

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

All Saints Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School			
Address	Hollybush Lane, Datchworth, Knebworth, SG3 6RE		
Date of inspection	14 June 2019	Status of school	VA primary
Diocese	St Albans	URN	117430

Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent

School context

All Saints C of E (VA) Primary School, Datchworth, is a primary school with 178 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. Since the beginning of the calendar year two members of the teaching staff have been on long term absence.

The school's Christian vision

"Walking together, discovering life"

Taking the Bible's description of The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) as our inspiration

Key findings

- The biblical inspiration for the school's vision directly shapes creative and innovative projects that enable all pupils and adults to flourish.
- Pupils are inspired by the school's Christian vision to become passionate advocates for change in a range of social action projects.
- Strong, well established links with the local church and clergy enhance all pupils' learning and understanding of Christian beliefs and the teaching of Jesus.
- Governors, together with the headteacher have established rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluation which involve the whole school community. This holistically infuses and shapes the operational direction of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent because they know and demonstrate the values underpinning the school's Christian vision. Pupils talk about forgiveness and reconciliation as the best way to live, work and play together.

Areas for development

- Develop the links with a partner school in Nepal enabling pupils to further understand the needs of those in the larger global community.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?
Inspection findings

The school's Christian vision of 'Walking together, Discovering Life' is exceptionally well articulated and lived out by all members of the school community. School leaders ensured that pupils and staff were involved in developing the vision, which underpins all that the school does. Relationships at all levels are exceptionally supportive, enabling a very high degree of well-being, hope and resilience. The headteacher and governors have been innovative in finding ways to enhance the mental health of staff and pupils. For example, psychotherapists provide support for staff if requested, enabling them also to support pupils. During recent challenging times staff and temporary staff have all worked together and tirelessly under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. Pupils therefore continue to flourish. There is overwhelming gratitude from parents who talk of the school's exceptional support in developing pupils' emotional strength. Many parents attribute this to the gospel inspiration for the school's vision.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They have an admirable recall of a range of values. Their explanations of how Jesus' teachings underpin the values clearly influence their behaviour. Pupils talk about the importance of forgiveness which they see as fundamental to maintaining good friendships. The school vision, they believe, gives them a responsibility for the feelings of other pupils. Consequently, they are proactive in seeking ways to support one another. Pupils speak of their confidence in expressing their own beliefs which may be different from others. This is because they know their views will be fully respected by other pupils. Some older pupils who have recently joined the school express their happiness in being able to celebrate their faith.

To be the best they can be by 'walking together, discovering life' epitomises leaders' vision and aspirations for all pupils to succeed. Pupil attainment is high and above national averages. Current data shows that pupils are making at least expected progress. The school uses creative and targeted support to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils increasingly make good and, at times, exceptional progress. The school is therefore well prepared to support a greater diversity of needs. School leaders welcome pupils from further afield whose parents believe the school will meet the more specific needs of their child. The curriculum is creative and inspirational, enabling pupils to explore the spiritual and ethical aspects within a range of subjects. Pupils reflect on many deeper issues and confidently explore and raise challenging questions. This is enabling them to 'discover life' in its many forms, whilst inspiring them to participate actively in the world around them. Workshops, visits and talks from a wide range of inspirational guests have encouraged pupils to be extremely aspirational, academically and in personal pursuits. Pupils value their time at school because learning is engaging, they feel very supported and well prepared for the next stage of their education. Consequently attendance is good.

Pupils can explain the importance of their Christian values in enabling them to take on challenging projects. The curriculum, extra-curricular activities and leadership opportunities allow pupils to explore areas such as climate change, plastics and the protection of endangered animals. Pupils are undaunted by these big issues. They articulate confidently their opinions and ideas to staff because they know teachers consider their opinions are valid. This further empowers them to communicate to parents and the wider community, not only their concerns, but the actions which they will take and those they expect from others. For example, one pupil wrote a persuasive letter on the impact of cars on the environment, encouraging everyone to support the 'walk to school week' and beyond. Parents responded positively to this request. Many pupils have demonstrated their advocacy for change through a range of social action projects, encouraged and supported by school leaders. Pupils explain that in hoping for a better world they have learned to persevere together and to be resilient when actions are unsuccessful. Pupils are clearly developing a keen sense of personal and shared responsibility and service. To further enhance pupils' knowledge of diversity school leaders are developing a partnership with a school in Nepal.

Pupils, staff and parents speak of collective worship as an essential, meaningful and important aspect in the school day. Collective worship is very well planned, ensuring that a variety of leaders are involved. Pupils and adults benefit from the exceptional skills of the local vicar and other church members. The termly visits from the 'Assembly Angels' give pupils experience of a more diverse expression of Christian worship. Pupils enjoy Bible stories and describe this as a time in the day when 'they can keep their minds clear'. RE ambassadors from the

older classes organise daily collective worship and the Christian festivals in the church. They also gather the pupils' views regarding collective worship. Resulting from this, the RE ambassadors requested that more time be given to reflection during worship. Leaders now include extended moments of reflection, sometimes pupil led. Year 6 pupils plan and lead a weekly act of worship. Pupils feel valued for their contribution, gain a deeper insight into the meaning of worship and a keen sense of involvement. Pupils have a very strong understanding of prayer beyond formal worship and several varied opportunities exist during the day for prayer. In each classroom prayer trees reflect the pupils' enthusiasm for writing prayers and there is clear evidence of a significant understanding of prayer. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of key days throughout the Christian calendar and a range of Anglican traditions, including Eucharist. The strong links with the local community have enabled pupils to be actively involved with a range of local groups. For example, a group of more elderly residents comment on how pupils keep them active and energised.

Since the previous inspection all recommendations have been addressed including the quality of RE. This has improved considerably because leaders have placed an emphasis on training and links with the diocese. The headteacher has also implemented a partnership with a local cluster of church schools, where the sharing of good practice has mutually improved teaching and learning, accuracy in assessments and a deepening understanding of character education. A highly effective curriculum is now in place and teachers demonstrate a strong subject knowledge. Pupils and adults have an excellent understanding of key Christian concepts following the adoption of schemes such as Understanding Christianity. Pupils demonstrate confidence and enthusiasm when using religious texts. They also enjoy debating and sharing their own views and observations. Pupils' written work often demonstrates a depth of thought and reflection. Pupils value and enjoy the opportunities to learn about a range of religions because they consider it important to understand and therefore respect what people believe.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is consistently good and often excellent. Teachers enjoy teaching RE and plan thoroughly, ensuring a variety of innovative strategies are used to enthuse pupils. Learning is tailored to challenge the most able whilst enabling all pupils to make good progress. Governors and the headteacher are rigorous in their monitoring and through their own substantial knowledge their advice has contributed to improvement. The quality of written work is at least comparable with other subjects. Rigorous assessment systems are in place and the results of these assessments show pupils' rapid progress.

Headteacher	Stuart Whiteland
Inspector's name and number	Lindsay Fraser 107