

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Somerfords' Water Powell Church of England Primary School

Vision

Growing together in belief, knowledge and wisdom.

John 15:5 – “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.

Our vision at the Vine Schools, is for all of our children to be inspired to grow spiritually, intellectually and personally through our nurturing school community; a network of students, teachers, parents and the wider local communities of which the schools are part.

Somerfords' Water Powell 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 Christian vision inspires the strategic growth of Somerfords' Walter Powell. Leaders' understanding of the school's context enables them to work well together, in the service of both pupils and adults.
- The vision gives life to resilient relationships within the school community. This motivates pupils and adults to support each other in their emotional and spiritual growth.
- Pupils have a strong foundational knowledge of global Christianity and key world religions. This develops a deep understanding and respect for diverse beliefs, which fosters empathy and reduces prejudice.
- Pupils have a secure knowledge of freedom and rights, leading to an understanding of equity. This empowers them to sensitively challenge injustice within the school community.
- Attentive partnerships surround the school. Because of this care, pupils and adults feel safe and supported in managing times of challenge.

Development Points

- Develop opportunities for discussion and pupil voice within religious education (RE) lessons. This is to enable teachers to adjust instruction within the lesson and facilitate a clear understanding of pupil progress.
- Governors to refine their monitoring and evaluation of RE. This is so that it challenges and supports the progress of pupils as they develop their understanding of worldviews and world religions.



Inspection Findings

The Christian vision guides the work of this Church school and shapes the daily experience of pupils and adults. It fosters an ethos of interconnectedness, where individuals are valued and contribute to the greater whole. Pupils speak of 'giving each other strength and confidence', drawing inspiration from the examples set by leaders. The core values of generosity, respect, acceptance, perseverance, empathy, and selflessness are articulated and flow through school life. A number of partnerships provide a stable foundation for the school day. This inspires positive relationships that are marked by mutual care. Leaders from the Blue Kite Trust and Somerfords' Walter Powell school ensure that the vision is active and influential in decision-making. The commitment of governors and Church leaders to keenly promote the vision ensures it is embedded and driving further growth. As a result, adults and pupils feel a powerful sense of belonging.

The vision shapes and ignites the curriculum. Opportunities for spiritual growth are evident across all subjects, which encourages a creative approach to learning. For example, pupils' sense of wonder and imagination is stirred through an exploration of mythical creatures. In other areas of the curriculum, pupils develop a deep understanding of human connectedness. This is through the study of real-life acts of courage, compassion and community support, such as lived by Grace Darling. Pupils gain great value from the use of the outdoor play space, which turns into a living classroom. Within this area pupils are stimulated by interactions with each other, sparking curiosity and extending thinking. This inspires them to explore, question, and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Careful thought is given to those who may face barriers in accessing school trips and extracurricular clubs. Leaders ensure that these activities are readily available to pupils, whatever their individual need. This provision includes residential visits, the arts and sport, ensuring horizons are broadened and pupils remain connected to each other and the wider world.

Collective worship enriches the school community by diversifying perspectives, deepening spiritual engagement, and building personal confidence. Reciprocal partnerships with the church mean clergy lead worship within the school and pupils lead services within the church. Pupils recount visits to church for Christian celebration with clear enthusiasm and enjoyment. They feel part of the community and that 'Jesus is around, whether they are up or down'. This helps them draw strength in facing adversity and further highlights the emotional and spiritual resonance of these events. The clergy are a regular and known contact within the school. As a result, pupils feel safe to share their thoughts in worship, such as on conflict or injustice. This helps them to deepen their personal understanding of the world. Equally, parents readily seek comfort and assurance from clergy as the need arises. This supports the formation of a caring community. Pupils actively lead prayer and explore scripture through sacred art. For example, this has inspired reflections on Jesus calming the storm. Pupils have readily interpreted this story as a metaphor for strength when facing a challenge. Class worship sessions embed consistent, vision-aligned messages. In this way, pupils live out the school values in everyday life, creating a culture of tolerance and acceptance. Reflections within class worship enable pupils to develop curiosity about gospel teaching. This further strengthens empathy, resilience and decision making for both pupils and adults. Staff members describe how worship develops their own resilience and tolerance.

