

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Derry Hill Church of England Primary School

Vision

Jesus explains: 'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.' Matthew 5:16

Derry Hill Church of England 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

- In this school, pupils and adults are understood, loved and nurtured. The outworking of a deeply embedded vision, alongside passionate and caring leadership, underpins a community where adults and pupils shine and flourish.
- Relationships are rooted in a desire to ensure the best outcomes for all. There is a strong commitment to wellbeing. As such, adults and pupils feel valued.
- Collective worship is at the heart of the school day. Through this, pupils are encouraged to embrace the school vision and values and put them into action in their own lives. Gatherings provide spiritual opportunities for personal growth in pupils and adults.
- Leaders use the vision as a corner stone of curriculum design. Careful thought is given to ways in which they can best meet the needs of pupils.
- Religious education (RE) is a valued subject. The balanced and challenging curriculum make certain that pupils gain extensive knowledge and become inquisitive learners. This extends their understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews, including Christianity.

Development Points

- Continue the school's journey by ensuring that leaders and staff embed spiritual language within school activities. This is to raise pupils' confidence in articulating their understanding of spirituality.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to reflect and act upon issues that they see as unjust. This is in order that pupils can deepen their understanding of how they can make a positive difference in the world.



Inspection Findings

Derry Hill Church of England Primary School is a shining example of a school where the vision permeates every aspect of its life. 'Let your light shine,' is a guiding force for the entire school community. Curriculum design, daily interactions, prominent displays throughout the school, all reinforce its importance. Staff, pupils, governors, and parents alike fully understand and embody the vision. Consequently, there is a shared commitment to its realisation. Policies, such as those for relationships and sex education, special educational needs, and behaviour, clearly align with the school's values. Strong local links in this close-knit community provide enriching opportunities which allow pupils to shine beyond the classroom. One parent commented such opportunities inspire her daughter to succeed in her own unique way. Governors, working with school leaders, undertake regular monitoring. Through learning walks, conversations with pupils and staff they are able to confidently evaluate the impact of the vision.

The curriculum at Derry Hill is ambitious and inspiring, incorporating 'big questions' to engage pupils in critical thinking. This connects their learning to the wider world, allowing students to explore significant topics, such as World War One. For the Remembrance service, pupils researched soldiers from the village who served in the war. In honouring their courage, pupils gain a deeper understanding of the school value of courage and local history. Spirituality forms a golden thread. It is woven into lesson planning, with agreed imagery used to highlight its presence across subjects. Opportunities to pause when learning about the changing seasons for example, are carefully planned. This holistic approach ensures that pupils are not only academically prepared but also develop a deeper sense of connection to the world around them. The wide range of extracurricular activities, including photography club, allows pupils to flourish as they explore their interests and talents.

Wellbeing is a priority, providing strong foundations for an inclusive, nurturing environment where pupils and adults succeed and shine. A real strength of the school is how well everyone is treated. The staff have detailed knowledge of the pupils' needs. This knowledge is used to ensure that everyone receives effective support and therefore thrives. Pupils have a secure understanding of protected characteristics and their responsibility to respect and support diversity. The behaviour policy reflects the school's Christian values. Pupils are asked to reflect on the values as part of their restorative conversation. The focus on spirituality and reflection contributes to a strong sense of belonging among staff and pupils alike. Staff feel valued and part of an inclusive family; parents express gratitude for the support their families receive. The school's reputation for living out its vision makes it a school of choice for many families, particularly those seeking excellent support for pupils with additional needs.

The grounds, corridors and reflection areas in classrooms provide peaceful spaces for quiet thought. Adults recognise when colleagues face challenges. Support is welcomed because of the culture of care and trust which exists at the school. Adults are grateful for the actions leaders put in place to support their wellbeing and to manage workload. Staff retention is excellent because adults feel respected, supported and that their skills and expertise are recognised and developed. The dedication of the staff and leadership ensures that each pupil feels known, valued, and supported. This commitment to fostering a sense of belonging and purpose enables pupils to shine their light brightly, embodying the school's vision and values in every aspect of their lives. Consequently pupils and adults want to learn and work in this compassionate school.

Collective worship at Derry Hill Primary creates carefully planned moments of reflection at the end of a busy day. Staff view these moments as opportunities for peace and unity, while pupils describe them as times of 'serenity' and 'togetherness'. These sessions draw on Christian festivals and values, including involvement of clergy from the local parish and beyond. The lighting of three candles is used to explain the Trinity, connecting abstract concepts to



tangible experiences for pupils. Worship is inclusive and invitational, with a consistent structure that engages pupils, from the youngest to the oldest. A worship council plays an active role in shaping and enhancing collective worship. They offer feedback, select songs, and update the prayer box. Spirituality is an integral part of school life, guided by the concept of 'ows, wows, and nows' and the metaphor of a broken bowl repaired with gold to symbolize resilience, growth and the beauty of life's imperfections. This supports pupils understanding that challenges shape their identity. Daily reflections, culminating in an end-of-week prayer, encourage pupils to pause, think, and grow. Prayer time before collection, further embeds spirituality into daily routines, enabling pupils to carry the experience home. Partnerships with the diocese provide professional support and development for staff, ensuring that worship is meaningful and impactful. Parents value how worship enriches their family lives, with resources in newsletters supporting discussions at home.

RE is a cornerstone of the curriculum at Derry Hill, fostering a strong understanding of belief systems. The subject is well-led. The knowledgeable subject leader ensures high-quality teaching and learning. The school's partnerships with the diocese and local organisations ensures continuous professional development for staff is current and effective. These collaborations provide pastoral support and access to training in RE and collective worship, enhancing teaching. Research and best practices guide curriculum review and adaptation, assuring it reflects diverse worldviews, including Humanism. School leaders active engagement with network hubs, ensures RE remains a core subject, vital for fostering respect and understanding among pupils. Pupils engage in enquiry-based learning, which encourages them to explore fundamental aspects of life and faith. Cross-curricular connections enhance the learning experience. For instance, a PE lesson on dance incorporated elements of Diwali celebrations encouraging parallels between cultural practices and celebrations to be explored. Assessment methods, including mind maps, retrieval questions, and termly evaluations, ensure that progress in RE is consistently monitored and celebrated. Pupils appreciate RE for its ability to broaden their understanding of diverse beliefs, with one pupil noting, 'My family does not have a religion, so it gives me a chance to learn about all faiths.'

Opportunities at Derry Hill result in a culture of understanding justice and responsibility. The school emphasises courageous advocacy, through seven inspirational figures who exemplify making a difference. From David Attenborough's work in conservation to Malala Yousafzai's advocacy for education, these role models help pupils understand the importance of justice, fairness and the importance of standing up for beliefs. This ethos is reflected in the school's practices, such as using named candles and lolly sticks to promote equity and fairness. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously, participating in initiatives such as litter collection during breaks, demonstrating their commitment to stewardship and advocacy. However, pupils' understanding of how they can challenge poverty and injustice globally is less developed. Pupils are kind to each other. They encourage others to flourish through their roles as worship leaders or as buddies to younger pupils. They successfully organise creative ways to raise money for charities, often of personal significance. Pupils are secure in their understanding that their opinions will be heard and that leaders will take action. These opportunities develop their understanding of the school values of courage, friendship and trust.

Information

Address	Church Road, Derry Hill, Calne, Wiltshire. SN11 9NN		
Date	20 November 2024	URN	126400
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	209
Diocese/District	Salisbury		
Headteacher	Hayley Roberts		
Chair of Governors	Richard French		
Inspector	Jane Gascoigne		