

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Northbourne Church of England Primary School

Vision

Together we gather and grow to bring life to our rural school community. Everyone is welcomed, known, valued and treasured as individuals. God's countryside is our classroom, where we live, breathe and connect with our evolving natural world. Through our experiential curriculum we nurture pupils to be resilient, inquisitive and compassionate. By embracing stewardship, we recognise our shared responsibility for each other and the world. We empower one and other to act and make a difference to their neighbour.

Our six Christian Values are at the heart of our vision. Every day we aspire to grow in Faith, Love, Compassion, Kindness, Respect and Forgiveness, so that our school family may experience the joy and hope of "life in all its fullness." (John: 10 v10)

Northbourne 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

- Rooted in the school's Christian vision, the rural setting offers rich learning experiences that spark curiosity and a sense of awe and wonder. These opportunities support spiritual development and help pupils flourish as resilient, inquisitive, and compassionate individuals.
- Supported by governors, leaders drive forward a deeply embedded vision which motivates a shared responsibility' in others. As a result, the vision and values ensure pupils, staff and families are treasured as individuals.
- Collective worship is reflective, inclusive and thoughtfully planned to complement the school's experience led curriculum. Pupils welcome the calm and peaceful opportunities for reflection and prayer supporting their spiritual growth.
- The school vision of encouraging shared responsibility enables pupils to become aware of injustice in the locality and the wider world. They make a positive difference by helping to bring about change.

Development Points

- Strengthen opportunities for spiritual development by providing a wider range of experiences that enable pupils to explore spiritual concepts more deeply. This is to enable them to develop the language and confidence to articulate their own spiritual growth and awareness.



Inspection Findings

Northbourne Church of England Primary School is a welcoming place which is warm, caring and filled with love for the natural world. The school's vision, to encourage stewardship of the planet, is evident and as a result the pupils are passionate advocates for looking after the countryside. The values of faith, love, compassion, kindness, respect and forgiveness, underpin the vision. The vision and values are shared in various ways, and pupils understand the school's distinct values as they live them out each day. Pupils, staff and families are treasured as individuals and as a result they flourish here. The school's vision is integrated into the trust's strategic plan and evaluated through local governance. Leaders and governors put the vision at the heart of their strategic decisions; it is lived and breathed. As a result, staff work together to support pupils to achieve, and families in the school community are enabled to live life to the fullest. This shared responsibility is nurtured by the governors and leaders so that it is second nature to them. For example, pupils enjoy outdoor learning, inspiring curriculum work on caring for the planet and deepening their understanding of environmental stewardship. This fosters pupil and family engagement, nurtures inquisitiveness, and builds resilience across all aspects of their learning and personal development.

The school's vision for pupils to flourish as part of God's creation shapes the curriculum. It encourages a connection with the natural world, enables pupils to learn, develop curiosity whilst developing their spiritual awareness. Leaders appreciate the uniqueness of their rural setting and plan activities to meet the needs of learners, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, bee hives, poly-tunnels, chickens and a woodland, are all used as opportunities for learning about nature. This means pupils develop curiosity, enthusiasm for their work and results in a resilient approach to new tasks. For example, pupils accepted a wildlife award challenge and surveyed the school grounds to identify possible conservation work. As a result, they construct bat boxes, showing commitment to caring for nature and improving their environment. Furthermore, pupils work collaboratively with parents and guest speakers on renewable energy plans. Consequently, they see how their small changes lead to impact for wildlife in the area. Pupils enjoy a variety of sports clubs and leadership positions; this develops their resilience. The trust provides opportunities for leaders to plan and collaborate to further enhance practice, supporting them to flourish in their roles.

