

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

<b>St Aldhelm's Church School</b>	
<b>Address</b>	Chelynch Park, Douling, Shepton Mallet, BA4 4PL

### School vision

‘Learning together for life in all its fullness.’ (John 10: 10)

At St Aldhelm's, we seek to help all our children achieve their full potential. We aim to instil a love of learning and encourage children to value themselves and each other as unique individuals. Christian values underpin our daily life in school in an atmosphere that is safe and welcoming, where children learn to be reflective and considerate to others. We work together so that all our children are the best that they can be.

### School strengths

- Strong and effective school leadership, based on a relevant Christian vision, has an impact on everyone's lives.
- A wide range of strong partnerships means that the vision effectively impacts the life of those within and beyond the school.
- Pastoral care and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. This has a particular impact on pupils flourishing academically and spiritually.
- The vision of ‘life in all its fullness’ inspires creativity through art. This contributes extensively to an overview of spirituality.
- Collective worship is well planned and executed, with the support of an ethos committee. The impact of worship is seen in the lives and actions of pupils and staff.

### Areas for development

- Strengthen the link between the values and the vision as their source, through collective worship and the curriculum. Consequently, pupils will be able to understand that the vision pervades all areas of life.
- Extend work on spirituality, by developing rich opportunities for promoting spiritual development in all areas of the curriculum. Developing a shared understanding will enable pupils to grow in their appreciation of all spiritual elements of life.
- Develop a more robust assessment system in religious education (RE). This will enhance teaching and learning and strengthen the effectiveness of the curriculum.

### Inspection findings

St Aldhelm's Voluntary Aided Church Primary School is working as a community to create a pertinent and appropriate vision for the school context. Using the biblical reference of John 10: 10, the vision ‘everyone learning together’ is a lived reality. Like a flock, the school works together for everyone's benefit, allowing all to flourish. ‘Inspire and Flourish’ opportunities, mean pupils can share their skills and talents. They discover

their strengths and value themselves for who they are. Pupils are polite and attentive, in and outside of school, demonstrating the vision's affirming impact on their lives. The senior leadership team work well together creating a caring and inclusive environment. Support from the Bath and Wells Multi-Academy Trust (BWMAT) means staff and governors feel strengthened and reassured. Work around the vision and values enables pupils with school avoidance issues to feel valued as a whole person. Pupils now engage with school every day. However, links between values and vision are weak, meaning pupils do not recognise the vision pervading all areas of school life.

St Aldhelm's curriculum reflects the vision of 'learning together for life in all its fullness'. Along with the BWMAT vision, 'striving to be the best version of ourselves', all pupils can achieve and progress. There is a fullness to the curriculum. Creative and outdoor opportunities mean that the offer is much more than just academic. Learning behaviours focus on attitudes and not just attainment. This allows all to recognise their achievements, including pupils who have SEND. Parents who move children to St Aldhelm's recognise the difference this has made. Gaps are addressed and no one is left behind. Like St Aldhelm, the school devises creative ways to administer the curriculum, including using artwork and music. The school provides spiritual development opportunities, through spirituality days and creative trips, supporting a whole-child approach. The creative pioneer pastor who collaborates with the school creates artistic opportunities for pupils and staff. This enables all to reflect and to be creative in their own unique ways. However, there is no shared understanding of spirituality to further support the community's spiritual development.

Collective worship is planned and organised to present opportunities for spiritual flourishing. Services held at the local church of St Aldhelm convey the gospel with clarity and in an invitational manner. Planning supports staff members in leading worship, enabling them to be involved. Artwork is included each week, with new pieces presented by the creative pioneer pastor. Pupils and staff engage and reflect on the artwork before recreating it for themselves. This inspirational and inclusive approach contributes extensively to everyone's spiritual development. All adults within the school are invited to take part in collective worship, with family members invited to church services. There is a strong partnership with the local 'Messy Church', which many pupils attend even before joining the school. This supports the church and school connection, helping the community to make spiritual links. There is shared liturgy for the start of every worship, with prayer, singing, readings and reflection promoting spiritual development. Pupils share what they are proud of, supporting them to identify how they are flourishing. Through governor monitoring, worship has been developed, leading to a multi-sensory Lord's Prayer, inviting everyone to engage.

