

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

### Thorpe Church of England Aided Primary School

<b>Address</b>	The Bence, Rosemary Lane, Thorpe, Egham TW20 8QD		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	11 July 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Voluntary Aided primary
<b>Diocese</b>	Guildford	<b>URN</b>	125174

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2</b>

#### School context

Thorpe Church of England School is a primary school with 207 pupils on roll. The school has a low level of religious and cultural diversity and 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 above national averages. Since the previous denominational inspection, the school has completed its expansion from being an infant school to a primary school, and now has all year groups from Reception to Year 6.

#### The school's Christian vision

'Faith, Love and Excellence'

Everyone will flourish in our distinctively Christian school where adults and children are treated with dignity and respect. We will achieve academic, emotional and spiritual excellence, inspired by faith and love.

#### Key findings

- The school has a clear Christian vision which it has maintained through its expansion into a primary school. Pupils and adults flourish in this nurturing school; they describe the school as a 'family'.
- Leaders are passionate about creating an inclusive community, where everyone feels valued and respected. This is driven by the Christian vision and values which everyone subscribes to, regardless of their background.
- The broad curriculum gives pupils of all abilities the opportunity to flourish and succeed. This includes pupils with special educational needs and other vulnerable pupils, who are supported particularly well.
- Worship helps pupils and adults to grow spiritually. It impacts positively upon behaviour and relationships in the school, particularly through an emphasis on Jesus' teaching about forgiveness.
- Religious Education (RE) provides pupils with a detailed knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths because teachers are confident and secure in teaching the subject.

#### Areas for development

- Simplify the biblical basis of the school vision so that it is easier for the school and wider community to articulate.
- Re-establish links with global partners to enhance pupils' understanding of the wider world.
- Ensure that more able pupils are given the opportunity to extend their thinking in RE through more open-ended and challenging tasks.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for their school, which they have sustained through its expansion. Staff and parents comment on how the 'small school' feel has been retained despite the growth in size. The well-known motto of 'faith, love and excellence', now developed into a longer vision statement, drives the school's work in many areas. It ensures that while every effort is made to help all pupils progress, each individual child is seen for who they are, not just what they can achieve. Leaders, including governors, can explain how their vision comes from biblical teaching, providing Bible verses which show this. Pupils can give good examples of Bible stories which illustrate the concepts of 'faith, love and excellence', such as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's faith in God, even in the fiery furnace. However, there is no straightforward way for the whole school and wider community to explain how the vision relates to biblical teaching.

Thorpe school is very welcoming and inclusive, particularly to pupils with special educational needs. They ensure that each child is treated with dignity and respect, whatever their needs or background. This flows directly from their vision as a Church school. Leaders at all levels are clear about what it means to work in a Church school. It informs their decision making and their school development planning, ensuring that all can flourish. They work co-operatively with the diocese and a local partnership of Church schools. This enables them to review the quality of their own provision and share good practice. An example of this is checking standards in RE, using the diocesan assessment system, which has helped the school to meet its recommendations from the previous denominational inspection. Additionally, the issues concerning prayer corners and spirituality across the curriculum have been well-embedded.

The school's broad curriculum and extra-curricular activities enable pupils to achieve in a range of different areas. This is particularly true for vulnerable pupils, who are able to feel successful even if they struggle with certain subjects. Reflecting its vision well, the school has worked very hard to improve progress for different groups of pupils, paying close attention to disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders advocate for their pupils fearlessly, seeking the best for them.

Pupils grow spiritually through the curriculum opportunities at Thorpe. They learn to ask questions and engage in ethical debates. An example of their concern for social justice is their advocacy for the environment, which has made a positive impression on their parents. Pupils learn about people who are different to them through the curriculum, through listening to classmates and staff from different cultures, and through their links with charities. The school supports charities related either to pupils who have been at the school or needs within their community, such as the Marsden Hospital and a local disability charity. Their link with a project in The Gambia is still spoken about, but it is not as active as it was. While pupils do learn about global issues, the link with The Gambia is not now sufficiently effective in deepening pupils' understanding of the wider world.

Relationships are a key strength. Pupils and adults speak positively about how any disputes and difficulties are handled. They say that school leaders listen to them and care about them. Pupils are supported to behave well, including those with additional needs. They understand how the vision of the school encourages them to treat one another with respect and forgive each other. Staff tailor the support given to individual pupils and families carefully. They know how to secure help from outside the school if needed and are aware of what is required for pupils with mental health needs. Adults, including parents, find the school open and responsive to their needs.

Pupils are very motivated to ensure that there is no bullying in their school, speaking about this passionately. They value and respect their peers, staff and the wider community. Pupils who have joined the school from elsewhere speak about how welcomed they have been. They say that they have felt quickly included and not discriminated against. The school's anti-bullying policy is very clearly linked to Jesus' teaching about loving one another. Staff speak about how they see each of their pupils as 'made in the image of God' and 'very precious'. Behaviour incidents are carefully logged and monitored by senior staff, and any issues are dealt with either in class or through collective worship.

The school includes and accepts everyone, regardless of their race, religion, gender or sexuality. Arrangements for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are appropriate to the context. This allows pupils to explore healthy relationships within a Christian framework.

Worship inspires pupils and adults to form positive relationships, in which they respect and forgive each other. Pupils say they learn from the teachings of Jesus, regardless of their own faith background. They enjoy the variety of creative approaches, such as drama, singing and quiet reflection. Pupils learn about the Eucharist and about

aspects of the Anglican church through school worship, and through church services and visits. They lead, monitor and evaluate worship through the 'worship council'. As a result, pupils now use a microphone so everyone can hear better. Worship covers a wide range of themes, linked to the vision and values. This enables pupils to speak knowledgeably about the Bible and God as the Trinity. The parish priest, who is spoken of highly by all, has a demonstrable impact upon the worship life of the school.

Prayer is important in school life. Pupils benefit from creative approaches to prayer, such as the 'tsp' (thank you, sorry, please) prayer. They make good use of prayer corners, and consequently, their prayers have become more sophisticated. Whole school prayers and the partnership prayer, shared with other schools, are beneficial to the spiritual development of individuals and wider community.

RE is well led and statutory requirements are met. Teachers feel confident and have good subject knowledge. They support pupils in their understanding of different religious ideas and concepts effectively. By the time they leave, pupils show an ability to reason theologically and challenge ideas. The school compares standards and shares good practice with its partnership schools to good effect.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

Pupils make good progress in RE because they receive effective teaching. Teaching is consistently good, with some examples of high-quality, creative practice. For example, Year 6 re-imagined Jesus' teaching on forgiveness through drama. The school has adopted a highly structured approach to its RE teaching, which has supported pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, this can limit the responses of some pupils, especially the more able. As a result, they are not as challenged in their thinking as they could be throughout the school.

Pupils develop a sound knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths; their use of subject-specific vocabulary from an early age is particularly strong. Vulnerable groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs, are well-supported to make good progress in RE. Standards in RE are good throughout the school, and often higher than those in other subjects.

Headteacher	Helen Southgate
Inspector's name and number	Emily Norman 912