Worship at Northbourne is a joyful and natural part of the day, offering an invitational and inclusive space for adults and pupils. Current projects, such as raising awareness of environmental issues, are thoughtfully woven into worship, enriching the experience and nurturing a spirit of compassion. Worship has a positive impact on the whole school community, enriching the spiritual life of both staff and pupils. Joyous singing is embraced by staff as a source of encouragement and renewal during the school day. Pupils engage wholeheartedly with worship themes. They respond thoughtfully to challenging questions, this develops an understanding of Jesus' teachings in real and meaningful ways. Pupils appreciate time to be calm and think, this supports their well-being and enables spiritual reflection and personal growth. Worship encourages pupils to reflect on values, confidently relating Bible passages to modern examples, such as being compassionate and donating to food banks. Teaching pupils a variety of ways to pray and talk to God, broadens understanding of prayer and spiritual practice. Many pupils express feeling especially close to God when praying outdoors, contributing to their spiritual awareness. Pupils find it challenging to articulate their spiritual journey or growth in depth beyond a basic understanding. As a result, opportunities to deepen pupils' spiritual development and personal reflection are limited. The trust actively supports worship leaders from all their schools to meet regularly, fostering collaboration and driving the ongoing development of worship practices.



Positive behaviour practice, rooted in forgiveness and reconciliation, helps the school create a welcoming environment where pupils feel known, valued, and supported. The school's vision of compassion and shared responsibility drives this approach, encouraging pupils to live out the values every day. Supportive adults, including a local church group who help at lunchtime, actively model and reinforce these principles. Staff build strong relationships with parents, understanding that these connections promote good mental health and inclusion. The school listens to and supports parents, fostering a collaborative partnership that benefits the whole community. A restorative approach works effectively with pupils, and staff see incidents of poor behaviour only rarely. Inspired by the school's vision, leaders nurture a culture where all are valued and supported. Staff feel confident in seeking help, knowing they will be met with care and encouragement. This is further strengthened by governors and the wider trust, who actively promote leaders' well-being, ensuring that all members of the school community feel treasured, respected, and empowered to flourish.

Pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of justice and responsibility, both within the school and in the wider community. This is the result of intentional opportunities provided by leaders, rooted in the school's vision. These opportunities enable pupils to explore ethical and moral issues in meaningful ways. Concerned about habitat disruption from nearby housing, pupils responded with compassion by creating bug boxes to support local biodiversity. Such experiences help pupils connect values like stewardship with real-world impact, fostering a deep sense of moral purpose. A wide range of leadership opportunities, including worship ambassadors, promotes a culture of meaningful responsibility. Fundraising for local causes, such as the foodbank at harvest, reinforces pupils' understanding of compassion and community. Involvement in an intergenerational art project with elderly people living with Alzheimer's demonstrates how they are growing into caring, confident individuals, who stand up for others. After noticing loneliness in a nursing home visit, pupils invited residents into school for music and shared fellowship.

Religious education (RE) is led with passion and a clear vision for inclusivity and balance. The RE leader has adapted a curriculum that encourages inquisitiveness through thought-provoking big questions. This approach encourages ownership of learning and critical thinking, often incorporating the local context to deepen understanding. One example of this is where the pupils were asked to think about how they could look after God's creation today. This inspired the pupils to create litter picking posters. The curriculum empowers pupils to explore key religious concepts from broad perspectives, fostering an understanding and respect for diversity. Pupils are enthusiastic about RE as it broadens their knowledge of faiths, beliefs, and traditions. Their growing ability to articulate understanding of various cultures reflects this. The pupils deepened their understanding of Sikh faith and culture through learning about worship in a visit to a Gurdwara and tasting traditional festival foods. The school's inclusive environment supports pupils in reflecting on their beliefs and developing an awareness of the world around them. RE provision is regularly monitored by leaders, and as a result, there is quality and consistency. This is supported by professional development and moderation from both the trust and the diocese.

Information

Address	Coldharbour Lane, Northbourne, Deal, Kent CT14 0LP		
Date	26 June 2025	URN	147055
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	131
Diocese and Methodist District	Canterbury		
MAT/Federation	Deal Education Alliance for Learning Trust		
Headteacher	Matthew Reynolds		
Chair of Governors	Charmian Winslade		
Inspector	Howard Fisher		