

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Buckland Newton CE Primary School

Vision

Let Your Light Shine; on everyone, everywhere, everyday.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16)

Buckland Newton 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

- Inspirational Christian leadership ensures the vision is widely understood and truly lived. Strategic decisions stem from this and are rigorously justified by it.
- The Christian vision is deeply embedded and firmly rooted in biblical teaching. The bible quotation to 'let your light shine' inspires people to aspire and to do their best for themselves and others.
- The vision inspires positive relationships that nurture and support staff, pupils and the school community. The inclusive culture embraces all, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Adults and pupils value collective worship. Shaped by the Anglican foundation of the school, worship enriches individual spiritual development by providing many opportunities to contribute and reflect.
- Effective leadership of religious education (RE) results in pupils demonstrating an impressive depth of understanding about a diverse range of religions and world views. Consequently, pupils value and respect a diversity of beliefs.

Development Points

- Extend pupils' understanding of justice and responsibility. This is to enable them to make and promote ethical choices, thereby influencing positive change beyond the school community.
- Develop explicit opportunities for pupils to articulate their spiritual reflections across the curriculum. This is to strengthen spirituality as an intrinsic part of their learning.



Inspection Findings

The school's Christian vision is deeply meaningful to its community, enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Pupils enthusiastically discuss the importance of letting their light shine and encouraging others to shine. Pupils link this to Jesus, describing him as 'the light of the world.' The vision is expressed through 12 values, explored in depth on a two-year cycle. Pupils adeptly recall and live out values such as compassion, justice, and respect, linking these to the vision. Leaders make decisions guided by the vision. For example, establishing a sensory room for additional support to meet the needs of pupils with SEND or vulnerabilities. The vision of Sherborne Area Schools Trust (SAST) resonates with that of the school. Through its Director of Flourishing, SAST provides innovative and effective support to ensure success. Using the trust's bespoke programme, leaders robustly monitor and evaluate the school as a church school. This supports pupils and adults in flourishing.

The school's vision is reflected in its curriculum. Learning is differentiated to allow pupils of all abilities to achieve and shine. The school has a shared language for expressing spirituality across the curriculum, which is widely understood. The Spirituality Policy outlines how subjects can include this. However, this is not embedded, which limits the number of planned opportunities within the curriculum for spiritual development. A bespoke curriculum, for mixed-age classes, has been carefully designed for progression and continuity. This enables pupils to flourish. The extracurricular offer complements the curriculum. It provides alternative ways for pupils to 'let their light shine,' such as in sports, drama and Forest Schools. Completing the 'daily mile' is a routine which enables them to be alert and ready to learn. An innovative initiative is the weekly 'big question,' providing opportunities for reflection and debate. Questions, such as 'What is more precious, gold or water?' develop vocabulary and pupils' ability to reflect and express themselves spiritually. Pupils are encouraged to instigate the big questions, giving them ownership. However, identified opportunities for spiritual development throughout the curriculum are less developed. There are some examples in prayers, literacy, and art, but these are not consistent or explicit across the school.

Daily collective worship is planned carefully and aligns with the Christian foundation of the school. Pupils readily recall biblical stories, link them to school values and exemplify them in their behaviour. There is a strong link with the local vicar who supports worship in school. Worship is enhanced by school services held in the parish church. Spirituality in worship is explored effectively through the windows, mirrors, doors and candle approach. Consequently, pupils reflect on themselves, the natural world, the wider world and a sense of otherness. Class reflection areas and the outdoor spiritual space provide further opportunities for developing spirituality. Pupils' reflections are shared in collective worship. A useful phrase, used successfully to elicit deep thought across the school, is 'What makes your heart sing?' This has a positive impact on the ability of adults and pupils to express themselves spiritually. Pupils are actively involved in worship and understand it is a special time for reflection, thereby developing their spirituality. Leaders support and promote the importance of spirituality in worship through monitoring and evaluation.

The RE curriculum is effective and aligns with the school vision. The subject leader is successfully supported by SAST. Therefore, the religious education curriculum is well developed and sequenced. Leaders appropriately balance world faiths and the inclusion of non-religious world views. Best practice is shared through the trust's RE leaders' focus group alongside impactful training from the local diocese. Pupils develop their reflectiveness by discussing the weekly 'big question' during RE. An innovative strategy is to include the 'big question' in weekly newsletters. Through offering this opportunity for discussion at home, pupils' spiritual awareness and vocabulary can be enriched before the RE lesson. The school invites parents to join pupils for their 'inspire morning' in RE,



raising the profile of this subject. RE is taught in a way that is engaging and therefore memorable. For example, pupils encounter a range of activities within the parish church at Easter. Their learning experiences are then shared with parents during the Easter Service. Pupils demonstrate a deep understanding of their learning.

The vision and the school's three clear rules, to be 'ready, respectful and safe,' underpin an active culture of justice and responsibility. Consequently, pupils are polite and considerate of others' needs. They take responsibility for their behaviour and behave well. They understand justice as being fair to others. Pupils support various charitable causes, including through selfless acts such as a pupil donating her hair to charity. Pupils earn points not for themselves, but for the charity chosen by their house. The points equate to money, which the winning house contributes to its chosen charity. This encourages pupils to think of others. Some pupils are given special responsibilities as 'leading lights' and they serve their school community with pride. These roles include pupil voice, collective worship, library, reading, eco and sports. The leading lights support younger pupils during worship, developing their sense of responsibility and helping younger peers to engage. The close partnerships between the school, the on-site pre-school and the village family hub support people of all ages, enabling them to flourish. Less well developed is a sense of pupils making ethical choices to bring about change beyond the school.

Inspired by the vision, Buckland Newton has a culture where pupils and adults are treated well. The emphasis on developing constructive and positive relationships results in a dignifying and equitable culture. Therefore, the dedicated staff feel supported and aptly describe the school as 'nurturing and caring, a place of love.' Furthermore, the impact of the culture is seen in how pupils are considerate towards one another and proud of their school. The trust recognises the importance of good mental health for all. For example, they have a staff wellbeing charter, which is reviewed through annual surveys. Senior Leaders access professional supervision and mentoring, developing their resilience and leadership skills. Pupils are recognised in the celebration assembly for their unique contributions to school life. This includes displaying behaviour inspired by the school's values and rules. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are enabled to flourish. Specialist staff, targeted interventions and alternative provision support individuals in their learning. This leads to a culture of equity where individual needs are catered for with compassion and expertise. The school community engenders a sense of belonging and inclusion. Consequently, people feel valued, secure and are inspired to succeed.

Information

Address	Buckland Newton, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 7BY		
Date	1 May 2025	URN	144413
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	95
Diocese/District	Salisbury		
MAT/Federation	Sherborne Area Schools Trust		
Headteacher	Phillip Sales		
Chair of Governors	Simon Notley		
Inspector	Amanda Brockway		