

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

## Four Marks Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

**Address** Five Lanes End, Four Marks, Alton, GU34 5AS

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

**Overall grade**

**Good**

**The impact of collective worship**

**Excellent**

### School's vision

Together, we are walking in Jesus's footsteps, learning to make good and courageous life choices to help others, our world and ourselves.

### Key findings

- Four Marks Primary School is an exceptionally welcoming school, in which the Christian vision underpins strong relationships across the whole community. It resulted in strong support for the community during the pandemic. Monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the school's vision does not always effectively inform strategic planning.
- Collective worship is inspirational through providing a rich variety of engaging experiences. It is deeply embedded in the life of the school. Pupils take an active role in its leading, monitoring and evaluating. A focus on spiritual development is intrinsically incorporated into both collective worship and the curriculum. This means that pupils reflect deeply and respond to big questions.
- Pupils are confident and enthusiastic in acting independently to make a difference in their locality and nationally. However, this is not extended to the wider global community.
- The curriculum and extra-curricular activities provide rich, exciting and engaging opportunities to develop strengths and talents in all pupils.
- Religious education (RE) is strongly led and pupils flourish in this subject. A structured and well-taught curriculum supports the development of pupils' skills and attitudes. However, pupils have limited understanding of diversity within Christianity.

### Areas for development

- Ensure that systems for monitoring and evaluation of the school's Christian character are focused on the vision and inform strategic planning.
- Provide pupils with further opportunities to act as courageous advocates in the global community. This is so they are equipped to become agents of change.
- Develop pupils' understanding of diversity within Christianity so that they better understand it as a living world faith.

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 is an extremely welcoming and joyful community where staff, pupils, governors and parents value and highly respect each other. Pupils try to live out the vision, 'walking in Jesus' footsteps, learning to make good and courageous life choices to help others, our world and ourselves'. Pupils are able to explain this. One pupil said, 'Our vision means that we follow Jesus as a role model and I want to learn to be kind and caring like him.'

Relationships between all members of the school community are strong. The Christian vision and its associated values spelling out LIFE, love, integrity, forgiveness and equality, permeate through every aspect of school life. The values are intrinsically part of the school's culture. Pupils adapt and apply these values outside school, helping to prepare them for life beyond primary school. Parents remark on how the values reflect the moral compass of the school. Governors provide strong support. However, some of the systems for monitoring developments of the school lack focus on the vision and do not feed into development planning. The school is blessed with an inspirational headteacher who leads a vibrant and committed team. Through her ethical leadership, she ensures that adults and pupils grow together in mutual trust.

The vision inspires staff to improve, so that good life choices are made to support their school families. Throughout the pandemic, this drove decision-making with the result that the school prioritised support for families. Staff delivered food packages and provided daily acts of collective worship. This reinforced a sense of community and fellowship in the school. Regular conversations online helped pupils to feel less isolated and enabled a smoother transition when school reopened. The vision was further lived out by working with the local community to provide laptops and dongles so that pupils could access learning at home.

The exciting and relevant curriculum is planned around learning experiences for all pupils where they are given opportunities to develop their strengths and talents. Forest school is a wonderful, inclusive, nurturing context in which all individuals, including adults, are able to flourish. Behaviour is impeccable throughout the school. The school's Christian ethos underpins behaviour management through the practice of forgiveness and reconciliation. Play leaders have responsible roles in helping to resolve disagreements amicably and forgivingly. The school 'pets as therapy' dog supports good mental health for pupils and adults. The breakfast club also strongly nurtures the wellbeing of the pupils. The school's vision and values are lived out explicitly in this respectful and safe environment.

Pupils engage positively with a variety of extra-curricular and leadership opportunities. The school's vision of following Jesus prompts pupils to make courageous choices. They talk about how they develop confidence and try out new skills. Engagement in engineering projects, such as the Goblin Car Club, fosters teamwork and self-confidence. Mixed year groups on Fabulous Fridays enable pupils to develop relationships. In clubs and throughout the school, pupils feel safe to make mistakes and learn from them, developing their character and resilience.

Spiritual, moral, social and character development are embedded into the curriculum. Big questions are a significant feature of lessons and enable pupils to develop a deep understanding of issues and inequalities in the world. This is evidenced in 'let's think' lessons where pupils are encouraged to respect each other's opinions by having opportunities to explore emotive and challenging themes.

The vision and values of the school are reflected in the way small acts of kindness and service to the local and wider community make a positive contribution to society. One pupil explained that he is proud that he is striving to help others and be the best he can be. Pupils are encouraged to consider how their talents and time can make a difference to people's lives. They are proud of their achievements in fundraising activities that involve self-sacrifice. The vision is lived out by pupils becoming pen pals with residents in the local care home. Residents benefit from the interaction and pupils benefit from thinking outside their immediate lives. Pupils are proud of their achievements as advocates of change. Campaigning successfully to reduce the speed limit outside their school impacts positively on the safety of the

community. Pupils meet with local magistrates and spend a day each year in a mock magistrate's court. This enables pupils to reflect on their values and a strong sense of right and wrong is nurtured. Pupils are aware that they can make a difference in God's world. They are able to compare and contrast their lives with a Church school link in Uganda. Pupils talk passionately about the toilet twinning project and how they plan to hold a cake sale for the Ukrainian refugees. However, pupils do not act independently as agents of change in the wider global community.

Partnerships are strong with the local Church and Diocese. Diocesan training impacts both on teaching and learning, as well as enabling teachers to support the school's Christian distinctiveness. Prior to the pandemic, visits to the church and major festivals took place with the whole school community. The community looks forward to re-engaging with this aspect of Church school life. The incumbent and governors play an active part in the school and know the school well.

Leadership in RE is strong. The RE lead has put in place robust systems of assessment which inform planning. Pupils are proud of their work and are able to explain their understanding of theological concepts. However, pupils' ability to engage critically with the concept of Christianity as a diverse, living world faith is undeveloped. Pupils enjoy learning about different religions and beliefs and this helps them to understand and respect different faiths and cultures.

Collective worship is an excellent expression of the school's vision. The pupils' church team confidently plans, leads and regularly monitors and evaluates worship. Pupils demonstrate a clear theological understanding of Bible stories, linking them to their LIFE values. A pupil expressed how she wants to try to be kind in everything she does, walking in the footsteps of Jesus. Big questions are asked and, as a result, pupils' spirituality is deepened. Following whole school worship on the theme of sacrifice, a pupil expressed that the more she learns about sacrifice, the more she realises that sacrifices can be harder when you are weaker.

All leaders in the school community aim to develop pupils who flourish and believe in themselves. This leads to the pupils making a positive contribution to society by living out the vision and making courageous life choices.

Contextual information about the school			
Date of inspection	22 March 2022	URN	116288
Date of previous inspection	19 May 2015		
School status	Voluntary controlled primary school	NOR	301
Name of MAT/Federation	n/a		
Diocese	Portsmouth & Winchester		
Headteacher	Veronica Stoodley		
Pupil profile	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.		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector's name	Gillian Morris	No.	1028