

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Bapchild and Tonge Church of England Primary School and Nursery

Vision

Our vision at Bapchild and Tonge CE Primary School is rooted in John 15:1-17 Jesus as the Vine.

Within nourishing soil of prayer and worship our school and church together provide space, opportunity and support to root, grow, connect and bear fruit; expanding understanding of the world, fostering good relationships, exploring individual's gifts, and deepening resilience of character.

Bapchild and Tonge Church of England Primary 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 vision is known and understood by pupils, staff and governors. It is a lived reality through the school community. This means that pupils and staff are able to root, grow and bear fruit.
- A focus on enabling pupils to become the best version of themselves inspires a rich curriculum. The wide variety of trips, visits and clubs enhance the curriculum offer. This enables pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop academically, socially and culturally.
- Collective worship is an intrinsic part of the school day, engaging pupils, staff and families. Moments of reflection, as well as the planned 'Lectio Divina' and Godly Play, support the spiritual growth of pupils and staff. The close links with the local church, supports the school community, fostering spiritual development.
- The school vision has been instrumental in building a culture where pupils and adults feel included, supported and are treated well. This creates a caring community where high value is placed on strong relationships and the worth of individuals.
- Religious education (RE) is effectively led so that staff are confident and knowledgeable. With support from the Diocese a curriculum has been devised that meets the needs of pupils. As a result, pupils are engaged and enjoy learning in RE.

Development Points

- Enable planning for spiritual development to be incorporated regularly across the curriculum. In this way pupils will have wider opportunities to explore and articulate their spiritual understanding.
- Sustain the current work of the school in pupil voice and decision making. This is so that they independently have a deeper understanding of social injustice and action to address this.



Inspection Findings

The vision is a lived reality fostering a strong sense of belonging for pupils and staff. It underpins the work of school leaders, including governors, and is faithful to the Anglican foundation of the school. Staff use the vision and associated Bible stories to inspire them to root, grow and bear fruit. There is a close and mutually beneficial relationship with the parish church. This partnership enables a nurturing connection between school, home and church uniting them as a community. The school works in collaboration with the Swale cluster of schools to further school improvement. Bapchild and Tonge has also supported others practically. For example, offering classroom space to another local school following a fire. Governors know the school well and offer significant levels of support and challenge to school leaders. In this way they understand the impact of the vision on the life of the school.

Inspired by the vision the school has devised a rich curriculum. The use of enquiry-based learning tasks engages and challenges pupils. In this way they are becoming resilient, independent and inquisitive learners. Together with a wide range of extracurricular activities and visits pupils are enthused to develop their individual gifts. For example, a visit to the Tate Modern led to a whole school arts week on textiles. A study on rivers involving field work, provided memorable learning experiences and deepened understanding. Unplanned opportunities for spiritual development abound in and outside the classroom. Activities within the school day allow for times of awe and wonder. This has enabled them to gain an understanding of who they are and their connection to others. Effective, structured support for pupils with SEND is in place. As a result, pupils are able to root, grow and flourish.

Collective worship is an important and special time of the school day. It is well planned and organised. Ideas are presented in an accessible, inclusive and meaningful way. This enables pupils to reflect on Bible themes or school values and how they influence their lives. There are many opportunities for pupils and staff to participate enhancing their enthusiasm for worship. Pupils enjoy taking an active role during collective worship, including 'the Grace' being led and acted out by Year 6 pupils. The 'fellowship of friends' help plan and lead whole school services and worship. This allows them to grow in self-confidence and feel respected. Singing by both staff and pupils unites the school community in a sense of joy. Times of deep reflection, through 'Lectio Divina', as well as moments of stillness, support pupils growing spirituality. This inspires pupils and staff to reflect on the words and embrace love and kindness in their daily interactions. Family worship has a positive impact on staff, pupils and parents' spiritual and personal development, strengthening connections within the community. The weekly celebration worship allows pupils to recognise how their work and effort is bearing fruit. At the same time the diverse gifts of pupils beyond the school are acknowledged allowing pupils to grow in esteem. A time of prayer for staff at the start of the week is led by the chaplain. It creates a moment of quiet and helps prepare staff for the week ahead. Reflection areas and prayer books are given importance in every classroom and are well used by pupils to share worries and give thanks to God. Pupils have opportunities to read their own prayers during collective worship. Their prayers are also read at the start of governors' meetings. This leads to pupils' feeling valued and fosters a sense of spiritual flourishing.

Underpinned by the vision the school has a deep understanding of the needs of pupils and families. This forms the 'roots' of good relationships and support, where high value is placed on the individual. The wellbeing leader is part of the leadership team, demonstrating how pupil welfare is central to academic progress and flourishing. Staff in the school know they are supported and valued. Leaders prioritise staff professional development. This enables them to deepen subject knowledge, develop practice further and progress in their career. Therapeutic interventions including emotional literacy support and mental health first aiders lead to vulnerable pupils feeling



safe and nurtured. Pupils effectively manage their feelings and emotions through the use of the 'zones of regulation'. This contributes to a calm atmosphere in class and across the school.

An understanding of the vision enables pupils and staff to grow and work together. In this way they develop a strong sense of care for one another. There are many opportunities for pupils to lead and take on additional responsibilities. They take pride in their roles to support the school and others impacting positively on pupils' lives. For example, pupils raise concerns about different issues, such as mental health and antibullying through worship or school campaigns. The school council and 'inclusion action group' help adults choose charities to support. Pupils readily recognise that the work that they do in this way makes a difference to others, especially those in need. However, there are more limited opportunities for pupils to independently embrace social action.

RE is given high priority in the school and is led effectively. Through the big questions at the beginning of the topic pupils demonstrate an interest in RE and are curious to know more. Training from the Diocese is disseminated to staff. This has led to improved staff confidence and secure subject knowledge, especially for those new to the profession. Explicit teaching of vocabulary enables pupils to confidently express their knowledge and understanding of RE. Visits to local churches, Canterbury Cathedral and other places of worship are an integral part of the curriculum. This has furthered pupils' interest and enjoyment of RE. Special weeks celebrate and recognise other global faiths, worldviews and cultures. As a result, pupils across the school have a deeper understanding of Christianity and an increased awareness of other world religions and worldviews.

RE is taught creatively and inclusively leading to pupils working to a high standard. For example, the use of 'Diddy Disciples' with the younger pupils ensures that they are engaged and knowledgeable about Bible stories. Where high quality teaching is identified, teachers are champions for the subject which inspires and supports other teachers. RE learning time is used well to challenge the pupils to explore concepts in depth. Pupils find the subject interesting and challenging because they can debate complex issues such as the Trinity. Teachers use assessment well to adapt teaching, consolidate learning or address misconceptions. This helps pupils to deepen understanding from previous learning. Attainment and progress is tracked across the school, including groups of pupils such as pupils with SEND. This information is used to identify gaps and plan for future learning. As a result, pupils make good progress, regardless of their starting points.

Information Bapchild and Tonge Primary School and Nursery

Address	School Lane, Bapchild, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 9NL		
Date	11 December 2024	URN	118730
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	250
Diocese	Canterbury		
Headteacher	Christian Kelly		
Chair of Governors	Susannah Butcher		
Inspector	Anne-Marie Bahlol		