

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Bartholomew's Church of England VA Primary School, Haslemere

Address Derby Road, Haslemere, Surrey, United Kingdom, GU27 1BP

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

Good

The effectiveness of religious education (RE)

Good

School's vision

'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' (John 10:10) Inspired by Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness', our vision is to be an excellent school where outstanding practice, personalised learning, social development and spiritual growth are nurtured through a rich and dynamic curriculum which inspires every child to achieve success.

Key findings

- The unique St Bartholomew's Christian identity is monitored and nurtured by school leaders at all levels and strongly supported by their local church resulting in a community aiming for a common purpose.
- Pupils use the St Bartholomew's values of believe, achieve, respect, trust and succeed and the associated Bible stories to direct them daily. Although the vision informs the values, the weight of understanding is less with the vision than with the values themselves.
- Staff support all pupils to experience school 'life in all its fullness' through the many and varied curricular and extra curricular activities the school offers.
- Collective worship is a time when all in the community grow spiritually. Pupils, school staff, and local church leaders ably plan and lead worship. By doing so, there is potential for greater spiritual growth.
- The rich and dynamic religious education (RE) curriculum means that pupils have the opportunity to explore their own beliefs and the beliefs held by others, yet stop short of personal critical reflection.

Areas for development

- Strengthen the link between the knowledge of the vision and values so that the vision benefits from the strength of understanding the values hold.
- Pupil leaders to explore the opportunities found in different forms of worship and moments of stillness in order to deepen spiritual growth.

- To explore opportunities for pupils to develop critical reflection so they are not only able to respond to 'big questions' but also ask questions of themselves and others.

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 St Bartholomew's vision is known by all, uniquely developed and the foundation from which the school community experience 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). The longstanding values that spell out BARTS complement the vision. They are connected to Bible stories which in turn help pupils and staff alike understand how to live the vision. The newly appointed headteacher ensures the policies, behaviour code and day-to-day interactions flow from the vision, with forgiveness and reconciliation woven in. He expresses his desire to explore the language of the vision in the next phase of the school's development. This is timely, as the connection between the vision and values is not entirely understood within the community.

The church school identity is deeply rooted in the view the school has of itself. This is helped to a great extent by the faithful and mutually supportive relationship they have with St Bartholomew's church. It is not an accessory but a necessity of its character. Governors effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of this identity through visits, meetings and conversations with those in the school, taking action when misunderstandings occur. Leaders recognise that relationships with the diocese, other local churches and schools must not be taken for granted but nurtured. The care of staff within this context means that they are supported in their own development by the music, computing and RE subject leaders as well as the diocese.

Staff at St Bartholomew's go above and beyond to provide a 'rich and dynamic curriculum'. Pupils express great excitement at the array of provision both in and outside the classroom. The newly created allotment is an example of this, with a pupil identifying that the flowers and vegetables receive nurturing, just as the children do. Pupils can identify what spiritual growth is because of the emphasis the school place on it. The work on 'Ow and Wow!' moments demonstrate this. As such, the spiritual garden is currently under construction and the pupils are looking forward to the opportunities it will give for further spiritual growth. Pupils are able to answer 'big questions' with deepening critical reflection. However, pupils do not ask 'big questions' as readily. Those with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are warmly drawn into the community and cherished. Each SEND pupil is known and cared for from the moment they enter the school. The school's vision for 'personalised learning' means that any child who needs support, whether on the SEND register or not, should receive it. This is indeed demonstrated more generally in the interactions pupils have with staff and with one another. There is self-assuredness, not least in large gatherings such as collective worship. Here all pupils are willing to share their thoughts, responses and contributions with relaxed ease.

The school's vision shapes the collective worship provision, giving opportunity for spiritual growth through its exploration of the BARTS school values. Throughout the year, each value is looked at from a number of perspectives using engaging content from Bible stories and modern day retellings. This leads to personal reflection both at the time and after the worship. In addition to this rhythm of worship, Christian festivals are enjoyed. A celebration of Pentecost was a recent highlight. Nevertheless, there is limited exploration of expressions of worship. Staff give many examples of how collective worship has led them to reflect on their own spiritual life and God. Indeed, in St Bartholomew's you're 'never far away from the spiritual big picture'. Visual displays encourage the reader to reflect on the previous week's theme. The pupil worship group regularly plan and evaluate provision. They are clear that both classroom and whole school worship are invitations from God to come without compulsion, so all belong. A school song and prayer have been crafted uniquely by the St Bartholomew's community and are enthusiastically used by all. The worship lead and school leadership are unapologetic about the centrality of worship in school life. As a result, it was given priority throughout the pandemic and remains so. The worship lead carefully co-ordinates input from the leaders of two local churches and those within the school. A personalised approach to evaluation of worship is taken. Feedback from staff and pupils is gathered and used to inform planning. Balancing this information with what is required to help others 'respond to God's love' is achieved.

St Bartholomew's school community meets the challenge of living life in all its fullness head-on, supporting one another to do so. Modelled by the staff and encouraged by parents, pupils are self-determined and enterprising as they make a difference in other people's lives with their skills, time and money. From raising funds for classrooms in a twinned school in Uganda, to joining a local food waste charity, pupils see themselves as agents of change. Although the proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below the national average, the community engages with those who have less. The number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic members in the community is below the national average. Therefore, St Bartholomew's make a determined effort to enlarge their awareness of the diversity of cultures through trips and visitors. Bullying is rare and incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. During a time of grief, the St Bartholomew's community testified to care, compassion and hope despite loss. Furthermore, a profound expression of creativity emerged, expressing 'life in all its fullness' even in the depth of grief.

Owing to the priority given to RE by all leaders at St Bartholomew's, it is seen as a core subject. RE is given the time and resource advised within Church of England guidance. Learning RE is recognised as another avenue along which pupils 'grow spiritually' and appreciate the beliefs of others from a 'rich and dynamic curriculum'. They explore such topics as how the Passover is connected to the Last Supper and the importance of the Qur'an to Muslims today. This spiritual growth is welcomed by parents who testify to seeing this during lockdown learning. Learning support assistants ably support pupils ensuring everyone is included. Through the exploration of prominent religious characters in two consecutive years, pupils delve into scripture and the motivations behind actions. The RE lead both receives from and provides support to other schools within the diocese, very much enjoying and recognising the value of the partnership. Teacher questioning draws responses from pupils as they boldly tackle 'big questions'.



The effectiveness of RE is

Good

The teaching of RE expands pupils' understanding of themselves and the world around them. Knowledgeable teachers are motivated to research and deepen their understanding, thereby providing pupils with richer learning. They use the diocesan tracking system to help pupils understand their progress. During the pandemic lockdown an audit identifying gaps in knowledge was undertaken. This led to a temporary curriculum rewrite and ensures pupils are confident in their understanding of world faiths, not just Christianity.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	16 June 2022	URN	125242
Date of previous inspection	07 July 2015		
School status	VA	NOR	416
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation			
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Guildford		
Headteacher	Simon Avenell		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Below National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)	The headteacher was appointed permanently to his post in June 2022 .		
Inspector's name	Fiona Foreman	No.	0966