

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Amberley Parochial Primary School

Address School Lane, Amberley, Stroud, United Kingdom, GL5 5JG

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

Providing the rich soil that enables our children to develop deep roots and flourish. The Parable of the Sower, Matthew 13.

Key findings

- Guided by the well established Christian vision, the headteacher, ably supported by leaders, is successfully driving the school forward, developing deep roots and enabling flourishing.
- The Amberley immersion curriculum, shaped by the Christian vision, provides rich and deep learning opportunities.
- Pupils engage in a range of charitable and ethical activities. However, further work is needed to develop their understanding of how they can be agents of change.
- Collective worship is central to the life of the school for adults and pupils. Worship clearly expresses the Christian vision. However, monitoring and evaluation by leaders and governors is less established.
- Religious education (RE) is led effectively. RE teaching is valued by all children. The RE curriculum is rich and engaging.

Areas for development

- Sharpen systems to ensure the impact of the school's well established and embedded Christian vision is evaluated more effectively by governors.
- Enhance the range of opportunities provided for all pupils to engage in social action and to be courageous advocates for change in their local, national and global communities.
- Strengthen systems for planning, monitoring, and evaluating collective worship including a broader range of members of the community. This will ensure worship continues to evolve over time.

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

Amberley Parochial School provides a nurturing environment, where a creative curriculum and enrichment opportunities allow pupils and adults to grow the strong roots they need to flourish. The Parable of the Sower encapsulates the elements needed in the school's aim for pupils to become independent, reflective and aspirational learners for life. Christian vision and values run through the veins of the school.

Leaders and governors are clear how biblical teaching roots the well-established Christian vision and articulate with passion how the vision informs all school development and strategic priorities. The Christian vision informs and drives an infectious culture of continuous improvement where aspirations are high. The school effectively lives out its vision in partnerships. During the COVID-19 pandemic, well planned, high quality remote provision ensured learning could continue online. Bespoke options were tailored to the needs of individual families. For example, the school implemented a freezer bank for families and staff in need. Parents report that the school 'dealt amazingly with COVID' and they 'didn't miss a beat'. A community enterprise initiative involving staff and pupils is underway to open a community café and shop in the local church. This is enabling the school to 'feel connected' and establish 'deep roots' with the church and village community. Leaders and governors ensure stringent monitoring of teaching and learning through a robust system of self-evaluation. This ensures pupils continue to flourish academically. However, further refinement is needed on processes to evaluate the impact of the school's well established Christian vision.

The Christian vision drives all aspects of curriculum development. Leaders and governors strive for excellence. Leaders have devised and implemented a bold and ambitious Amberley immersion curriculum in response to the needs of the school community. RE, outdoor learning, physical education, spiritual growth and activities to support mental health and wellbeing are key strands to this aspirational curriculum. A bespoke phonics programme has also been designed and developed. Leaders articulate with passion how the Christian vision underpins all curriculum decisions, providing the 'rich soil' that ensures pupils make progress and flourish. This includes support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties which is a strength of the school. For example, early intervention is prioritised so no time is lost. Furthermore, leaders ensured post covid gaps in learning were swiftly addressed by increasing teaching capacity. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about provision for all pupils.

The school has a clear and well developed understanding of and approach to spiritual development. Regular and well planned opportunities are mapped into the curriculum allowing pupils to ask big questions and explore spiritual and ethical issues. Spiritual scrapbooks in each class showcase this impressive work. Pupils value spending time in the spiritual garden and the space to 'be with our own thoughts'.

Pupils engage in a range of fundraising, charity partnerships and social action projects. This is beginning to develop their understanding of their role as advocates of change. Recent projects have offered support for The Long Table social enterprise, funds for a link school in Kenya, and a campaign to be carbon emission neutral. Pupils link this work directly to the Christian vision, stating 'we are the fertile soil that will lead to a better world.' Well designed opportunities across the curriculum enable pupils to think globally and develop their understanding of disadvantage and deprivation. However, further work is needed to develop this beyond a sense of compassion into a concern for justice.

