

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ludlow Church of England School

Vision

“No divisions among you, perfectly united in mind and thought.” 1 Corinthians 1:10

Founded on Christian values, embracing those of all faiths and none, our school strives for Excellence Together, through developing knowledge, skills and an understanding of the world and its diversity, in a caring community of compassionate adults and young people; we will go forward together in celebration, reconciliation and ambition. Our school lives by three core Christian values; Excellence, Resilience and Care.

Strengths

- Ludlow School’s Christian vision, underpinned by biblical values, inspires pupils and adults to be the best they can be. Because of this they are able to flourish.
- The vision-inspired emphasis on pastoral care results in pupils and adults having a strong sense of belonging.
- Collective worship is inclusive, provokes thought and action, and is a major contributor to spiritual flourishing.
- The vision prompts staff and pupils, including vulnerable pupils and those with additional learning needs, to value and develop resilience.

Development Points

- School and trust leaders have not ensured that the provision, profile, and priority of religious education (RE) result in an effective curriculum. Therefore, they must secure sufficient time in the curriculum for RE. In addition, they must ensure that all Key Stage 4 pupils follow a suitable accredited course in RE or religious studies. This is to raise the profile, provision and effectiveness of the subject.
- Establish and implement a working definition of spirituality so that pupils can deepen their understanding of spiritual development across the curriculum.
- Ensure that leaders systematically monitor and evaluate the impact of the vision and the school’s Christian distinctiveness. This is to confirm that their actions and plans are having the desired impact and lead to further flourishing.



Inspection Findings

Ludlow Church of England School is a cohesive community where pupils and adults are determined to give of their best. Their unity of purpose is inspired by the way St Paul nurtured the Corinthian Church. The Christian vision's Bible verse exemplifies this. Leaders are aware of how pressures in life today can be divisive. Consequently, the vision's associated values are crucial not only for pupils' time in school but also beyond it. Pupils and adults know that pursuing excellence is not always easy and so they need resilience. Leaders prioritise praise to emphasise where things are going well. They also talk about 'even better if' to show how perseverance leads to further improvement. This is empowering for pupils and adults. Both the diocese and the trust offer invaluable support in deepening its understanding of what it means to be a Church school. A number of staff have benefitted from local and national Church of England professional development courses. Leaders have some awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development in relation to the vision. However, systematic monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the vision is not sufficiently rigorous to secure continual improvement.

The breadth of the curriculum offer is a tangible impact of the vision. Leaders are determined that pupils should discover and nurture their talents. Dance and drama, for instance, are taught to all and quality productions are a hallmark of the school. Many students, including those who are vulnerable and/or disadvantaged, thrive socially through taking part in these. Leaders are aware that outcomes for students should be higher. Staff are following best practice advice to improve their teaching. Regular recall and by responding to feedback in assessments is helping pupils are helped to practise resilience. Staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are clearly identified at the start of their schooling. They also communicate and regularly review their needs with other teachers and parents and carers. Pupils who are vulnerable seize opportunities to extend their learning in the school garden. They turn their produce into soup as a mini-enterprise. Pupils are developing self-esteem through succeeding in these practical activities. Staff and pupils can identify elements of spirituality. They understand the interdependence of all living things. There is, however, no common language that enables them to engage deeply in spiritual development across the curriculum.

Daily collective worship is engaging and inclusive. For those who prepare the very detailed plans, it is a labour of love. Pupils and adults are flourishing spiritually through these efforts. The Bible is used effectively to exemplify themes in worship. Interpretation and space for reflection help pupils to understand its relevance today. The school prayer, used daily, reinforces how prayer can be a force for living out the vision and associated values. Each act of worship also involves a challenge for participants to put some aspect into daily living. The parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the Bible passages linked to the values. Pupils have animated discussions on the implications of 'go and do likewise'. There is a strong partnership with the parish church. The building itself provokes awe in pupils. They are also moved by inspiring school services there, such as at Christmas. The local church provides strong role models for Christian living. Pupils are effective leaders of engaging tutor group worship and therefore support the development of the spiritual life of the school.

The vision engenders mutual respect, care and sense of inclusivity. The vertical tutor groups provide opportunities for pupils to learn from and to care for each other. One classroom acts as a safe space for pupils of all backgrounds to meet together. This is appropriately called the 'rainbow room'. Pupils exhibiting the values earn reward points and are proud of how they are developing in character. When things go wrong, there is a clear process followed. The values are used effectively to promote reflection, restitution and reconciliation. Positive mental health for



pupils and adults is a priority for leaders. This is an aspect of the excellence at the heart of the vision. Early intervention and support are factors that assist wellbeing.

Leaders, inspired by the vision's emphasis on compassionate care, are helping pupils to move towards taking more responsibility for others. They are building on the tradition of each House choosing its own charity for the year. They encourage pupils to investigate more deeply the issues of justice that lie behind this process. Pupils respond readily, developing a greater sense of empathy. They cite examples from English, Humanities and personal development sessions where their thinking has been positively challenged. Collective worship includes a weekly pledge, often connected to making a difference through action. Pupils record and review progress on these pledges. Partnerships, such as the local police and further education college, help pupils to be more confident in standing up for what is right. The trust has a vision of respecting human dignity across the wider community. This is assisting school leaders in their understanding of the unity at the heart of their Christian vision.

In a number of aspects, leaders have not made certain that the expectations for RE in a Church school have been met. The curriculum time allocated to RE at Key Stage 3 and non-GCSE classes is insufficient. The impact of this is that the curriculum is not adequate in its range, depth and balance. In addition, non-GCSE pupils do not follow an accredited course in RE or religious studies. This limits their opportunities to go deeply enough into foundational religious beliefs. The new leadership team, and the trust, are aware of these issues and have plans in place with the intention of addressing them. Within the limited time for Key Stage 3 RE, leaders carefully select the curriculum topics. Elements of Christianity, other faiths and worldviews are explored, enabling pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding. In Key Stage 4, there are opportunities in the RE curriculum to engage in debates. Because the environment for this is safe, pupils feel confident in discussing thought-provoking issues. Times for reflection contribute well to learners' spiritual development. The diocese provides valuable professional development for specialist and non-specialist staff alike. This enables teachers to be confident in their approach to RE.

Information

Address	Bromfield Road, Burway, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1GJ		
Date	11 March 2025	URN	144435
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	634
Diocese	Hereford		
MAT	Diocese of Hereford Multi-Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Mark Burton		
CEO and Chair of Local Academy Board	Andrew Teale		
Inspector	Simon Stevens		