St Aldhelm's nourishes a culture where all are treated well. This is supported by the vision, expressed through values, including generosity, community and thankfulness. The school has a wellbeing group, with pupils from all classes. The vision inspires them to create their own action plans and lead the school's mental health week, further raising the wellbeing profile. There are strong friendship groups, helped by buddying up Year 6 with Reception. Reading to younger pupils helps them to feel valued and connected, whilst also building confidence in older pupils. The newsletter provides information and tips on mental health, including those who may not ask for help. There is also an advice section for families with pupils who have SEND. The school's behaviour policy promotes an ethos of reconciliation and forgiveness, supporting the culture where all are treated well. There is good interaction between school staff, providing pupils with positive role models. Staff share resources and ideas, especially with new teachers. There is also a culture where adults check in regularly on each other's wellbeing. Pupils talk about helping others if they are stuck or hurt and about how to be kind.

The phrase ‘change makers’ helps St Aldhelm’s create an active culture of justice and responsibility. The vision of learning ‘together’ is instrumental in achieving this. The partnership with the BWMAT, has a positive impact on everyone, through leadership and curriculum support. The school’s working relationship with the diocese leads to further training and support. Year 6 children develop spiritually through Pilgrim Days in Wells. The creative pioneer pastor has developed a meaningful partnership with the local church and the school. By working on the value of creativity, the pupils now identify as stewards of creation. Their raised awareness of environmental care leads to supporting insect habitats through the local Insect Trail. Pupils also create posters to challenge global warming and littering and abstain from products with palm oil. Former pupils continue to work with the community by supervising stalls at school fairs to raise money for chosen charities.

The RE curriculum at St Aldhelm’s is effective and builds on prior knowledge, skills and concepts. The diocese and BWMAT provide training, developing teachers’ confidence and expertise. Combined planning with teachers from the partner school, supports staff with less experience. This collaboration provides fullness to the lessons. Pupils are taught key Christian concepts in Key Stage 1 and these are revisited further up the school to create a cyclical curriculum. World religions like Judaism, Hinduism and Islam are also taught alongside Humanism as a non-religious worldview. All class teachers teach RE and along with standalone books, the school continues to raise the profile. The subject is not only knowledge based, but promotes curiosity, challenges misconceptions and inspires pupils to be outward looking.

RE teaching at St Aldhelm’s is high quality and pupils are making good progress. Work on display and within books shows the positive teaching impact. Pupils make connections with previous learning, demonstrating effective teaching. Discussion and reflection opportunities, make RE inclusive. Pupils can talk about their learning in detail. In Key Stage 1, pupils recognise many biblical stories and reflect on what they have learnt. Pupils in Key Stage 2, identify key Christian concepts and can explain their meanings. Diversity is represented through artwork and music, however Christianity is not accurately represented as a diverse and living world faith. Quizzes and reasoning questions recap on previous learning, creating opportunities to identify gaps. Informal methods like ‘Jamboard’ and ‘Post Its’ are used for monitoring purposes. However, summative assessment is not used effectively to identify where the pupils are at the end of each year. Church and statutory requirements are met but not completely understood by governors.

The inspection findings indicate that St Aldhelm’s Church School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	7 March 2024	URN	150030
VA/VC/Academy	Academy (inspected as Voluntary Aided)	Pupils on roll	173
Diocese	Bath and Wells Diocese		
MAT/Federation	Bath and Wells Multi-Academy Trust		
Executive Headteacher	Chris Chorley		
Chair	Adam Underwood		
Inspector	Paul Marvin	No.	C.23/24