Relationships between all members of the community are strong and supportive. Pupils of all ages behave well and support each other. The school council took an active role in the recent re-writing of the behaviour policy to ensure it reflects the Christian vision and values. Bible stories connected to Christian values are used effectively to reinforce forgiveness and reconciliation. Pupils talk with clarity about ways in which the curriculum supports their understanding of difference, diversity and respect. Staff feel valued and supported at the school. They describe themselves as 'the Amberley family'. Staff are proud of their school and its achievements. The headteacher prioritises staff wellbeing through innovative and creative strategies. All staff and leaders have access to a wide range of professional development opportunities. These include National Professional Qualifications, providing school to school teaching and learning advisory support and local authority moderation. This ensures staff can continue to grow and flourish and share in the rich soil of Amberley.

Collective worship is highly valued by pupils, staff and parents and is at the heart of school life. Worship is invitational, inclusive and inspirational. Pupils appreciate the time for reflection and the opportunity to consider how to apply the school's values to their own lives. They clearly illustrate how worship helps them to flourish and live fruitful lives. The positive impact of worship can be seen throughout the school. Worship plays a significant part in the school's success. Staff are proud of the impact worship has and give a range of examples of how worship enriches them as adults. Worship is a special moment in the day for the whole school community and allows time to stop and consider the needs of others. Online worship was prioritised and valued during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils state that this 'kept us together'. Pupils experience a range of worship styles. Links with the local church are very well established where worship is held weekly. The local incumbent is a regular and popular visitor to school. Pre-pandemic, 'Open the Book' worship was enjoyed by all. These partnerships enrich the worship life of the school for all. The pupils' worship team effectively plan and lead worship with confidence. Puppets, role play, drama and music regularly enhance worship, along with beautiful singing from both pupils and adults. A variety of Anglican traditions are well established ensuring children understand the different elements of Christian worship. This includes the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God as three candles are lit. Prayer is a natural and valued part of the school culture. The worship team meet regularly with the headteacher. They consult with their peers to evaluate and improve the school's worship practice. Further refinement is needed to these systems to ensure a broader range of the school community is involved in planning, monitoring and evaluating worship.

Pupils talk with enthusiasm and passion about RE lessons. They find the subject interesting and challenging. Pupils are proud of their RE work which is of a high standard. They are very clear about the importance of learning about Christianity and a range of faiths and beliefs. They understand this helps them to develop respect and tolerance in addition to deepening and broadening their views. Pupils are clear that this helps them develop into well informed, respectful global citizens. As one child stated, 'school provides the rich soil so we can be active human beings'. The RE curriculum is well planned, sequential and is given high priority across the school. Enquiry, analysis and interpretation skills are strongly evident in lessons and from RE work. The highly effective RE leader has developed and embedded robust assessment systems, including bespoke progression grids linked to Understanding Christianity. Weekly leadership time allows the RE leader to support all teachers with planning and assessment, ensuring lessons are delivered with rigor and confidence. Furthermore, the RE leader devised a bespoke recovery curriculum. This ensured learning and progress continued at pace post pandemic. The RE leader is proactive in attending and sharing appropriate training and continuing professional development from the Diocese. This is further supplemented by additional reading and study. This has a positive impact on the quality of provision. The RE leader speaks with passion about how RE is an expression of the Christian vision. This can be clearly seen in practice.

The dedicated headteacher, ably supported by leaders has ensured the Christian vision at Amberley runs throughout school life and is the foundation of policy and practice. Strong Christian leadership is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. As one parent stated 'the headteacher is exceptional and our school is a gorgeous little family'.



The effectiveness of RE is

Good

RE is a strength of the school and reflects the Christian vision well. The curriculum is rich and engaging. Teaching and learning is consistently good and pupils' work is of a high standard. Pupils make good progress across the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able. Monitoring by leaders is effective. As a result, pupils are flourishing in RE.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	22 June 2022	URN	115689
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2015		
School status	VA	NOR	099
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation			
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Gloucester		
Headteacher	Sharon Cale		
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 is currently supporting another local school 2 days a week in her role as executive headteacher across both schools.		
Inspector's name	Christian McGuinness	No.	2113