear much fruit.' John 15:5

But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." Jeremiah 17:7-8

School strengths

- Leaders make bold decisions that are rooted in the Christian vision, which underpins school life. As a consequence, pupils and staff are inspired to flourish and are cherished in this supportive environment.
- The broad curriculum and enrichment activities ensure pupils have the opportunity to flourish whilst learning through real-life contexts. Every pupil is valued and believed in, celebrating their unique talents.
- Collective worship reflects the deepest Christian roots of the school and is central to this vibrant worshipping community. Invitational prayer, opportunities for reflection and joyful singing contribute to the spiritual experience of worship.
- Strong partnerships, with the local church, community and diocese, enrich and enhance the school's Christian foundations. These links often lead to transformational change for vulnerable pupils and their families.
- The curriculum for religious education (RE) is skillfully devised and demonstrates progression throughout the year groups. This develops pupils' knowledge systematically, enabling deeper understanding of different faiths and worldviews, including Christianity.

Areas for development

- Deepen the shared understanding of the language of spirituality so the impact is maximised across the school's curriculum.
- Further encourage pupils to act as agents of change in global projects so they develop wider social action experiences.

Inspection findings

Leaders and governors regularly review Barnham's Christian vision to ensure it is relevant and lived out in the community. Staff are inspired by the biblical example of Christ providing the deepest roots to sustain and grow everyone. They speak eloquently of their own vision to serve the pupils and families in their school. They are particularly motivated to support the high proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged, including those with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND). Another significant focus is working with pupils and families who face extreme challenge in their lives. Leaders carefully consider the needs of their pupils, demonstrating their commitment to believing in everyone. For example, the time staff spend building trusting relationships means the school is exceptionally well-regarded in the community. They work tenaciously in their designated roles to strive for the best possible provision and support for every pupil and family. Leaders invest in their staff and prioritise their wellbeing to enable them to be effective in their work. Committed governors provide support and take pride in being the guardians of the school's Christian vision. They forensically evaluate the impact of it in detail and regularly check how the vision drives the school's priorities. They see it as the living gospel of Jesus' work in their community. This strengthens how the vision is lived out in the school.

The rich and varied curriculum has many opportunities for pupils to reflect and grow spiritually. Leaders have thought carefully about these planned opportunities, but staff and pupils do not always use consistent language to talk about them. However, intentionally planned moments of awe and wonderment feed the pupils' curious nature to ask questions. A strong culture of exploring real-life context is the bedrock of learning, enabled by an exceptional relationship with the local farming estate. This ensures the curriculum offers long-term memorable projects that root the school to its Christian vision and its local community. A good example is the regular learning undertaken on the estate farm – including tree planting, practical maths and a regular countryside week. Here, learning in the classroom is taken outdoors and practically explored through enrichment activities, such as tree management. Pupils' interests and achievements are celebrated weekly in worship. Here, pupils are selected to share their achievements, both in and outside of school. Overcoming barriers is celebrated, living the vision of fulfilling their potential.

Collective worship forms a central point of the school day. A real sense of celebration and togetherness is felt by those involved and is reflected in the joyful singing. Worship offers a welcome for all, without compulsion, and pupils and adults value the opportunity to stop and be refreshed. Its invitational nature encourages those of faith to speak to God and others to reflect privately. Worship is enhanced by external partnerships with a range of Christian groups and organisations. This includes strong and fruitful links with the local church. The school provides regular services in the church for the whole community. As a result, pupils and adults appreciate the personal nature of belief thanks to this breadth of experience. Pupils are often inspired by stories from collective worship and share their thoughts at home. The weekly newsletter provides helpful guidance to parents to support this ongoing conversation.

Pupil leadership is a valuable part of daily worship. Pupils actively lead reflections through a structured approach to prayers, which enables spontaneous response from others. Pupils frequently take deep, philosophical questions and explore them in group worship. This develops pupils' confidence and spiritual reflection in a smaller setting. Collective worship has a real depth and breadth because of strong links with a range of local churches and organisations. One example is the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). By supporting MAF the school learns how God's word is spread in isolated countries through a range of charitable programmes.

Leaders seek to serve their community and treat everyone well. The Christian vision creates a warm and inclusive ethos where pupils and adults feel trusted. This is because every pupil is known

individually, enabling barriers to flourishing to be actively removed. 'Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Days' intentionally explore diversity, disability and difference in the school community. This leads to everyone being celebrated and no ceiling being placed on an individual's development. This enables pupils with SEND to exceed all expectations. Pupils thrive, because of specialist support for mental health, wellbeing and behaviour. Many parents identify how the school helps to rebuild their trust in education and life. This often leads to transformational changes to pupils' and their families' lives.

Barnham's Christian vision looks beyond the school and provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to engage in social action work. These local and national opportunities enable pupils to become 'Change Agents.' These include regular food bank collections and planned acts of kindness, such as litter picking or visiting the local care home. Other pupils are motivated to tackle climate change through ecology work, such as writing to organisations to challenge them on non-recyclable products. Social action work on a global scale has some planned opportunities for pupils to engage but these are less developed. The school is beginning to address this aspect so pupils understand more about social injustice globally. The Christian vision also supports pupils to serve each other as leaders. This includes a range of roles where pupils learn to bear and share their fruits, such as becoming 'Junior Headteachers'. This group of pupils reports on learning and life in school at governor curriculum meetings. This ensures pupils flourish by using their talents to promote the interests of others.

The RE curriculum is carefully crafted to provide pupils with accurate knowledge about a range of religions and worldviews, including Christianity. Leaders work hard to ensure the RE curriculum challenges pupils to respond thoughtfully to what they have learned. The subject leader has ensured the skilfully devised curriculum meets the requirements of the newly written local authority arrangements for RE. Teachers are supported to improve their knowledge of the subject, leading to them being confident and enthusiastic about RE. Pupils' interest develops through big questions, which foster their curiosity in the subject. It inspires them to explore deeper questions about beliefs and how religions are diversely lived. As a consequence, pupils are confident in their knowledge and understand the subject's importance in a multicultural world.

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

Information			
Inspection date	27 November 2023	URN	124688
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	158
Diocese	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Amy Arnold		
Chair	Matthew Hawthorne		
Inspector	Christopher Allen	No.	847