



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Donnington Wood Church of England VC Junior School	
Address	Leonards Close, Winifreds Drive, Donnington, Telford, TF2 8BH

School vision

Our school is a community where each person is valued as a child of God. We are a Church of England school, inspired and guided by the life and teaching of Jesus. We work together to create a caring, friendly and safe school family, to enable the whole school community to flourish and each person reach their full God-given potential.

Our Motto

‘The ones who plant and the ones who water work together as a team with the same purpose.’
1 Corinthians 3:8 We believe that with God’s help when we all work as a TEAM - Together Everyone Achieves More.

School strengths

- The Christian vision is made real through the core values of hope, friendship and perseverance. These have a profound and positive impact on how pupils and adults flourish in their personal growth.
- Care for more vulnerable pupils and their families is exemplary and inspired by Christian teachings. The school is a safe haven for those who face challenges in their lives and learning.
- The curriculum is creative and inspiring. As a result, pupils grow in hope and aspire to a bright future.
- Relationships across the school are warm and trusting. The Christian vision and values are a lived reality so that behaviour is excellent. New pupils are readily integrated and part of the extended family that is Donnington.
- Religious education (RE) is an important subject and given prominence on the timetable. It gives pupils a window onto the diverse nature of modern society.

Areas for development

- Leaders, including governors, to evaluate the impact of the Christian vision so their findings explicitly inform the ongoing development of this Church school.
- Review the provision for collective worship, in particular time for class worship. This is to ensure that classes have a consistent experience and that worship has a greater impact on spiritual flourishing.
- Leaders to develop a shared understanding and language around spirituality so that staff plan for spiritual development with more confidence.

Inspection findings

Donnington Wood is a place of calm and purpose. Staff and pupils work as a close knit team,

growing together in confidence and self-belief. This is because of the vision, based on Christian teaching, that focuses on personal growth. The school is the 'good soil' and its 'produce' is high levels of engagement with learning. Governors offer specialist support to meet the needs of the community and take ethical decisions to support learners. For example, ensuring sufficient staff for pupils with additional needs, such as those with English as an additional language. Their wisdom and expertise complement those of leaders and are invaluable in moving the school forward as a learning community. Leaders consider and reflect on the Christian vision and values. However, leaders and governors do not explicitly include this in their programme for monitoring and evaluation.

A striking aspect of this school is the way it engages with its families. Provision of technology and the system 'Seesaw' help learning at home as well as in school. It also encourages parents to know what their children are studying. Parent survey results affirm that the school works well with families.

The safety and welfare of each individual are of paramount importance. Leaders and staff are tenacious in their mission to ensure pupils are safe, secure and so able to learn. The inclusion team supports colleagues to identify when a pupil may require additional support. This team effectively nurtures staff to treasure each pupil. 'What a child needs, we do' is a comment echoed by leaders, teaching and support staff. The success of this is evident in the improved figures for attendance and strong work ethic seen in classes. Pupils thirst to learn. As pupils comment on the vision, 'we are the seeds, so we flourish.' Staff confirm this view in describing themselves as 'gardeners'.

Such care for each precious individual extends to adults. Leaders are approachable and caring so staff are confident to seek help, whether personal or professional. Adults are treated well. Governors are mindful of work-life balance and work to safeguard this, especially for senior leaders. Staff are actively encouraged to pursue their own interests. There is a positive culture of ongoing professional development. As a result, staff often move into more senior posts within the school and in other schools. This is because the Christian vision of growth is fully embraced and followed. Relationships between adults and pupils are trusting and characterised by compassion. As a leader commented, 'we are not afraid to love'. Staff are consistent positive role models for learners and for each other.

The core Christian values of hope, friendship and perseverance underpin the curriculum. These are firmly rooted in examples from the Bible. Consequently, subjects and lessons are planned to deliver those values. The range of extra-curricular clubs and curriculum enrichment activities play a key part in raising pupils' aspirations. They confidently articulate their desire for a bright future. Staff rightly state their belief that there is more to life than timetabled lessons. This reflects their sensitive awareness of the adverse experiences that pupils may have beyond the school day. There are opportunities in lessons for moments of reflection and to note wonder. The policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development links spiritual growth to a practice called 'windows, mirrors, doors'. This is not fully embedded. There is a lack of a shared understanding of what spirituality means at Donnington and consequently this inhibits spiritual growth.

Intrinsic to the curriculum, and reflecting the value of friendship, pupils are keenly aware of social injustice. They have the confidence to express their views and are vocal in raising concerns with adults. Pupils have a voice and adults listen, taking on board and acting on pupils' concerns. In this way, pupils do what they can to alleviate some of the pressing issues in the local area, such as food poverty. They also articulate a developing sense of personal responsibility, which is part of their social conscience, 'I can water myself so I too grow.'

Religious education (RE) supports this sense of cultural awareness. The subject helps pupils understand their place in our diverse and multi-cultural world. In their study of Christianity and a range of faiths, pupils gain a foundation in knowledge. They are enquiring and respectful in their

response to themes studied. The RE curriculum has a prominent place on the weekly timetable. This demonstrates leaders' commitment to an important aspect in the life of this Church school. Leadership of RE is highly experienced and provides generous support to colleagues. Pupil responses and work in their curriculum books show they acquire a basic knowledge of the concepts of world religions. It is also noteworthy that the school actively supports the development of RE in the diocese.

Collective worship is key to flourishing and the sense of belonging, both of which are at the heart of the Christian vision. Gathering together to learn, to explore and to reflect has a positive impact on the lives of adults and pupils. Staff rightly talk of how their personal connection with faith has deepened as a result of attending collective worship. Whole school worship is well-planned and firmly rooted in Bible teaching. Consequently, pupils encounter a range of teaching from the Old and New Testaments. Worshippers offer feedback and staff address this. For example, including more regular drama activities to encourage pupil involvement with the telling of Bible stories. The school marks key Christian festivals and is fortunate in having the support of the local church. Visits to St Matthew's enrich pupils' understanding of Christianity and the traditions of worship in the Church of England. Time for prayer shapes the school day as pupils are invited to reflect or pray in worship, before lunch and at the end of the day. These times to pause, and reflect or pray matter. Pupils value them and appreciate the few minutes offered to be still and to ponder. Class worship takes place in most classes twice weekly. However, despite comprehensive resources to guide staff, worship is sometimes missed. There are also occasions where pupils are withdrawn from worship to receive additional support with learning. This limits their spiritual flourishing.

The inspection findings indicate that Donnington Wood Church of England Junior School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	10 January 2024	URN	123473
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	226
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Robert Fox		
Chair	Lynne McGuire		
Inspector	Allyson Taylor	No.	768