Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Culworth Church of England Academy

Vision

Respect, Believe, Succeed
'Do to others as you would have them do to you.' Matthew 7: 12

Culworth 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 reinvigorated Christian vision drives leaders' actions to enable pupils to be the best they can be. Leaders model 'do to others as you would have them do to you'. Because leaders respect the uniqueness and value of individuals, pupils and adults thrive.
- Pupils and adults are treated well. In this small rural school, time is spent building strong relationships which develop pupils' understanding, thus reducing barriers to learning.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum engages and inspires the pupils. Leaders' passion and commitment ensures that staff are well supported in their teaching of RE. This ensures improvements in pupil outcomes remain a focus.

Development Points

- Review the planning of worship to maximise the opportunities for pupils and adults to actively engage and reflect upon its impact on them. This is to give them opportunities to deepen their spiritual flourishing,
- Empower pupils to act on issues of justice and responsibility. This is so they have an opportunity to build an awareness of how they can make a difference to the lives of others.
- Develop pupils' understanding of Christianity as a global world faith. This is to enable them to learn how Christian beliefs and practices are influenced by culture.

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Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership The newly established leadership team, supported by the EMAT trust, have reinvigorated the Christian vision of this small school. It reflects the Anglican foundation of the school and provides a 'firm foundation for life'. The biblical underpinning of 'do to others as you would have them do to you' motivates and drives leaders to build strong relationships. As a result, pupils and adults thrive. The Christian values are a strong influence on pupil behaviour. Staff guide pupils to explore them so that they recognise, understand and apply them in everyday situations. The trust vision to 'be the best they can be', reinforces the school's vision, bringing with it investment in the buildings and people. As the school begins the new part of their journey in the trust, there is a renewed sense of hope and a stronger sense of direction in living out the vision. Leaders, including governors, effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of the vision. Recently, the school has refined its behaviour policy to promote restorative conversations that reflect and support its vision and values.
Vision and Curriculum The recently reviewed curriculum is shaped by the vision of 'respect, believe and succeed'. Pupils enjoy learning and develop resilience because staff believe in them. Motivated by the vision, leaders ensure the curriculum challenges stereotypes and broadens pupils' horizons and allows them to succeed. The school day is enriched by extra-curricular activities which nurture pupils' interests and talents. The trust has enabled visits from a paralympian, established a voices choir and pupil parliament. As a result, learning has been revitalised. Leaders have a strong focus on inclusion and ensuring pupils recognise the benefits of diversity. For example, their work is enhanced through apt choices of books to study in English. This develops pupils' awareness beyond their local community, preparing them for life in modern Britain. Adaptations and targeted wellbeing support for those pupils who are deemed vulnerable and who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), enables them to access learning. As a result, pupils develop a strong sense of belonging. Their social, emotional and spiritual development is nurtured through the curriculum. Opportunities to reflect are woven throughout the day. As a result, pupils develop spiritually. They explore their relationships with others, engage with the natural world, and reflect on questions beyond the material aspects of life.
Worship and Spirituality Collective worship is highly valued at Culworth as a time of togetherness and reflection. This enables pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. The school's Anglican foundations are highlighted in the use of a candle, a cross and celebrating events in the church calendar. Driven by the vision, the inclusive and invitational approach allows pupils to respond to worship in individual ways. Singing is a joyful expression of the renewed hope and vision of the school. Parents highly value being invited to collective worship in the school and church as an opportunity to be together as one big community. The range of collective worship over a week, covers themes from the Bible, values and key aspects of news from around the world. This provides a varied stimulus to develop pupils' spirituality. They are invited to read out their own prayers and take part in creative retellings of stories. Partnerships with the 'turn the page' team, provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on Bible stories and their relevance today. However, overall pupils and adults do not make strong connections between collective worship and its impact on their lives, actions and attitudes.
Vision and School Culture The Christian vision creates a culture which acknowledges the uniqueness of individuals and their worth in the school. Successes inside and outside school are celebrated. This creates a feeling of belonging and as a result, relationships are strong. Effective communication by the school and trust during recent changes have built confidence and respect. As a result, pupils are flourishing. Pupil attendance is high as they enjoy coming to school and appreciate the warm and welcoming environment. Developing good mental health is a key focus of the school's work. It provides targeted support either from inside school or externally, for those individuals and families in need. The wellbeing of staff and pupils is a priority. Pupils and adults are supported through challenges in life by the approachability of staff and signposting to specialist support. This is highly effective in ensuring pupils are receptive to learning and able to participate in class activities. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing. 'Respect, believe and succeed' is seen in the collaboration and openness to change of the staff team. The trust value and support staff, providing resources for teaching and facilitating

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professional networks. This ensures best practice is shared, creating a strong learning culture from which pupils' benefit.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The Christian vision fosters conversations about individual responsibility across the school. Because staff model the values, pupils learn from each other, listening carefully and are respectful. The vision inspires pupils to behave well and take responsibility for their learning. They share their ideas through the school council, showing an empathy for the diversity of pupils' needs. For example, it responded to the needs of their peers by fundraising for a project to create a calm garden to help with emotional regulation at playtimes. Pupils have a strong sense of their responsibility for nature and wildlife. For example, they have thoughtfully created bug hotels. Pupils' curiosity and interest has been sparked through learning about injustices in the world. This has developed their awareness of peoples' lives beyond their school community and prompted lots of discussion. They show an interest in racial equality, climate change and its effects both on environments and animals. However, opportunities to allow pupils to take action that will help people and ecosystems beyond their local environment are undeveloped.

Religious Education

RE is given high priority across the school. The RE leader's passion and knowledge enthuses the staff and pupils. The curriculum is well sequenced and progressive using carefully selected materials. It provides pupils with the opportunity to discuss their personal views. Visits to the cathedral and the local church enrich the curriculum. The trust supports the RE curriculum in providing opportunities for pupils from a variety of faith backgrounds to meet. The RE leader's passion and knowledge enthuses the staff and pupils. Staff are supported with their RE teaching through joint planning and discussions. This enables them to reflect and improve their teaching. Leaders benefit from training delivered by the trust, diocese and national networks. This ensures best practice is shared across the staff team and as a result pupils are making progress. They are engaged and fascinated by lessons as teachers adapt the RE resources to suit the learning needs of the pupils. Pupils build up a good knowledge of Christianity and a variety of faiths and worldviews. However, there are inconsistencies across the classes in the understanding of Christianity as a global faith. Leaders monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum, identifying training needs which are woven into the school development plan. The recent introduction of individual books for RE has enabled staff to have a finer evaluation of each pupil's understanding. Assessment practices have recently been reviewed and developed. As a result, teachers adapt their planning and address gaps in learning.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	The Green, Culworth, Oxfordshire OX17 2BB		
Date	22 October 2026	URN	140065
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	106
Diocese	Peterborough		
MAT	East Midlands Multi Academy Trust (EMAT)		
MAT Chair	Stephen Morales		
Headteacher	Luci Clapton (Executive Headteacher) Luke Spurway (Interim Head of School)		
Chair of Governors	Verena Childs		
Inspector	Rachel Chamberlain		

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