

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Oulton First School

#### Vision

Hand in hand at Oulton, we strive to follow Jesus' example offering friendship and forgiveness through a trusting and welcoming community where all are loved and valued as children of God. We are thankful for the exciting and vibrant curriculum which enables everyone to flourish and achieve their God given potential. (Inspired by the Bible story The Good Samaritan.)

Oulton First School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Strengths

- The Christian vision is expressed through carefully selected and inclusive values which are widely known. The vision supports decision making and actions. As a result of this, pupils and adults flourish.
- Strong relationships are rooted in Christian love. The parable of the good Samaritan acts as the vehicle in which the examples of love and care are set. Throughout the school, people work together effectively. As a result, adults and pupils thrive.
- The worship life of the school is invitational and inspirational. Pupils and adults alike value the time to come together to pray and praise. Daily worship aids pupils' learning, spiritual and personal development.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum provides significant opportunities for pupils to become knowledgeable about a breadth of non-religious world views and faiths. Visits to places of worship and visitors to the school enhance provision and deepen pupil knowledge.
- Effective partnerships, including with the church, are strong and support the school to live out its vision. The result is a school which holds a valued position in its community.

#### Development Points

- Develop a whole school shared approach to spirituality. This is to ensure pupils are able to define and articulate what spirituality is like for them at Oulton. Further, to support staff in deepening opportunities for spirituality across the curriculum.
- Develop systems to ensure that leaders know that the provision of religious education in class is effective and of a consistent high quality. This will enable the sharing of good practice and provide support for the less experienced members of the team.



## Inspection Findings

As a result of living out the Christian vision, Oulton Church of England First School stands as a beacon of love and care. Its Christian values are carefully woven into the fabric of the school. The clear sense of an established Christian community provides a strong foundation. The parable of the Good Samaritan acts as the golden thread through the school. It affords pupils and adults the opportunity to understand the values of friendship, forgiveness, trust, thankfulness and community. A sense of belonging permeates the school. Pupils and adults are rightly proud to be members of Oulton First School. Parents hold the school in high regard. Whether through family support, specific interventions or inclusive approaches, parents talk lovingly about their experiences. Dedicated governors are regular visitors. Through their robust monitoring and evaluation, they have an accurate picture of strengths and areas for development. The effective support of the multi academy trust (MAT) provides advice, guidance and development opportunities. The school community gains much from this effective partnership. Highly supportive and trusting relationships bind this small school together.

A vibrant curriculum provides pupils with a breadth of experiences. The school acknowledges the importance of developing the whole child and nurturing their God given gifts. Staff know pupils well and, as a result, support is highly effective. Where needed, adaptations are made to the curriculum resulting in pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities flourishing. Link governors visit the school often. They are well matched to subjects and very aware of developments within them. They are welcomed as valued members of the school community who are supportive and caring. Enrichment opportunities enhance the curricular offer and enable pupils to fulfill their potential. A range of clubs include: gardening, choir, yoga, dance, football and martial arts. The Christian value of koinonia, binds the school together. Rich opportunities for pupil action are planned by the school. Whether singing with a community choir, supporting the local Alzheimers group or donating to the local foodbank, pupils are involved. Such actions illustrate the spiritual content of the curriculum by showing compassion and reaching out to others. The school's inclusive nature creates a sense of belonging. 'We're like one big family here', is a recurring theme.

Collective Worship is a strength at Oulton First School. It is an integral part of the school day. A range of worship styles provides a balance of experiences for pupils and adults. Music and song are valued features of worship. Pupils understand the place music and prayer play in connecting with God. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to lead worship which results in the deepening of engagement and spiritual flourishing. Members of the church community play an active role in the school. 'Open the Book' launches the theme for weekly worship. Led by church volunteers, pupils enjoy stories from the Bible and time for reflection. Through this, pupils explore the themes and appreciate the visitors who enrich these special times. Worship is an outworking of the vision and has a strong impact on spiritual flourishing. Leaders ensure that it is relevant, inspirational, invitational and inclusive. Worship areas in class are a focal point which are used for prayer, reflection and class worship. Reflection areas around the school provide opportunities for stillness and spiritual moments. Prayer forms a valued and natural part of the rhythm of worship. There is a keenness to lead prayer in worship because pupils believe it grows a praying community and this develops them spiritually. Pupils know a variety of stories from the Bible and can talk about their meanings and how they affect them. 'Trekks Club' provides additional church outreach, enabling pupils to explore biblical themes and messages through debate, arts and craft.

The school's approach to justice and responsibility is underpinned by the parable of the Good Samaritan. Pupils understand the importance of loving their neighbour and act accordingly. Whether it is supporting a pupil seeking a



friend on the 'buddy bench' or fundraising, pupils take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils are keen to protect God's world. The creation of bird and animal homes for the school grounds illustrates their care and compassion. Their understanding of courageous advocacy or being a change maker is strong. Siting world figures who have been effective advocates for change, pupils recognise that they too could be a future change maker. Such recognition has spurred them on to act outside the school. A charitable bake sale enabled pupils to donate funds to two causes important to them. However, pupils' understanding of global injustice and their knowledge of inequality in the wider world is less well developed.

RE is well structured, sequenced and diverse. It is planned with care, accounting for the needs and context of the school so that pupils make progress. Creative approaches to learning are employed. Technology is embraced which impacts on success. Pupils enjoy the coverage and variety within RE. Appropriate resources shape and support the delivery of RE. Further, the school provides creative opportunities to learn about non-religious beliefs, worldviews and world faiths. These opportunities prepare pupils for the diverse world in which they live. Visits to a range of places of worship and special visitors enhance RE. Pupils talk with passion about their experiences. Governors' awareness of RE content is enabled through book trawls, pupil voice and subject leader discussions. These actions enable Governors to keep track of how initiatives are progressing. Leaders have benefitted from training and development from the diocese. Leaders ensure that RE is of a consistent high quality through monitoring pupil books. However, monitoring of other aspects is less well developed.

The parable of the Good Samaritan steers the ways in which people are treated and valued. School and MAT leaders are known and respected. Staff value their support since it is evident that they care. Parents talk of the compassion shown to their children and families. One parent referred to the personal care shown by a member of staff following a time of great challenge. Such actions illustrate the Christian love shown to others. The school's restorative approaches have led to pupils having a deep understanding of forgiveness. They handle conflict in a mature way seeking resolution and peace. Leaders recognise that the flourishing of adults is key in securing success for pupils. As a result, staff feel valued and appreciated. Where needed, a range of strategies and initiatives support the mental health of adults and pupils. The MAT's innovative approaches to well-being are welcomed by staff. Providing wellbeing sessions strengthens resilience and passion for the workplace. Throughout the school, friendship, trust and community enable staff to feel confident in their roles. As a consequence of which staff and pupils flourish at Oulton First School.

## Information

Address	Rock Crescent, Oulton, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 8UH		
Date	26 November 2024	URN	142439
Type of school	First School	No. of pupils	79
Diocese	Lichfield		
MAT/Federation	Key Educational Trust		
Headteacher	Amy Graham		
Chair of Governors	Craig Wass		
Inspector	Shaun Miles		