

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Barnack Church of England Primary School	
Address	School Road, Barnack, Stamford, PE9 3DZ

School vision
We live by our biblical statement: ‘Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles’. Isaiah 40: 31.
School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vision and values drive all areas of school life. Pupils and adults soar at Barnack as they are personally known and supported to thrive in this aspirational school community. The spiritual life of the school is impressive. People flourish spiritually here through regular opportunities to pause and reflect across school life. Strong relationships connect and inspire all the school does. Pupils and adults regularly use their gifts, time and talents to serve one another in love. Collective worship is the heartbeat of school life. It unites the school community in a shared endeavour to reflect on God, self, others and the world. Religious education (RE) is ably planned and thoughtfully led. It contributes well to pupils’ understanding of religion and worldviews.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there is a deeper understanding of the biblical roots of the vision. This is to inform future development as a Church school. Further support pupils to be agents of change in the local community and further afield. Share the school’s approach to spirituality to enrich the work of other Church schools in this important area.
Inspection findings
<p>Leaders at Barnack have established a vision which informs every aspect of school life. This shared purpose binds all together in a culture of love where everyone is embraced. For staff, governors and parents, aspiration shapes the school’s vision and is key to their thinking. Now, all ‘soar’ in a community committed to excellence in all forms. The vision and associated values, such as wisdom, hope and service, all link to a verse from Isaiah. This provides a shared language through which strong relationships are forged and all can grow as unique individuals. Exactly how the vision and purpose of the school is rooted in biblical teaching is unclear. Consequently, it does not inform leaders’ decision making on the school’s development as a Church school as well as it might. Partnerships with the church, diocese and partner schools impact positively on the daily experience of pupils and staff. Leaders keep up to date with developments in Church school education. They have a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and areas of development.</p>

A transformative curriculum has been crafted by school leaders. Pupils 'soar' in their learning because staff are deeply committed to ensuring that all, including the vulnerable, flourish academically. Their learning is extended by an impressive range of trips and extra-curricular activities. This includes visits to Peterborough Cathedral and science enrichment through the 'Lego League'. Teachers place the school's values at the heart of lessons, which contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual development. Linking their learning to values such as hope and wisdom helps pupils recognise how others in the world have demonstrated them. In turn, they consider how their thinking and actions might be shaped by these. Each term, a philosophical question stimulates deep, personal thinking. For instance, last term pupils considered 'What makes us who we are?' across subjects. Mindful of the school community, leaders provide opportunities for pupils to understand and celebrate human diversity. With the school's academic success, staff support teachers locally and nationally in achieving the highest quality of education.

The vision is a lived reality at the school. Pupils and adults thrive as everyone feels valued for who they are. Staff instil strength and hope in one another. 'Barnack Bravos' allow staff to affirm each other's contribution to school life. They have opportunities to grow personally and professionally as lifelong learners within an ethos of growth and support. Staff have real pride in what they provide for pupils. Knowing pupils well, they tailor support for learning, mental health and wider foundations so they can 'fly'. Leaders and governors place a high priority on wellbeing. This leads to wise decision making which takes workload into account. This culture of wellbeing enables the school community to navigate difficult times well. The support of the church is highly valued during these times. Pupils are proud of their 'kind school'. In rare instances that disagreements happen, the Christian value of forgiveness informs restorative conversations to move forward positively.

Opportunities for spiritual reflection permeate life at Barnack. A shared understanding of spirituality as 'reflecting on relationships' has been shaped with the church group working party. Pupils use this language and value the time to engage in such reflection at spiritual spaces in class and out. As a pupil stated, these areas give a place 'to review our week and consider future actions'. A range of reflective activities, including prayer trees and 'sorry sand', help pupils reflect in a way of their choosing. These spaces are regularly used and contribute significantly to pupils' spirituality and wellbeing.

Leaders use the vision to shape and exemplify a culture of service. Pupils contribute to school life through several leadership opportunities, including 'Mindful Mentors' and the school council. Inspired by the vision to see all flourish, charitable giving is commonplace. As well as supporting the Specs for Africa and Shoebox Appeal, pupils act to benefit the wider community. The choir sing at a local retirement home, and cooking skills learnt in forest school led to a meal for local residents. This service with and for the community is reciprocal. Parents run numerous clubs for pupils, providing them with experiences they might not otherwise have access to. Across lessons and worship, pupils frequently learn about current issues and individuals acting for a better world. Occasionally, this animates pupils to use their voice to bring about positive change. For instance, following an English lesson, one pupil wrote to the Prime Minister to advocate for those in need in South Sudan. However, sometimes opportunities to consider root causes behind injustice and inequalities, and why not all people are 'soaring', are missed.

A culture of inclusivity and inspiration in worship helps those at Barnack to 'spread their wings'. It is carefully planned with the local church, helping the community reflect upon vision and values in practical ways. This allows pupils and staff to reflect upon choices they can make for the flourishing of themselves, others and the world. Opportunities to reflect through story, discussion, drama, silence and celebration contribute significantly to pupils' and adults' spirituality. Pupils particularly value time to celebrate each other and think deeply through Tuesday's 'big question'. Spiritual spaces around the school are used by pupils to continue reflecting on collective worship themes throughout the day. This shapes pupil thinking and actions on the playground, in lessons and at home. Collective Worship Ambassadors ably plan, lead and monitor the impact of worship upon the spiritual life of the school. Pupils have an impressively strong knowledge of the bible and Christian year. A strong partnership with the local church enhances the lived experience of both school and the community. This finds expression through school services (such as the Year 6 blessing), Messy Church and a foodbank.

Pupils flourish in RE. Leaders shape a rich curriculum which has a high profile. Staff use their training and resources to provide RE which is academically rigorous and personally inspiring. Pupils speak with delight about

their RE learning and how it helps them to think deeply about others and themselves. A variety of learning rich approaches mean that classes are developing a secure understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews. For instance, Year 6 pupils can explain Christian views on the Kingdom of God and how this shapes Christian living. Learning is enriched by visitors and trips, including to a synagogue, mosque and mandir. Diocesan training has been used to inform teaching and learning. As a result, pupils develop age-appropriate skills of inquiry, critical analysis, and interpretation. Regular use of quizzes ensure that pupils remember key knowledge and connect it to future learning.

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

Information

Inspection date	2 February 2024	URN	110823
VA/VC/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	165
Diocese	Peterborough		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Colette Firth/Kate Joubert		
Chair	Margaret Sargent		
Inspector	Ryan Parker	No.	982