Somerfords' Walter Powell is united by a powerful, collective commitment to build a positive culture that guides and protects individuals. The collaborative spirit of this village school activates opportunity for flourishing. Peer relationships are exceptional, balancing both love and challenge for behaviours that sit outside of shared expectations. Pupils play equitably across mixed-age groups, so that a culture of tolerance and acceptance is visible



across classrooms and during social times. Investment in each other secures bonds that last beyond their school years. Wellbeing is a priority. Adults and pupils receive thoughtful care, sustained by the Trust's proactive strategy for wellbeing. The organisation of support networks for school leaders impacts on the provision of professional development for staff. Furthermore, fostering the personal wellbeing of adults creates a supportive and empowering working environment. Mental health teaching is woven into the curriculum, encouraging pupils to share worries and seek help. This opens their perspectives on emotional safety and creates understanding of the positive impact of discussion. Deliberate crafted approaches ensure vulnerable pupils, or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), integrate quickly into their class. They are nurtured and steadily succeed alongside their peers, feeling valued and supported.

Pupils carry a sense of responsibility. This is rooted in their close community where friendships and support flow naturally across all ages. They look out for one another with pride. The school values of respect and acceptance are vehicles to secure understanding of the freedom of individuals. As a result, pupils have a deep understanding that choice is a right, and that diversity creates inclusive and just communities. Regardless of background, ability, or belief, people are known as individuals. Opportunities for forming opinion encourages pupils to consider their ability to speak up, developing critical thinking. Individuals are carefully listened to by adults and consequently, their confidence and voice flourishes. Pupils debate local and global issues to form their own perspectives, before comparing their opinions to national public survey statistics. This impacts on their wider understanding of viewpoints beyond their locality and why people may hold differing viewpoints. Pupils are thus empowered to develop the courage and conviction to speak out against injustice and stand up for others.

The RE curriculum ensures a strong foundation in global Christianity and key world religions. Being engaging and thoughtfully structured, it builds progressively on pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils are increasingly able to evaluate the influence of religious traditions on the daily lives of believers. In this way, they demonstrate deeper understanding and critical thinking. As a result, pupils speak knowledgeably about stories and practices, demonstrating secure understanding of core religious concepts. RE books reflect the breadth and creativity of learning. Pupils with SEND are supported to participate and express their ideas. The subject is led with notable skill. Professional development is always a priority. It draws on high-quality resources and diocesan training, which strengthens staff subject knowledge. Trust leaders act swiftly to build long-term expertise, establishing a team of RE specialists to sustain excellence and grow future leadership. This strategic investment ensures RE continues to flourish across the school.

RE is well taught, with instruction demonstrating secure expertise that aligns with the planned curriculum. Lessons are driven by clearly identified essential knowledge and carefully chosen religious vocabulary. Key terms that support conceptual understanding are explicitly taught, enabling pupils to use and apply them appropriately. Assessment takes place periodically at the end of each unit, with pupil achievement measured against defined knowledge outcomes. Misconceptions are identified and addressed through retrieval and revision activities. This ensures learning gaps are closed. Lessons are predominantly adult led, meaning pupils currently have limited opportunities to discuss and explore deeper concepts collaboratively. The absence of group discussion within lessons is preventing dynamic adjustment to the teaching. At present, governor monitoring of RE does not fully challenge and evaluate pupil progress as their understanding of the subject develops. Pupils make good progress over time and demonstrate a growing confidence in the subject.

Information

Address	Dauntsey Road, Great Somerford, SN15 5HS		
Date	7 July 2025	URN	142292
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	62
Diocese	Bristol		
MAT	Blue Kite Academy Trust		
Headteachers	Shaun Carter Sam Austin		
Chair of Governors	Antony Slack		
Chair of Trust	Gary Evans		
Inspector	Faye Kitchen		