

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

West Monkton Church of England Primary School			
Address	Bridgwater Road, Bathpool, Monkton Heathfield, Taunton, Somerset TA2 8FT		
Date of inspection	10 December 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as Voluntary Controlled The Oak Partnership Multi-Academy Trust
Diocese	<b>Bath and Wells</b>	URN	146676

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Additional Judgement</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### School context

West Monkton is a primary school with 416 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The school became part of The Oak Partnership Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in January 2019.

### The school's Christian vision

We aim to be an inspirational community, 'where everyone has the courage and confidence to fly.'

This is supported with clear aims and objectives, with a biblical foundation in Galatians 5 v22:  
...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control  
In accordance with John 10:10 "That They shall have life in all its fullness..."

### Key findings

- The vision inspires leaders and staff to use research to find innovative and creative approaches to meet the needs of all pupils so that they can 'fly'. The school is seen as a centre of excellence in a number of areas.
- The religious education (RE) leader has a wealth of knowledge and expertise, supporting staff in a number of schools. However, pupils' understanding of how different faiths influence people's actions in global communities is less well developed.
- Leaders are passionate about the work of this Church school, making decisive decisions to support pupils and families through outstanding pastoral provision.
- The vision informs the rich relationships the school has developed, extending the experiences it offers to pupils. Excellent relationships with the diocese have led to the innovative post of a pioneer worker, enhancing work between the church, school and community.
- The robustness and quality of the school's monitoring and evaluation strategies are exceptional. The governors' ethos team and staff are fully involved, leading to a relentless drive to improve.

### Areas for development

- Extend the school's links with global communities so pupils can give evaluative accounts of how different faiths influence people's lives.
- Ensure high quality opportunities for reflection are planned which enable pupils to articulate their understanding of the spiritual and ethical dimensions of questions and issues.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### **Inspection findings**

A distinctive Christian vision is established and shapes the school's strategic direction. The vision reflects the village, where following considerable new housing the school is developing a sense of community. Leaders used the Church of England vision for education to inform their thinking of the theological principles underpinning the vision. They point to Jesus' teaching which inspires how we can live. These are seen in the Fruits of the Spirit which enable all to have live in its fullness. There is a strong emphasis that everyone is special as they are made in the image of God. The language of flying is used across the school by staff and pupils. Flying goes beyond academic success and includes developing all their talents, relationships and being the best they can be.

The vision inspires leaders to explore innovative approaches to all of their work. For example, the interior of the new building was informed by research to maximise pupils' learning. Pupils explain how the new outdoor learning project has transformed breaktimes. Extending pupils' oral skills is another innovative research project, with leaders transforming the school into a centre of excellence. These new strategies enable pupils to accelerate their language development. Working with national experts has led to pupils taking greater ownership of their behaviour. The school has an outstanding reputation for its innovative work sharing with schools across the locality. Further innovative projects such as the 'Talk for Teaching' significantly raise pupils' literacy skills. The quality of research in mathematics and curriculum design are recognised beyond the school. These projects build on those from previous years. This provides excellent opportunities for staff to take further responsibilities, developing leadership skills and becoming reflective teachers.

Leaders made a bold ethical decision to appoint a pastoral lead who would address pupils' and families' needs. A 'school 365', open throughout the year is their vision. Approaches for nurturing social and emotional well-being are shaped by research. These creative approaches have raised pupils' attendance. Leaders make influential decisions on pupils' admissions, enabling some to make a new start to their learning. Staff have enabled these pupils to overcome barriers and transform their behaviour. The nurture for vulnerable pupils is equally impressive with high quality support. There is an impressive culture of inspiring pupils' aspirations and self-belief. Pupils develop a growth mindset and talk about learning, realising that 'they may not be able to do it as yet'. Pupils make very strong links to Christian values which support them. Overall, there is a rising trend in pupils' attainment. The progress of vulnerable pupils is strong, where they make similar progress to their peers.

The quality of monitoring and evaluation and its impact is exceptional. The ethos team consistently challenge leaders leading to ongoing improvements to the school's Christian distinctiveness. Improvements include forming a worship team and identifying a greater variety of leaders for collective worship. Groups of staff work together to evaluate one another's teaching. They share excellent practice and identify areas for training over a six-week period. This is a powerful approach, leading to impressive ongoing improvements.

The vision promotes partnerships which enrich the lives and learning of pupils. Leaders instigated the MAT's formation. The school plays an outstanding role in offering support and high-quality practices to others. An impressive example is the collective worship leader who shares high quality approaches. Local church links are excellent, supporting worship and the ethos team. The diocesan link has led to the innovative appointment of a pioneer worker who is heavily engaged in bringing community together, often through the school. He offers invaluable mentoring to pupils, enhancing their mental health. Relationships with global communities are growing with pupils becoming penfriends with children in different communities. This leads to pupils having a well-developed understanding of difference and diversity. At present pupils' understanding of how religious belief informs people's actions and shapes society is not fully developed.

The vision and Christian values have a transformational impact on pupils' lives and relationships, which they are confident to articulate. Pupils recognise how adults live out values on a daily basis. They show a high degree of respect for others particularly those with individual needs. Pupils explain the importance of forgiveness, confident to challenge others about what is expected making links to the values. They show real initiative in raising awareness of issues, challenging local supermarkets on the use of plastic. There are excellent examples of pupils supporting dementia care which has made a long-lasting impact on the school. Progressive experiences for reflection deepen pupils' understanding of spirituality. Pupils are confident to express their thinking in creative

ways, such as art or drama. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to explore the spiritual and ethical dimensions of all of the different subjects and questions.

The RE subject leader has an extremely high degree of expertise, writing modules for the locally agreed syllabus. Her support for staff is outstanding, introducing a variety of creative approaches, which readily engage pupils. Philosophical and theological big questions challenge pupils' thinking. Pupils enjoy justifying their ideas, listening to others and shaping their opinions. Pupils consistently articulate that RE challenges and inspires them as they perceive the relevance that Christianity can have. This is seen as a safe place to share their ideas which are valued. Visits and visitors extend pupils' understanding of other world faiths. Families from different cultures enrich this, raising pupils' respect for others. Assessment is robust and ongoing enabling the leader to make improvements. The subject leader is completely dedicated to providing the highest quality of experiences.

The pupils' worship team have inspired significant improvements to collective worship. Their evaluations led to highly valued reflection areas being established. Together with peers the team design and shape these regularly. The team plan and lead worship frequently and have considerable ownership. Worship is vibrant and engaging, an essential part of daily life. The summer celebration for Year six, 'Pilgrims' day', provides creative interactive experiences for nearly 200 pupils. They explore different types of worship and current issues; the feedback shows how this has inspired them. Festivals are celebrated in creative ways, such as the nativity held on a local farm. The Easter experience enabled pupils to deepen their understanding of the Eucharist, participating in their own way. Planning is detailed, drawing upon biblical ideas, extending pupils' knowledge of the importance of Christian values. Pupils have an extremely well-developed understanding of prayer. They talk enthusiastically about worship explaining where this has been influential or leading them to be advocates for change.

Headteacher	James Blackmore
Inspector's name and number	Revd David Hatrey 844