

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Aston Rowant Church of England Primary School

Vision

Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. (Colossians 2:7)

Growing together we inspire each other to achieve our full potential as courageous lifelong learners.

Aston Rowant 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.

Notable Strengths

- The Christian vision is embraced by the community. This underpins strategic decision-making and leads to impact in daily life. Leaders have high aspirations for their community. They know and cherish each individual member.
- Rooted in personal growth and God's love, relationships are respectful and courteous. People treat each other very well.
- There is a strong culture of encouragement and support. This enables pupils and adults to thrive, including those who may be vulnerable.
- Collective worship helps to show pupils and adults how to live and enrich their daily lives. This is due to astute questioning and opportunities for personal reflection.
- A sense of wellbeing and nurture emerges from strong leadership, community support and a shared vision. This means that pupils and adults live well together, including in difficult times.

Development Points

- Ensure that Aston Rowant has a clear and consistent understanding of spirituality. This is so that it can enrich the experiences of both staff and pupils across the whole curriculum.
- Embed systems for the assessment of learning in religious education (RE). This is to enable teachers to identify next steps to ensure pupils make stronger progress.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

Aston Rowant Church of England Primary School has a deeply rooted, inclusive Christian vision. This is for pupils to grow together, so that they might achieve their full potential as courageous lifelong learners. Aston Rowant is a small school with a big heart which strives to care deeply for all. The vision inspires and drives strategic decision-making, daily routines, and relationships throughout the school community. Pupils are at the heart of choices made by leaders who ask, 'How will this let our pupils grow?' Leaders are responsive to the needs of a small school and have secured assistance to enhance Aston Rowant. Targeted resources, such as the play therapist, enable pupils to attend school and to flourish. Dedicated governors and clergy are regular visitors, engaging with staff and pupils. Leaders and adults serve their community with love and respect, enabling families to flourish. Pupils delight in explaining the meaning of the vision from their perspective and how it informs their actions. Training and other support provided by the local authority and the diocese supports leaders in ensuring that the vision guides the strategic direction of the school. The school is outward facing, sharing good practice and engaging with the wider community.

Vision and Curriculum

Leaders ensure that teaching and learning opportunities reflect the needs of this rural community. Outdoor learning, especially through the 'forest Fridays', helps pupils to learn about caring for the environment and appreciating the wonders of nature. This inspiring and colourful school environment serves to uplift and encourage, particularly benefitting vulnerable children who need additional assistance. The school's leaders have embedded inclusive practice so that pupils who have these additional needs can readily access school provision. The curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors. Extra-curricular opportunities are chosen carefully to broaden and inspire. As a result, pupils are thoroughly prepared and well equipped to leave Aston Rowant as confident individuals who have strong self-belief. They have a true sense of self-worth. While spirituality has been discussed, its impact across the curriculum is not fully understood.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is central to daily life at Aston Rowant. It plays a major role in deepening pupils' understanding of the vision and what this means for them in daily life. In the specific context of worship, the community is supported on its spiritual journey. This is through opportunities for pupils and staff to engage, reflect, and develop personal thought. It is inclusive and invites each person to contribute with integrity. Worship is planned carefully, involving pupils, staff, and clergy. Pupils are enthusiastic about contributing to and leading worship. Reflection areas in classes and in the playground give further opportunities to ponder big questions. Interactive displays, joyful singing and pupils' wall art help to create a shared sense of place for worship in school. The 'I wonder' wall, linked to a weekly passage, is highly effective by drawing pupils into the readings chosen. Spontaneous and heartfelt prayers are offered by pupils and adults in response to the theme. Pupils enthuse about the range of Bible stories they share together in the 'open the book' times of worship.

Vision and School Culture

This is an outward facing school. Collaboration through the Thame Partnership provides valuable opportunities for staff flourishing through training and networking. Respectful relationships draw the school community together. Consequently, the behaviour of pupils is positive towards each other and towards adults. Leaders make wellbeing a priority, which enables pupils to feel cherished as individuals. Staff are supported to thrive, with many enjoying long and fulfilling careers at the school. Others have returned to education because of its vision and approach. New governors have been welcomed, inspired and supported. Leaders consistently demonstrate genuine compassion for staff, providing support during challenging times and recognising the importance of family life. They express their appreciation for staff commitment. Wellbeing support is shaped by the school's vision, using targeted strategies and interventions. Families frequently highlight how the school goes 'above and beyond' to help their children to progress and achieve their full potential. Nurturing is a



strength of the school. Consequently, a number of families travel some distance to the village, selecting the school for its vision. Parents and carers are treated with warmth and dignity.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The school actively encourages and empowers pupils and staff to speak out, challenge injustice, and make a positive difference locally, nationally, and globally. Pupils are passionate about change, leading projects that address environmental issues, poverty, and social justice. For example, the older learners presented their project about the UN rights of the child to the local MP. The vision is lived out in the local community where pupils feel that they belong and can see how they make a difference to people's lives. Pupils take increasing responsibility for who and what causes to support, for example they have been supported in setting up recycling stations. It also means that many fundraising events are linked to charities associated with wellbeing and health. Staff act as role models, supporting pupils to become confident and compassionate advocates.

Religious Education

In RE, pupils learn about a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. Pupils are encouraged to ask big questions and explore diverse perspectives. The RE curriculum has been tailored and updated reflecting the needs of the small sized and mixed cohorts. It is sequenced progressively from Year R to Year 6 and focusses on building knowledge, vocabulary, and conceptual understanding over time. Units are engaging, relevant, and rooted in real-world issues.

Arts, crafts and drama are intertwined to make teaching and learning both engaging and impactful. The school uses fictional individual children from different faiths to make religious experiences and practices more relevant. This helps pupils to look closely at themselves, other people, the world outside and 'worlds beyond this one'. In this way, pupils are encouraged to have well-informed and balanced conversations. They have a good knowledge of Christianity and a growing understanding that it is a global faith. Leaders stay up to date with current developments in the subject so that it remains relevant and meaningful. Developments which adjust the curriculum are in their early stages. Adjustments and improvements are supported by staff training. The school's approach to assessment is helping teachers to identify individual progress in pupils' books. However, it is not driving good progress for each pupil.

Information			
Address	School Lane, Aston Rowant, Watlington, Oxfordshire, OX49 5SU		
Date	15 September 2025	URN	123124
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	99
Diocese	Oxford		
Headteacher	Helen France		
Chair of Governors	Tom Sowerby		
Inspector	Elizabeth Savage		