

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Frome Valley Church of England First School

Vision

Together, with God's love, we learn, nurture and grow, without limits

Everything starts and ends with working together and the mental health and wellbeing of our school community. When someone is suffering, we all work together to support. Without limits, we continue to work through difficulties and help our children to flourish.

If one part suffers, all suffer together; If one flourishes, all rejoice together."

(1 Corinthians 12.26)

Frome Valley Church of England First 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 school's exceptionally well-developed Christian vision directs leaders and staff. It is tightly woven into the curriculum, collective worship, and culture. As a result, pupils and adults flourish.
- Exceptionally resilient supportive relationships exist within the school. There is meticulous attention paid to ensuring the wellbeing and mental health of individuals. This means that there is a calm, nurturing ethos.
- Teaching in religious education (RE) is very effective. Pupils engage enthusiastically with a huge variety of tasks which develop their knowledge and understanding well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what justice and responsibility mean. Despite their age they take decisive action and know how they can exert influence in a positive manner. This is shaped by the Christian vision and thoughtful discussions.
- Careful attention is paid to spiritual development within the curriculum. Planning for this is very thorough. It has a significant impact on pupils' ability to reflect and question.

Development Points

- Develop pupils' understanding of global Christianity. This is to enable them to explore diverse Christian traditions, practices and expressions.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The carefully thought through Christian vision is a guiding principle for the school. Each of its words is firmly rooted in Scripture. With the values of compassion, respect and perseverance it is fully understood and well used. For example, the words 'without limits' show the aspiration which staff have for learners. The importance of the vision and values are reinforced by colourful displays. A striking drawing of a boat includes self-portraits of the pupils and pictures of the staff. This highlights the feelings of working together and warmth which pervade. Leaders and governors constantly refer to the vision and the values. They shape their decision making and as a result pupils and adults flourish. The highly committed governors are actively involved in the life of the school. They provide encouragement and challenge. They monitor rigorously, evaluate the impact of the vision assiduously and take appropriate action. For instance, the emphasis on nurture and mental health influenced their decision to buy additional specialist resources. The Wessex Multi Academy Trust (WMAT) is highly supportive. Its vision resonates with that of the school. It has comprehensive and effective systems for school improvement. Together with school leaders it checks that the vision at Frome Valley exerts a significant impact.

Vision and Curriculum

The recently refreshed curriculum ensures that pupils grow academically and in their personal and spiritual lives. A wide range of engaging extracurricular activities gives them opportunities to experience new and exciting things. For example, skateboarding, rock climbing, and gardening develop confidence as well as extending communication skills. The vision of working together and growing with God's love is threaded through the activities. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who are deemed vulnerable are given sensitive support. This is tailored to their needs while making certain that they have full access to the curriculum. The development of spirituality within the curriculum is strong. The school has a very clear approach. Staff make good use of spontaneous moments such as hearing skylarks singing in a nearby field to encourage reflection and thought. They also make good use of planned moments within subjects.

Worship and Spirituality

Pupils and adults value collective worship in the church as a time to come together, be still and reflect. Worship themes are carefully planned and linked to the school values. Singing and music are an integral part and develop spirituality. The playing of the violin by the headteacher means that pupils sit and listen in rapture and deep reflection. The lighting of candles on the central table, the saying of the school prayer and the welcoming words set the tone. They allow pupils and adults, regardless of their beliefs, to be reminded of God's love. Bible stories and particularly the acting of these by members of the local church are enjoyed. Each class takes it in turn to contribute by leading prayers which they have written. As the church currently has no vicar, the lay minister leads collective worship in church. Throughout the week whether in the church, school hall or in class worship spiritual growth is nurtured. Diaries of reflection for older year groups and the answering of 'wondering' questions for others play a key role in this. Most pupils engage well. A small minority of younger pupils show less enthusiasm for collective worship than the older ones. Partnership working with the local church during the vacancy has been maintained and, in some ways, enhanced. Members of the local congregation now sometimes join the school at church. A volunteer is working with the collective worship group on an award scheme for leadership. This reinforces the school's already strong Christian foundation.

Vision and School Culture

The culture of the school is one of warmth, inclusiveness and encouragement. An extensive system of rewards is highly prized. The vision underpins the ethos. Pupils and staff are greatly valued, loved and seen as bringing individual talents. The importance of good mental health and wellbeing is a priority. Listening to concerns is at the heart of the school's vision. Pupils value the chance to talk about their worries under the 'I wish my teacher knew' initiative. They benefit from nurturing approaches, and consequently they thrive. The statement and



lifebuoy on the 'vision boat' of 'catch me before I fall' shows the trust which exists in the school. Strong relationships are at its core. Behaviour is good and meaningful forgiveness is understood well. Parents rightly welcome the care given to their children. They like the communications they get especially the 'vision and values' newsletter. Staff support one another. They appreciate being able to talk to senior leaders about issues which concern them and the thanks they are given. Workloads are carefully monitored and adjustments made. Their philosophy of 'we can do this together' demonstrates their positive attitude. The provision by WMAT of a wealth of resources and training indicates their collaboration and alignment with the vision of the school.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils have an understanding of the meaning of justice which is beyond that which might be expected for their age. They can explain right and wrong, what is fair and unfair. They talk with confidence about the importance of difference and equity. A recent 'parliament week' extended their understanding of democracy. They take on posts of responsibility willingly. They are eager to join groups such as the school council or collective worship group. One wrote on an application form, 'I would like to be part of a group that contributes to my school.' They are fully aware of their responsibility towards the planet. The eco- group instituted a 'power down' afternoon when electricity was shut off. Some pupils wrote letters to International Animal Rescue in support of their work. This sense of responsibility is fostered as part of being active citizens. This includes delivering hand drawn cards to elderly residents and raising funds for the local food bank. They readily explain how these actions are related to the values of compassion and respect.

Religious Education

RE is given high priority within the school. It is led well with effective monitoring. It meets the expectations for teaching RE in a Church school. A recent revision with support from the diocese has ensured the curriculum is well-balanced. Planning is comprehensive and high-quality resources are used. Pupils' understanding about a range of world faiths, non-religious worldviews and how people of different faiths live is well covered. Effective training in RE for teachers is provided by Salisbury Diocese and WMAT. A visit to a Roman Catholic Church is developing pupils' insight into the variety of Christian beliefs locally.

Teaching and learning in RE is effective. A wide variety of activities engages pupils' interest and they respond with enthusiasm. In Reception the teacher made clever links between the Bible and pupils learning about bridges thus stimulating thinking. She connected Jonah giving thanks to God for being 'his bridge', to acting the story of the 'Billy Goats Gruff.' In Year 1 pupils demonstrate very good knowledge of the Easter story and in other Years they show a mature understanding of the teachings of Jesus. They readily ask and answer searching questions. As a result, there is secure progression in learning. Assessment is a strength and pupils know how to improve their work. However, pupils show less awareness of Christianity as a worldwide faith. This means they are less confident when talking about diverse practices within Christianity globally.

Information

Address	School Drive, Crossways Dorset DT2 8WR		
Date	3 March 2026	URN	141777
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	142
Diocese	Salisbury		
MAT	Wessex Multi Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Martin Baker		
Headteacher	Clare Moore		
Chair of Governors	Elizabeth De Bardi		
Inspector	Marcia Headon		