

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barningham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Vision

To grow in faith, grow in our learning and grow our future world

Through the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1-20), we aim to teach children that if they have good 'soil', where they hear the message of God and live it in their lives, they will be able to grow and flourish, equipped for their future world.

To inspire lifelong learners; guided by the example of Jesus

We inspire the children to become life-long learners; to serve the community, to care for the environment and to be curious about the wider world. Through our Christian values, we champion diversity and inclusivity to ensure all children can grow and become confident citizens equipped for the ever-changing world. To enable us to succeed in our vision, we have three core values that move from the individual to the school and to the world. To be ambitious, to be kind and to give.

Barningham Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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

- A strong Christian vision and core values are deeply embedded and understood at Barningham. Compassionate leadership, at all levels in the school, underpins decision-making. As a result, the school is a caring, and inclusive place that proudly serves its community.
- Strong and compassionate relationships across the school reflect how the vision is lived out. By working well together as a community, pupils flourish. This is especially so for pupils who have additional needs, who find a loving home and thrive.
- Collective worship is valued as a special time when the community comes together to celebrate their identity as a Church school. It is a time to reflect on the vision and values and how they apply to daily life. This supports spiritual flourishing.
- An active culture of justice and responsibility underpins a deep sense of care for others. This positively impacts the school's ethos. An outworking of this is how pupils respond by leading schoolwide work through the Faith, Learning and Future World Councils. Here, pupils believe that their actions can make a big difference in the world.
- High-quality provision of religious education (RE) results in pupils who have a deep knowledge and understanding of a range of beliefs. Strong leadership of RE ensures pupils explore diversity and celebrate difference. This includes Christianity as a global and multicultural faith.

Development Points

- Develop a shared language of spirituality, so that adults and pupils can confidently speak about their experiences of awe, wonder and reflection.



Inspection Findings

Leaders and governors have carefully constructed the Christian vision to ensure it reflects the needs of the community. It permeates everything undertaken in the school and is supported by the Parable of the Sower. As a result, staff are inspired by the biblical example of being the 'good soil' for their community. This enables pupils and adults to proudly grow in their faith, grow in their learning and grow their future world. They live out the core values of being ambitious, kind and generous, so they can be the best they can be. This leads to Barningham being a highly motivated school that serves its community. Staff champion the needs of pupils who have additional needs and those who are the most vulnerable. The school's vision inspires staff to support pupils' needs with dedication, ensuring their success. For example, a warm welcome is offered to new pupils and their families ensuring respectful and dignified relationships are nurtured. Consequently, the school is exceptionally well regarded in the community. Leaders invest in the staff and prioritise their wellbeing, enabling them to work effectively. Through this genuine care, staff feel highly valued. Committed governors provide support and take pride in being the guardians of the school's Christian foundation. Their strong strategic decision-making is because they regularly evaluate and systematically check the impact of the school's vision.

The vision promotes creative opportunities in the curriculum, seeking ways for pupils to 'grow in the good soil.' This brings learning to life through immersive themed days such as VE Day 80. In addition, the wider curriculum considers ways to support pupils' talents and interests. This enables pupils to recognise and achieve their potential. Many learning experiences inspire curiosity, such as the schools 'No Outsiders Project.' This encourages pupils to question and challenge why people are marginalised in society. Leaders intentionally plan moments of awe and wonderment to feed the pupils' curiosity. One example of this is Barningham reflecting on God's creation through its local studies curriculum. However, discussions around spiritual growth are limited as there is no shared language to convey thoughts and ideas. Staff are persistent in their approach and focus on the development of the whole person. Thoughtful curriculum adaptations support individual pupils, helping them reach their full potential.

Collective worship offers a calm space in the school's busy day. Pupils and adults talk about the special time of coming together as one community. Worship is an engaging experience that provides ideal conditions for spiritual development. One example is how images are used to link Christian teachings to everyday life. Leaders plan worship so the school community can explore its vision and values. Biblical references are interwoven into each session, so everyone understands the vision's roots in Christian teaching. The local church hosts school services, enhancing its Christian foundations. These services are open to the local community and build strong bonds with the Barningham residents. Pupils lead all church services and many school worships as part of their role on the Faith Council. This ensures worship is centred around their ideas and interpretations of the school's core values. Pupils and staff value prayer and reflection. They see it as an invitation to share their thoughts with God. Others, simply enjoy the tranquil and quiet time to think. These moments of peace are balanced with joyful singing. Pupils who struggle with whole school worship experience its content and impact in other ways. Reflection time is also built into the rest of the school day through quiet spaces in classrooms. Consequently, pupils feel naturally comfortable with spiritual reflection and growth.

The whole school culture of treating pupils and adults well is demonstrated by compassionate leaders. They take time to know pupils and respond to them equitably. These actions are underpinned by the school's vision and creates an inclusive ethos where people feel trusted. The school's curriculum intentionally explores diversity and difference. This leads to everyone being celebrated for who they are. Pupils with additional needs thrive because



time is taken to understand what they require to thrive. This provision is driven by the vision of providing the right soil for each pupil to flourish. Staff are trained to provide a wide range of strategies to deal with the complexity of needs of pupils. Time and resources have been given to support structured regulation of behaviour and emotional literacy. Staff are confident in building resilience in pupils at Barningham and feel no barrier to learning is too hard to tackle. This leads to life changing work by the school because lives are improved for the better.

Pupils are active in roles of responsibility at Barningham and this enables them to respond to issues of injustice. They lead the action of others by serving on three pupil councils – Faith, Learning and Future World. Each council enables pupils' ideas to be discussed and developed in response to learning about injustice. This brings great value to their voice in school. Pupils are driven by providing the 'good soil' in which others can do well. They regularly organise events to raise funds for, and increase awareness of, charitable causes. Pupils proudly undertake work in their community through projects such as 'Keep Barningham Beautiful.' They have led a schoolwide project on plastic pollution that has led to a reduction of plastic usage. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to make informed choices. It has thematic topics where pupils learn about good role models for helping others. This includes work pupils have undertaken on including the marginalised, resulting in them developing a strong voice to advocate for others. Consequently, pupils make informed decisions about how to respond to injustices presented to them.

The RE curriculum is organised to ensure mixed-aged classes systematically study beliefs, and religions in a diverse multicultural way. This provides pupils with accurate knowledge about a range of religions including Christianity. Leaders have worked closely with the diocese to build a curriculum that reflects the school's context and needs. Consequently, pupils develop sophisticated ideas, such as the concept of Christian incarnation, enabling them to respond creatively to their learning. They are enthusiastic and critical thinkers. Pupils ask and answer deep questions such as 'Should everyone learn to pray?' Leaders continuously support teachers to improve their knowledge. This builds their confidence to teach RE effectively. Because of well-chosen teaching resources, pupils have a good understanding of a range of RE concepts. These are presented as 'big questions' such as, 'What does the word God mean?' The school explores a diverse range of Christian beliefs that look beyond its community. This results in pupils' confidently understanding Christianity as a worldwide and multicultural faith.

Information

Address	Church Road, Barningham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 1DD		
Date	9 May 2025	URN	124689
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary	No. of pupils	73 (+ 8 Nursery)
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich		
Headteacher	Stephany Hunter		
Chair of Governors	Julie Surridge		
Inspector	Christopher Allen		