

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

### Waddesdon Church of England School

#### Vision

*"I have come that they may have life and have it in full." – John 10:10*

Waddesdon Church of England 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 school's Christian vision and values are deeply embedded and thoughtfully applied to school life. This has a transformational impact on its students, helping them to live life to the full.
- Daily collective worship for the whole school is distinctively Christian and fully inclusive. It is inspiring and uplifting, enabling the whole school community to explore faith and spirituality together.
- Students and staff are known, valued and loved unconditionally. Students' individual needs are identified and met within a culture of mutual respect, encouragement and generosity of spirit so that they can flourish.
- Students benefit from the many opportunities to develop their sense of personal responsibility towards each other. They also understand the importance of making a stand for justice on a local, national and global scale.
- Religious education (RE) has high status within the school curriculum. The high-quality resources and engaging teaching mean that it is valued by students and their achievement at every key stage is strong.

#### Development Points

- Identify further opportunities for spiritual development, and the consideration of worldviews, across the full range of curriculum subjects. This will help students to recognise that every aspect of school life can contribute to spiritual flourishing.
- Enhance the provision of RE for sixth form students who do not study the subject at A level. This is to enable Year 12 and 13 students to deepen their knowledge and understanding of religious perspectives and ethical issues.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

The school's vision is carefully thought through and deeply embedded, underpinning school life in an intentional way. The vision is known, understood and valued by students, parents, staff and governors. The Christian ethos working group, which includes a wide range of staff, students and local clergy, guides the ongoing development of the vision. Students' artwork on display around the school buildings helps to bring the vision alive in a visual and often powerful way. Students also find special events linked to the Christian calendar, such as the Easter trail, to be memorable and thought-provoking. Leaders and staff model the school's values in their interactions with students, parents and each other. As a result, the school is a transformational, inclusive Christian community where students, their families and staff really matter. Parents are rightly positive about the school and the ways in which it enables young people to flourish. Staff often refer to the first part of the John 10:10 Bible verse. This helps students to understand that acknowledging the challenges that human life can present is a necessary part of living life to the full.

### Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship at the start of each day is central to the life of the school. The school aims for it to enable the school community to 'share in, see, and experience Christ's promise of life in all its fullness'. The worship programme is planned with great care and attention to detail. This is to ensure that opportunities for spiritual development are accessible for all students and staff. Collective worship is distinctively Christian, but also genuinely inclusive, reflecting the diversity of the school community. It is valued by students and staff alike who describe it as inspirational, encouraging, impactful and memorable. Including as many students as possible from across the year groups helps create a strong sense of community. Students, staff, members of the chaplaincy team, faith leaders and other external speakers all contribute to leading collective worship. The chaplaincy team help staff and students to understand the value of different expressions of spirituality on a personal level. Times of reflection together also help students understand the importance of relationships within spiritual development. Student involvement, including the worship band that performs at the start, and students leading prayer at the end, is a particularly powerful element. It creates an opportunity for students to share their personal faith with their peers. Over 100 students regularly attend the holy communion service led in school by the local vicar. The Christian union is also well attended. Both provide safe and inclusive spaces for students to reflect on their own spiritual journey. Governors and leaders periodically survey students in order to evaluate the impact of different aspects of school life on students' spiritual development.

### Vision and Curriculum

Leaders have given careful thought to how each element of the school curriculum can enable students to live life to the full, both within school and beyond. A broad range of subjects is offered. This helps students with different interests and aptitudes to be motivated and successful in their studies. School leaders ensure that students with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND), and those who are disadvantaged, are fully supported in accessing the curriculum. Students are given high quality advice and guidance about appropriate options for them beyond Year 11 and Year 13. The extended curriculum is wide-ranging and includes school productions and performances, clubs, retreats, residential trips and visits. These provide numerous opportunities for students' character and spiritual development as well as contributing to their academic achievement and wellbeing. There are also occasions when students explore questions relating to worldviews and spirituality within a number of curriculum subjects. However, spiritual development is not highlighted sufficiently clearly across the curriculum as a whole.

### Vision and School Culture

The school treats students as individuals, and invests in their support, which allows them to overcome barriers to learning and flourish. For many, the school has transformed their educational experience and future life chances.



Leaders ensure that as many students as possible can successfully access mainstream lessons. Staff have received extensive training in order for them to create calm and truly inclusive classrooms. This helps students to regulate their own behaviour and focus on learning that is adapted to their needs. Leaders advocate a 'warm, strict' approach to behaviour management. This, along with the school's longstanding values of dignity and respect, have resulted in a safe and affirming school ethos. The culture of treating people well is modelled by the governing body, leaders and staff. The wellbeing of staff as well as students is a high priority for leaders and there are ample opportunities for staff professional development. Leaders genuinely know and care for the staff and go the extra mile to provide emotional and practical support.

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Students are given many opportunities to take personal responsibility through day-to-day school life. They have a voice in school and learn about issues relating to justice and equity. The high-profile 'let's talk about racism' group brings together staff and students to promote equity across the school community. At the annual 'WaddFest' event, students organise activities to raise awareness of, and funds for, a wide range of charities. Throughout the year, students and their families make donations for the local food bank and toy appeal. A number of students have given talks during collective worship on issues of justice close to their heart. A choir from an orphanage in Eswatini have also performed at the school and spoken about their experiences. These events have had a profound impact on the whole school community and raised awareness of injustice in today's world. Student leadership is a strong feature of school life with Sixth Form students, in particular, serving as role models to their younger peers. Students author many of the articles in the school magazine and helped design the new multi-faith reflection room.

#### Religious Education

RE is a high-status and valued subject within the school curriculum. The RE curriculum is carefully planned, well-resourced and regularly reviewed and refined. All Key Stage 4 students study RE at GCSE level and the subject is also offered at A level. The profile of RE is raised further through special events such as the annual 'inter-faith' and 'is there a God?' weeks. These feature debates and talks by visiting academics as well as staff and students. All sixth form students benefit from a comprehensive extension programme that supports their academic and personal development. RE themes feature within a number of these sessions. However, for students not studying RE at A level, the curriculum is not sufficiently detailed.

The quality of RE teaching is consistently high and students find lessons engaging, inspiring and thought-provoking. Reflecting this, outcomes in RE are strong. Progress measures for A level have improved steadily over recent years and reached the top 10% nationally in summer 2025. Student achievement at GCSE level has also been consistently above average. From Year 7 onwards, students' work is generally of a high standard, and they show impressive subject knowledge and understanding in class discussions and debates.

## Information

Address	School Lane, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP18 0LQ		
Date	19-20 November 2025	URN	137355
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	1,012
Diocese	Oxford		
Headteacher	Matthew Abbott		
Chair of Governors	Andrew Howard		
Inspector	Andy Yarrow		