

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

## Littlebourne Church of England Primary School

### Vision

Together, we grow, thrive, achieve

At Littlebourne, we foster a nurturing, inclusive school community. Following the example of Jesus, we act with compassion to look outwards to serve our neighbour. We empower all to be lifelong, respectful learners who flourish under God's guidance. Through our aspirational curriculum, we grow and thrive together.

### Strengths

- The vision, strongly underpinned by the school's Christian values, creates a respectful and compassionate environment. As a result, there is a strong sense of belonging and high value is placed on the worth of individuals.
- An enquiry-based curriculum, with a focus on outdoor learning enthuses pupils, including the most vulnerable, enabling them to thrive.
- Leaders have created a loving environment in which good mental health is central to the work of the school. This results in a deep understanding of the academic, social and emotional needs of pupils. In this way adults give pupils the right support allowing them to develop resilience and grow in confidence.
- Collective worship draws the school together around the vision and values, reinforcing a sense of koinonia. This inspires a caring and supportive community that seeks the best for their neighbour. Times of stillness and reflection support spiritual development.
- A strong partnership with the diocese provides support, challenge and professional development. This is strengthening the work of Littlebourne and as a result pupils and staff are growing together.

### Development Points

- Ensure that all staff and governors have a deep understanding of how the vision is a lived reality in the daily life of the school. In this way it will securely underpin the strategic direction of Littlebourne.
- Develop a shared language and understanding of spirituality. This is so the curriculum and other activities facilitate rich and relevant opportunities for spiritual development.
- Embed a systematic and rigorous process of monitoring and evaluation by governors, especially for religious education (RE) and collective worship. In this way they will support the growth and development of Littlebourne as a Church school.



## Inspection Findings

Littlebourne is a school where the vision is actively lived out through its Christian values of respect, courage, compassion, hope and koinonia. The values are deeply understood by the school community, binding the school together in a strong bond of love and respect. These values consistently underpin interactions and behaviours. Regular reference to the values gives pupils confidence in their ability to grow together. The story of the Good Samaritan motivates a deep awareness of service to each other. Furthermore, it creates an environment with a distinct shared identity, drawing staff and pupils around a common purpose. In line with the vision, Littlebourne has established links with other schools in the Canterbury Rural Alliance. This outward looking focus has supported the school in sharing best practice with others, fostering ongoing school improvement. The diocese has been a highly supportive strength to the school. It has enriched the life of Littlebourne through generous nurture of new staff, as well as offering staff training and professional development. Governors and staff are committed to the work of the school. However, a deep understanding of how the vision informs the strategic direction of the school is not fully embraced by all. Governors conduct monitoring activities. At present these do not evaluate the impact of the vision, thus opportunities to develop Littlebourne as a Church school are missed.

Pupils are empowered to be lifelong learners through an enquiry-based approach within the curriculum. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. This is spurred by imaginative activities both in the classroom and outside. For example, a study of the digestive system was brought to life by the creation of a large-scale tubing system on the playground. Careful provision for pupils, including those with special and educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), helps them to thrive. The onsite forest school makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment of life at Littlebourne. It creates a safe place for pupils to interact and explore the outdoor environment, nourishing healthy relationships with others. Pupils' confidence is nurtured and they experience a sense of freedom in personal wellbeing beyond the classroom. At the same time, it supports a love of the natural world contributing to spirituality. However, at present there is not a shared understanding of spirituality across the school. Furthermore, there are no planned opportunities to foster spirituality within the curriculum, thus restricting spiritual development.

Collective worship is a time when the school gathers. It reinforces an understanding of how pupils and staff grow and thrive together and fosters the recognition of how the values are lived in daily school life. It is a key point when koinonia is experienced and the close connection between each other is recognised. This reinforces their sense of working together to support and nurture their neighbour. The stories of Jesus inspire them to behave in a kind and compassionate way in the class and on the playground. The celebration worship is a highlight of the week. Pupils take great pride in being awarded values certificates. Equally the whole school community demonstrates great warmth towards the success of individuals on these occasions. Prayers enable pupils to speak to God, seeking his help to make the world a better place. Times of stillness represent a point when pupils and staff can find a place of inner peace and calm. In this way spiritual development through worship is fostered. Local clergy make a valuable contribution to the worship life of the school. Pupils welcome their lively presentations. At other times, the clergy initiate unique opportunities for spiritual growth, for example, within the natural environment.

Reflecting the school's vision, the wellbeing of pupils and staff is central in creating a community that lives well together. The school is marked by peaceful interactions and nurturing relationships. Staff consistently model positive behaviours between each other and towards pupils and their families. This in turn generates kindly relationships between pupils who are eager to care for each other. In this way individuals are content in themselves and constantly seek the common good. The school has created a safe environment where pupils feel secure and protected. When problems occur a system of restorative justice enables pupils to move forward in forgiveness and renewal. Pupils feel confident in their environment as they know that adults will listen and



respond to their concerns. As a result, they thrive, including through difficult times. The school has put in place training for pupils about their emotions. This means that they are developing strategies to recognise and manage these effectively. Challenges in learning are seen as growth points rather than stumbling blocks. Pupils thus gain huge satisfaction from being resilient and the subsequent successes that they experience. Staff feel part of a closely knit team that fosters their emotional wellbeing as much as their professional development. This helps create a harmonious team enabled to grow together.

A culture of shared responsibility, underpinned by respectful interactions enables pupils to build feelings of self-worth and inner confidence. Inspired by the story of the Good Samaritan and the chosen Christian values they are motivated to care for each other. Pupils take pride in playing well together, seeking opportunities to initiate friendships with all ages. In order to live out the value of koinonia a range of roles enable pupils to grow in self-assurance. These opportunities empower pupils to take responsibility for the wellbeing of others and foster a sense of growing together. Pupils have some understanding of meeting the needs of others and have compassion for those facing hardship. They contribute with enthusiasm to a harvest collection of foods to meet local needs. At other times they have supported charitable work, sometimes inspired by individuals as well as by staff or groups of pupils.

The school's vision of aspiration underpins an engaging RE curriculum. The RE lead has attended local network meetings and has disseminated knowledge and information to staff. The diocese also offers strong support for the development of RE. Together with monitoring activities with other local schools, staff are thus confident in teaching RE. Embracing the well-sequenced curriculum with enthusiasm, they ensure that activities are matched to meet pupil interests. Consequently, pupils find the subject interesting and challenging, enjoying learning about different faiths and beliefs. As part of its regular cycle of review the school has adapted the topics within the RE curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils more effectively. As a result, pupils respect and uphold diversity. Enquiry based learning allows pupils to explore big question both collaboratively and individually. Pupils particularly enjoy the creative learning opportunities within RE. They relish debates knowing that the classroom is a safe place to share ideas and disagree well.

## Information

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| Address            | Church Road, Littlebourne, Canterbury, Kent CT3 1XS |               |        |
| Date               | 17 October 2024                                     | URN           | 118657 |
| Type of school     | Maintained Voluntary Controlled                     | No. of pupils | 103    |
| Diocese            | Canterbury  |               |        |
| Headteacher        | Simon Hillier                                       |               |        |
| Chair of Governors | Simon Rudland                                       |               |        |
| Inspector          | Elizabeth Pettersen                                 |               |        |