Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Little Thetford VC Church of England Primary School	
Address	Green Hill, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambs, CB6 3HD

School vision

School motto 'let your light shine before others.'
Vision- Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before others." (Matthew Chapter 5:16)
'We believe that every member of our school community can reflect, be creative and flourish, shining as a light in the world.'

School strengths

- The influence of the Christian vision and values is evident in the life of the school. They drive decision making, policy and practice so that the school community can 'be creative and flourish.'
- In line with the vision, the curriculum enables pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or those who are vulnerable, to thrive as learners and 'let their light shine.'
- Partnerships with the church, the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust (DEMAT) and the wider community are a strength. They support the school to live out its vision.
- Relationships within the school community are strong, creating a culture of mutual support where adults and pupils are treated well.
- Collective worship is an important part of the day. Adults and pupils value the opportunity to come together as part of the school community. It is effectively used to promote the vision and values, encouraging pupils to live them out in their daily lives.

Areas for development

- Develop in-school systems for monitoring and evaluating the Christian Vision. This is so that leaders can identify and celebrate its impact, and continually develop Little Thetford as a Church school.
- Create a shared understanding of what spiritual development means at Little Thetford, enabling pupils and adults to talk about their own and others' spirituality. This will allow opportunities to be identified and planned for across the curriculum, including in collective worship.
- Implement the new Religious Education (RE) curriculum to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of religions, non-religious beliefs and worldviews.

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Inspection findings

Little Thetford is a 'tight-knit,' welcoming village school, which plays an important part in the life of the community. Its Christian vision and associated values permeate school life. The message of the vision encourages pupils and adults to 'let their light shine.' It prompts them to make a difference and be a light to others in their homes, school, community and wider world. The five values of Love, Integrity, Generosity, Harmony and Tolerance act as a vehicle through which the vision is lived out. Pupils recognise that the shared values 'bring them together as a school family.' The school vision aligns with that of the trust which is ''I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' (Philippians 4:13). This enhances the school's work and aspirations by providing pupils with additional opportunities to shine 'beyond the walls of the school'. Although the impact of the Christian vision is reviewed by the trust, monitoring systems are not in place at a school level. As a result, its effectiveness in promoting adults and pupils' flourishing is not evaluated and celebrated. Also, the next steps in the school's development as a church school are not identified.

The school has implemented a 'knowledge-rich curriculum,' driven by the trust so that pupils can shine as learners and demonstrate their individual talents. Being part of the larger DEMAT community provides additional opportunities for them to share their creativity. For example, by joining with other trust schools to showcase their artwork, pupils demonstrate their talents to a wider audience. Staff know pupils well. As a result, support is quickly put in place to overcome barriers to learning. Adaptations and individualised strategies make a difference, enabling pupils, including those with SEND and those who are vulnerable, to flourish. Staff work closely with their families, providing practical support to improve outcomes for pupils. Some opportunities for spiritual development are in place. For example, reflection areas in classrooms offer spaces for moments of quiet and calm. Although pupils can describe their purpose, they do not explicitly share why they use them, or their impact. Pupils and adults explain what spirituality represents to them personally. However, there is not a shared understanding of what it means at Little Thetford. As a result, spiritual development is not consistently planned for and so opportunities for it can be missed.

Collective worship is an important time in the day when the school community comes together. It is planned around the Christian calendar. The vision and five values are promoted through examples from Bible stories. Pupils and adults then reflect on how they can live them out in their own lives. Pupils actively engage with collective worship through drama, story-telling and singing. They become immersed in what they see and hear. As a result, pupils internalise important messages to support and influence their future choices. Although collective worship inspires pupils, its impact on adults is less evident. Through the trust, the school unites with others to worship together. For example, attending a Christmas service at Ely Cathedral. This creates a sense of togetherness with a wider, diverse community. During celebration worship, pupils are recognised for the ways in which they live out the vision and shine their light both inside and outside of school. This encourages them to be and do their best. The partnership with the church enriches the worship life of the school. Times when pupils and adults attend services in church and when members of the church lead worship in school are special to them. This valued partnership extends beyond collective worship. Church members support school events and the school community are invited to attend services such as Messy Church. This strengthens the relationship, resulting in further opportunities for the vision and values such as love and generosity to be lived out.

The culture of care and support is strong. Pupils and adults are known and mutually supported as important members of their school. Mental health is a recognised as a priority. Staff speak confidently about the

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provision that is available to them. For example, through the role of mental health first aiders. Staff describe Little Thetford as an 'extended family' where they are welcomed and valued. This enables meaningful connections between pupils and adults to develop which 'builds trust' and promotes wellbeing. These relationships, which extend beyond the school into the village community, are valued. For example, parents recognise how younger pupils are supported by older pupils when outside of school. This helps them to thrive.

The Christian vision prompts pupils and adults to think about how they can shine their light into the wider world and help others. This supports an understanding of responsibility and justice. Pupils confidently express how this links with how they live out the values. They show tolerance and love by 'treating others how they would want to be treated.' Through the curriculum, pupils develop an awareness of what is right and fair. This inspires them to act and raise money outside of school. Charity days within the school provide opportunities to support causes that are important to them. Charities are carefully chosen in response to needs within the school or village so they are meaningful. Working with the diocese, for example engaging with the Bishop's Lent Challenge, extends the opportunity for pupils to be agents of change. They are keen to make a difference. However, there are few opportunities for them to take the initiative and lead on projects other than fundraising.

RE is valued as a subject which promotes equality and respect and celebrates diversity. As a result, pupils are equipped to respectfully engage with the beliefs of others. They enjoy learning about Christianity and are able to share their knowledge. However, they are less confident when talking about a wider range of world religions, non-religious beliefs and worldviews. Big questions such as 'What is God's kingdom all about and what is it like today?' allow pupils to make links between their RE learning and the school values. For example, they explain that God's kingdom is about love, thinking about others and being kind. The trust monitors the impact of RE provision. This informs professional development so that staff keep up to date with their skills and knowledge. Knowledge organisers for each unit of work outline new information and vocabulary for pupils, as well as building on what they have learnt before. However, their knowledge and understanding of world religions, non-religious beliefs and worldviews is less well developed.

The inspection findings indicate that Little Thetford Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundations as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	25 June 2024	URN	149958
VA/VC/Academy	VC	Pupils on roll	96
Diocese	Ely Diocese		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust (DEMAT)		
Headteacher	Sarah Durrant		
Chair	Mick Bispham		
Inspector	Rebecca Bright	No.	c.23/24

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