

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Levens Church of England (VC) Primary School	
Address	Church Road, Levens, Cumbria, LA8 8PU

School vision

Loving to learn, growing together, caring for all

‘Let your roots grow down to him and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth that you were taught and you will overflow with thankfulness’

Colossians 2:7

School strengths

- Ambitious leaders, including governors, know the school well through their effective monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Christian vision. This drives clear direction and improvement, enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- Through the vision of ‘caring for all’, pupils, staff, parents and carers are valued as unique and special individuals. Consequently, a loving culture is evident in which they live well together. This is underpinned by nurturing relationships, high quality mental health provision and active systems to support positive wellbeing.
- Through ‘loving to learn’, the vision drives an inclusive approach to the curriculum, supporting pupils to thrive on their learning journeys. Staff engage with extensive training opportunities, to further develop its impact on the curriculum, enhancing pupils’ learning experiences.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum enables pupils to develop respect and celebrate diversity. This is lived out in caring relationships throughout school.
- Collective worship is a valued time for the school community to reflect on the vision and how it can be lived into being. Impactful partnerships with the local church and wider organisations enhance the breadth and depth of worship and opportunities for spiritual flourishing.

Areas for development

- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality, through planned and progressive experiences in the curriculum and in worship. This is to enrich the way that pupils and adults have opportunities to flourish spiritually.
- Deepen pupils’ knowledge and understanding in RE, through embedding different ways of learning including, believing, thinking and living into the curriculum.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to challenge injustice within the curriculum, to enable them to be active agents of change.

Inspection findings

Levens is a school at the heart of its community. The Christian vision is rooted in the Bible and represented by the school sycamore tree. This visual representation of the vision further supports adults and pupils to understand the way in which it is rooted in the Christian story. It unites the community to flourish through a 'love of learning, growing together and caring for all'. The vision has been shaped, and is regularly reviewed, to respond to the context of the school and its setting. This supports pupils, staff, parents and carers to actively live out the vision in their daily lives. Leaders place the vision at the centre of their planned school development. Alongside robust monitoring and evaluation, this strategic implementation of the vision improves the effectiveness of Levens as a Church school.

The vision underpins an inclusive curriculum. Consequently, pupils are empowered to achieve their potential through their development of a love of learning, confidence and a 'can do' attitude. A focus on big questions and curriculum connections allows pupils to build on prior learning. This is supported by a wide range of opportunities for creativity and enrichment. Exploration of art, music and environmental studies enables pupils to thrive in their learning. Staff engage with high quality professional development, through local learning partnerships and educational research, to further enhance curriculum impact. Aspects of spirituality are starting to be recognised within some subjects such as art and geography and wider enrichment opportunities. However, the whole school approach to spirituality is at an early stage of development. Experiences are not explicitly planned across the curriculum. This limits the way in which the curriculum enables pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. The school is actively aware of this and is proactively seeking further training and support.

Collective worship is shaped by the Christian vision. It unites members of the local and school community to reflect on how they can learn, grow and care together. Pupils and staff have space to develop their spirituality. This is supported through music, the lighting of a candle and singing the 'welcome blessing', to mark this shared time. Planned moments are provided to enable pupils and adults to reflect on words of encouragement from the Bible. Some pupils speak about the special feeling that worship provides and the sense that 'God is always there for you'. They learn about prayer and access this in a way that is meaningful to them. Collaborative planning with the local church enables the sharing of Bible stories in an inclusive way, through drama and wider creative activities. Through these partnerships, staff are growing in confidence to plan and lead worship. Pupils and adults express the positive impact that worship has on their spiritual journey. It allows them time to 'reflect on their inner self'. Adults particularly enjoy worship in church and the celebration of the seasons of the Church year. Staff, parents and carers enjoy reflecting upon the message of worship at home with their families. Opportunities for wider spiritual development are enabled through pupils engaging with reflection spaces in school. However, there is currently not a shared understanding of spirituality as a school community. This limits the way that pupils and adults can express the impact of worship on their spiritual development.

The vision of 'growing together and caring for all' is successfully embedded through positive relationships. Members of the school community are known and valued as individuals and fully supported to grow in their development. This enables a safe, happy and nurturing learning environment. The school works in beneficial partnership with a wide range of organisations. This deepens the impact of personal development, wider mental health and wellbeing provision, enabling pupils to flourish. Staff undertake training to strengthen their understanding of areas such as trauma. This extends the positive impact of wider interventions on pupils. The vision guides the way that leaders prioritise staff wellbeing. Their supportive and carefully considered strategies are highly valued by colleagues, enabling personal and professional flourishing. Parents and carers appreciate bespoke provision from the school for their child and for their personal wellbeing.

The Christian vision actively encourages all members of the community to care for each other and grow together, within an equitable culture. Pupils and adults are beginning to develop an understanding of the negative impact of injustice and how they can actively challenge this. There is a focus on the protection of the local environment, working with rangers in the Lake District National Park. Pupils learn about the key issues of global deforestation, which empowers them to be champions for climate injustice. The school actively engages with national charities to support those who are considered vulnerable. This supports pupils deemed disadvantaged to thrive through the removal of barriers to learning.

The RE curriculum is valued as a core subject in school with a prominent place on the weekly timetable. A passionate and knowledgeable subject leadership ensures the curriculum is planned and well-resourced. The subject leader works in partnership with governors to regularly monitor the quality and impact of the curriculum. This helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and the wider world. The curriculum is well-sequenced, to enable pupils to develop their subject knowledge. Opportunities to reflect on prior knowledge and to make curriculum connections with other subjects are built into planning. However, the different ways of learning about religions and worldviews through believing, thinking and living, are not yet embedded into the curriculum plan. Pupils are therefore not able to deepen their knowledge of a range of global views and beliefs. Carefully planned multi-faith weeks and enrichment visits, support the development of acceptance, respect and a celebration of diversity.

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

Information

School	Levens Church of England VC Primary School	Inspection date	28 June 2024	
URN	112262	VA/VC/Academy	VC	
Diocese	Carlisle	Pupils on roll	101	
MAT/Federation				
Headteacher	Jane Farraday			
Chair	Suzan Bishop			
Inspector	Katherine Humpleby		No.	C.23/24