

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Chilworth Church of England Infant School

Address	Dorking Road, Chilworth, Surrey GU4 8NP		
Date of inspection	30 April 2019	Status of school	VA primary
Diocese	Guildford	URN	125167

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

School context

Chilworth is a small infant school with 75 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is just below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below national averages. The headteacher is a local leader of education and works as a professional mentor to other school leaders.

The school's Christian vision

To provide a safe, caring, Christian environment, where every child develops a love of life and learning.

Key findings

- The school's Christian vision underpins the positive and productive relationships across the school.
- The pursuit of good mental health and wellbeing are priorities that are clearly understood and shared by all.
- Lessons in philosophy for children' (P4C) and Forest School make a helpful contribution to the growth of pupils' spirituality, although a more sequential and structured approach is needed to the planning of spiritual development.
- Pupil's experience and understanding of cultural diversity is limited.
- Pupils do not take an active enough role in planning and leading collective worship.
- Effective learning in religious education (RE) helps most pupils make at least the progress that could be expected of them.

Areas for development

- Recast the vision so that it has a broader and more inclusive perspective and is grounded in a clear theological understanding.
- Deepen the experience of collective worship for all by enabling pupils to take a more active role in planning and leading.
- Provide pupils with the experiences that will help them gain a better understanding of cultural diversity.
- Provide more challenge for the more able in religious education (RE).

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 community of staff, governors and parents are rightly proud of the achievements and character of their church school. The school's Christian vision draws upon its religious foundation and promotes and sustains a Christian ethos where pupils can grow and flourish. Nevertheless, the vision lacks a broad and outward-reaching perspective with aspirations that are clearly matched to a clear theological grounding. Parents and children cannot always recall the vision as it is currently written. The associated values are underpinned by a biblical passage from the book of Colossians, focusing on growing while being rooted in Christ. The values, underpinning the vision, are based on an acrostic of the school's name. This arrangement means that there are a lot of values for pupils to comprehend and handle. This, in turn, means that pupils are not as adept as they should be at linking them to the Christian and biblical narrative. Conversely, and in many respects, the influence of the key values can be seen in the life and work of the school. This is particularly the case regarding values such as caring, trust, and respect. Examples of this being demonstrated by the trust pupils and adults have for one another.

In line with the school's vision and values the behaviour and relationships are positive and productive across the school. Within this small school, the teamwork among all staff and the shared leadership of senior staff is very effective. This, in turn, ensures that good communication becomes a process that drives school community cohesion and encourages shared commitment. Leaders are passionate about the caring and nurturing of the children in their care and this forms the basis of the strong partnership with their parents. The pursuit of good mental health and wellbeing are priorities that are clearly understood by all. Pupils are treated with dignity and respect and they in turn treat each other in the same way. A measure of the care, drawing upon the school's Christian values, can be seen the effective pastoral support for both children and adults. There are examples where leaders and governors have worked hard to include pupils within the school, despite their presenting challenging behaviour and complicated difficulties in learning.

Pupils' learning is effective, they listen well in lessons and carry out their tasks with enthusiasm. Achievements are above the national average overall and pupils, including the disadvantaged, make good progress. This is supported by the positive influence of the school's Christian vision and values. Pupils learn to become more socially aware and they actively support charities, such as Christian Aid and the Besom Trust. However, they have limited experience and understanding of matters concerning cultural diversity. RE is carefully planned and this makes a positive contribution to the Christian character of the school. Pupils have good opportunities to openly explore challenging issues and matters of faith, regardless of their religious or non-religious background. Parents appreciate these chances and justifiably say that their children's opinions are treated respectfully. The level of care means that attendance is good overall and pupils want to come to school.

The school approaches the growth of pupils' spirituality through teachers posing them deep and searching questions and through them exploring 'big questions' within the curriculum. Many of these strategies are also embedded within the regular P4C lessons and through the openings offered by Forest School. In the latter programme, pupils learn to appreciate and understand the beauty of God's creation and the necessity of developing responsible sustainability. During the inspection, pupils were observed learning in, and about, a nearby woodland. One group were studying interdependency within the eco-system by weaving a 'web-of-life' in the form of a cobweb. Teachers are mindful to remind the pupils of the importance of their role in the preservation of the natural environment. However, a sequential and deeper development of the broader definition of spirituality, as outlined in the school's own policy, has not, as yet, been planned across the curriculum.

Governors know their school well and are active in supporting and challenging leaders. They have monitored a number of aspects of Christian distinctiveness. Examples include RE, collective worship and spiritual learning in P4C lessons. Staff have attended a wide range of professional development, although this has been more limited in terms of Christian distinctiveness. As a result, staff monitoring of respective areas, and their own self-evaluation, is not sufficiently centred around impact and therefore not as secure as it could be. Partnership with the local churches is particularly strong and pupils visit the church and learn about the importance and symbolism of sacred Christian spaces. Currently this has not been extended to visiting the buildings of different religions or inviting their leaders into school. There are established partnerships with other church schools and this has involved some shared professional learning and monitoring of standards in RE. Parents talk about their enormous respect for the school, the staff and its work.

Collective worship for pupils and adults in the school is an important aspect of each day. In so doing, the school's vision has a positive impact on collective worship. The worship encourages an understanding of Anglican traditions, for example by the use of a focal table with a candle and through observing the seasons and colours of the church calendar. Regular use is made of the Bible, and especially so during the frequent visits from the Open the Book group. Children's understanding of the Bible and Christian faith is equal to what could be expected of their age group. They can readily talk about Easter and other important events in the church year. While pupils can listen well during collective worship, they are not always as focused and attentive as they could be in gathering for worship and in leaving. This results in a lack of stillness and expectation. At the last inspection the school was asked to involve pupils more in planning and leading worship. Planning for whole school worship is now more comprehensive, although pupils are not, as yet, fully involved. Likewise, they are not involved in leading worship and opportunities are being missed. Prayer is a regular feature in the life of the school and pupils write their own prayers. Currently the school does not have any special resourced spaces, away from the classrooms, to encourage a deeper understanding and practice of personal prayer and reflection.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Effective learning in the subject helps most pupils make at least the progress that could be expected of them, including the disadvantaged. The overall quality of teaching and learning in RE is good. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their ideas together. Pupils were seen exploring and comparing biblical texts about creation, with those from different faith traditions. They show interest in their work although there is not always enough challenge for the more able in the tasks that are offered. An effective assessment system is in place. This, along with work produced over time, indicates that pupils meet the subject expectations when compared with pupils of a similar age.

Headteacher	Maggie Mackie
Inspector's name and number	Dr Trevor Walker 908