

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Olveston Church of England Primary School	
Address	Elberton Road, Olveston, Bristol, BS35 4DB
School vision	
Olveston CEVC Primary School is a deeply caring community which recognises our responsibility to show love and respect to all. Our children are 'rooted in love', underpinned by the biblical verse 'Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong' (Ephesians 3:17). Our hope for our children is that they leave us with the 'roots of responsibility and the wings of independence', so that they may go forth and make the world a brighter place.	
School strengths	
• The impact of the school's vision of being 'rooted in love' is felt throughout the school and results in an extremely cohesive and committed community. • Pupils and adults flourish at Olveston School because the vision inspires very positive relationships. Everyone treats each other well. • Pupils and adults benefit from the many opportunities for meaningful reflection in collective worship and across the curriculum. • The effectiveness of Olveston as a Church school is greatly enhanced by strong, mutually beneficial partnerships. The relationship with the local Church is particularly vibrant. • Leaders ensure that religious education (RE) has a high profile and that the curriculum is planned for maximum pupil engagement.	
Areas for development	
• Ensure that the lived reality of the vision is carried through into the school's written policies • Develop an understanding of how spiritual development deepens throughout the key stages to inform better planning across the curriculum. • Enable pupils to speak out more strongly for justice by developing their skills of oracy.	
Inspection findings	
Olveston's longstanding Christian vision of being rooted in love is readily understood by both pupils and adults. 'Rooted in love' draws on the Bible teaching, 'Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong' (Ephesians 3:17). Love from God and love for other people are powerful principles for both pupils and adults. Pupils feel safe and secure as they are quickly assimilated into a loving Christian community. Leaders nurture a genuine family feel at the school where all have a strong sense of belonging, and mutual respect flourishes. The associated values of the vision are friendship, happiness, courage, respect, kindness and success. These were chosen by pupils and they find them very helpful in understanding how to live out being rooted in love. Leaders are committed to making sure the vision guides decision-making in all aspects of school life. This is not reflected so clearly in written policies.	

The principal curriculum aim that pupils leave with ‘roots of responsibility and wings of independence’ is inspired by the vision. Carefully crafted units of work start with a focus on self in Reception and finish appropriately with an exploration of global citizenship in Year 6. There are threads which weave their way through the curriculum. One of these is spiritual and moral growth. Pupils feel confident to ask and to answer significant, meaningful questions. Pupils enjoy the thinking involved in this. However pupil opportunities to grow spiritually are not fully exploited. This is because leaders have not shared a common understanding of spiritual development.

The love of the vision inspires staff to cherish and support vulnerable pupils and draw up effective strategies to meet their needs. These pupils are helped by creative methods of doing regular recall alongside targeted interventions by support staff. Leaders take financial decisions linked to the vision such as paying for enrichment activities in music, drama and forest school. That so many pupils, including the vulnerable, blossom through these is a good indicator of pupil flourishing.

Collective worship is a key driver for exploring the vision, especially at the start of each school year. Pupils have a good insight into the purposes of worship even when it is varied. This is because the school uses a common structure that even the youngest pupils understand. Pupils and adults look forward to the often-inspiring collective worship, especially when singing is involved. The use of drama by members of local churches led to older pupils using it when leading class worship for younger ones. Pupils show good understanding of Bible stories due to this and due to the attachment of biblical illustrations for each of the values. Each value is meaningfully explored in turn during the year. There are many opportunities for reflection in collective worship. Pupils appreciate that this is both invitational and inclusive for them. Reflection and prayer allow good response to the content of collective worship. Leaders use insightful questioning to get good participation. Pupils display good understanding of the life of Jesus and significant festivals of the Church’s year. Leaders set store by, and act on, the regular evaluation of collective worship by pupils.

The vision’s emphasis on love in action results in a community where the wellbeing of both pupils and adults is a lived reality. Pupils display positive behaviours and treat each other very well. The buddy scheme pairing older and younger pupils is very positive in helping all pupils to feel supported and valued. The scheme is commissioned very fittingly with a service at the local church. Parents prize the scheme and enjoy attending the commissioning. Another thread that runs through the curriculum is character development. Pupils respond well, for instance, to emphases in lessons on teamwork, resilience and generosity, all of which are related to the vision’s associated values.

The vision inspires pupils and adults to show concern and respect for all, especially for those who are treated unfairly. This naturally extends into curriculum work on issues of justice. Pupils speak, for example, about the importance of fair trade and how they are tackling their personal climate promises. Leaders also use a variety of ways to highlight the diversity found locally and internationally. Leaders recognise that good oracy is key to being passionate advocates for justice. Staff are developing techniques for pupils to acquire powerful skills that will enable them to make the world a brighter place.

Significant partnerships extend pupils’ horizons and exemplify what it means to be rooted in love beyond the school. A women’s group from Bristol helps pupils respond to issues arising, for example, from Black History Month. They also facilitate a meaningful link to a Christian school in Zambia. Olveston is part of the Bridge network of Church schools. This gives the opportunity for Olveston staff to share their good practice. They also benefit from learning from expert staff in other similar schools. Bridge Awards is a rewards scheme based on meeting significant personal and community challenges. It also recognises achievements outside of school. Relationships with the local church are so strong that it is fair to comment that the school is part of the church and the church is part of the school. The joint development of a reflection garden is an example of this.

Pupils join in with the church's work with, for instance, local retirement homes. They readily acknowledge that this has deepened their understanding of what older people may offer and their needs as well.

Leaders are certain that good RE lies at the heart of living out the vision. The skilled subject lead cascades their knowledge and up to date training from Bristol Diocese very effectively to the class teachers. They, in turn, take pleasure in seeing pupils flourish spiritually and intellectually in RE. The RE curriculum uses the local syllabus as its basis but supplements it with enriching activities such as interfaith days. There is a good balance of approaches covering the thoughts, beliefs and practices in the religions and worldviews studied. This means that pupils talk knowledgeably about Christianity and other beliefs systems as living faiths today. RE enables pupils to acquire a deep understanding of Christian beliefs and practices, including realising it to be a diverse living faith across the world. Other faiths and worldviews are introduced in the early years, allowing informed reflection on themes across the faiths and worldviews later. Year 6's final topic is 'is there an afterlife?'. Pupils are confident in discussing their own views and respect different ideas and beliefs. Whole class books and individual journals are evidence for this. Visits and visitors linked to RE are a key part of bringing the subject to life.

The inspection findings indicate that Olveston Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	16 November 2023	URN	109170
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	200
Diocese	Bristol		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Lee Dunn		
Chair	Andy Hollingdale		
Inspector	Simon Stevens	No.	953