

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Polehampton Church of England Junior School

Vision

At Polehampton Church of England Junior School, our vision is inspired and motivated by the words of Jesus. Jesus reminded us in Matthew's gospel that we are lights for the world. As we seek to follow him, we can share his light with others and change the world.

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:16

Polehampton Church of England Junior 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.

Notable Strengths

- The deeply embedded Christian vision, inspired by Jesus' words to 'let your light shine', is clearly articulated and understood by the school community. It underpins the daily decisions that leaders make. As a result, pupils and adults shine brightly and flourish.
- Partnerships with The Keys Academy Trust and the diocese are highly valued. They deepen the school's Christian vision and provide leaders and staff with guidance, support and professional encouragement. Consequently, both pupils and adults benefit from a purposeful learning environment and continually improving provision.
- This is an inclusive school where pupils and adults are known and loved as unique individuals. Inspired by the Christian vision, leaders craft an ambitious curriculum, carefully providing specialist input, creating equity of provision. Therefore, pupils, including those with additional needs, thrive in a loving and safe environment.
- Collective worship is a central and valued part of the day. It allows the entire school to come together to share their light, engage with Bible teachings and experience moments of reflection. As a result, pupils and adults flourish spiritually.
- Leaders prioritise wellbeing in order that members of the school community may become 'lights for the world'. Highly effective, targeted interventions and calm spaces help pupils to regulate their emotions and unlock their full potential. This fosters a nurturing environment built on compassion, connection and a shared sense of belonging.

Development Point

- Develop pupils' understanding of Christianity as a global and diverse faith. This will enable them to recognise how Christian belief, practice and worship are expressed in different cultures and traditions worldwide.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision to 'let your light shine', inspired by Jesus' words in St Matthew's gospel, drives strategic decisions and influences leadership priorities. Pupils are known and loved, therefore they thrive as cherished, unique individuals. Lives are changed by the work of the school because leaders turn the vision into a living reality. For instance, by actively supporting the trust's career pathways, they strengthen staff professional development. The school's vision and associated values align well with those of the trust. This is because they share high aspirations and a desire to provide compassionate pastoral care for the school community. Trust leaders strengthen the school's capacity to live out its vision through strong support and robust procedures that propel ongoing improvement. This shared commitment ensures that the vision consistently shapes practices, relationships and outcomes, enabling pupils and adults to flourish. This exceptionally collaborative drive by leaders unites staff, pupils, governors and the wider community. Leaders evaluate how effectively the vision is being implemented and understand its impact. Displays and reflection spaces around the school reinforce the values and act as visual reminders for the school community.

Vision and Curriculum

Shaped by the vision, the curriculum is rich, broad and inclusive, enabling pupils to shine wherever their gifts lie. A wide range of trips and clubs, including sport, art, music and nature-based activities, supports pupils' rounded development. Leaders know the curriculum is effective because of regular, robust evaluation. The school has a clear, shared understanding of spirituality using the windows, mirrors and doors approach. By embedding moments of awe and wonder into the curriculum, leaders foster deep spiritual development. Pupils who have special educational needs/disabilities (SEND) receive personalised support through targeted interventions. This allows them to shine in their own unique ways. The trust significantly enriches the curriculum through high-quality training, subject networking and shared expertise across their schools. The beauty of the local environment and surroundings is celebrated, enabling pupils to experience and appreciate the natural world. This helps them to recognise a sense of purpose and connection beyond themselves, creating further opportunities for spiritual growth.

Worship and Spirituality

Deeply rooted in the vision, collective worship is a special time for the whole school to gather together. It is inclusive, well planned and supports the spiritual flourishing of adults and pupils. They reflect on the Christian values through invitations to engage in prayer, song and Bible stories. The lighting of a lamp for each class at the start of worship creates a sense of calm anticipation. The school's 'value leaders' make a significant contribution to worship by leading prayers and evaluating what they experience. They regularly collaborate with other pupil worship leaders across the trust, thereby sharing their lights and ideas together. Weekly celebration assemblies are deeply appreciated. This is because pupils' commitment to the values is rewarded with prized certificates. The annual trust service is highly valued by schools and is recognised as an important shared occasion across the community. The strong partnership with local clergy enriches worship and supports spiritual growth. This is enhanced by visits to the local church to celebrate Christian festivals throughout the year.

Vision and School Culture

The vision fosters a culture where members of this nurturing school community feel valued and respected. Leaders are deeply committed to ensuring that the school's provision is both inclusive and equitable. Therefore, effective wellbeing initiatives are in place that benefit both adults and pupils. Areas such as the sensory courtyard, the secret garden and nurture room provide quiet places. As a result, people have calm spaces where they can pause, reflect and process their emotions. The school guinea pigs help to create a nurturing and reassuring environment, appreciated by many. Pupils' emotional regulation is supported through purposeful



outdoor activities, including a nature club, den-making and gardening. This is especially valuable for pupils who are facing challenging circumstances. Direct support for families improves lives and builds trust, thus strengthening and uniting the community. Bespoke training, coaching and mentoring support staff in developing their strengths and talents. They appreciate the thought given to workload management, flexible working and the support they are given to shine their lights. As a result, relationships are strong, leading to a clear sense of belonging and a resilient culture of mutual support.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Guided by the vision, the school looks outward and builds positive partnerships across the wider community. This is achieved through events such as singing in local settings and supporting charitable initiatives, including foodbank collections. By learning about freedom and rights, pupils develop a keen sense of justice and responsibility. This can be seen in the way they debate environmental issues and initiate their own fundraising projects. The planet protectors implement sustainability projects at school. This leads to greater awareness of energy saving, waste reduction and recycling. Pupils demonstrate responsibility by showing compassion towards those who need it. For example, they act as buddies by helping others in the playground. Taking on many leadership roles such as peer mentors help pupils to contribute positively to school life. Through these roles they make a difference, often referencing the value of friendship. The school engages well with the diocese. This includes staff and governors' participation in training and support, resulting in improved practice.

Religious Education

RE is a vibrant subject that is well planned and led. The curriculum is enquiry-based, engaging and meets the standards set out by the Church of England. It provides a balanced, structured approach to a wide range of religions and worldviews. Pupils engage with challenging, meaningful questions about life, beliefs, faiths and values. As a result, they show curiosity and are able to think critically, using deeper thinking. However, pupils' understanding of Christianity as a richly, diverse global faith is less understood and is still in its early stages. RE is given a high profile in the school curriculum and is considered to be a core subject. Pupils with SEND are well supported, with adapted provision to enable them to access the curriculum. Visits to places of worship, such as a Hindu temple, enrich the curriculum. The subject leader meets with colleagues from other trust schools, which means that good practice is shared. Staff are provided with relevant training and a wide range of resources to make the subject interesting and inspiring. The trust and diocese provide invaluable advice, training and guidance to support the curriculum.

Information

Address	Kibblewhite Crescent, Twyford, Berkshire RG10 9AX		
Date	09 July 2026	URN	147580
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	230
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT	The Keys Academy Trust		
MAT CEO	Hester Wooller		
Executive Headteacher	Philip Sherwood		
Co/Headteachers	Elizabeth Castell and Helen Medcalf		
Chair of Governors	Tom Curwen		
Inspector	Jenny Earp		