

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Abbots Ripton CofE VA Primary	
Address	Wennington Road, Abbots Ripton, PE28 2LT
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	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Excellent

School's vision
<p>With God's help, and supported by our Christian community, we create firm foundations for all. We learn for life through discovery, independence and empowerment, enabling confidence. We achieve our best nurturing potential, widening horizons, supporting aspirations. We grow in faith developing and deepening our understanding of Christian values and God's message.</p> <p>We base this vision on the parable of the mustard seed. Mark 4:30-32.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision permeates school life as the golden thread binding the work of the school together. Pupils, staff and families flourish because they receive meticulous care and support. This encompasses academic and personal growth, mental health, wellbeing and spiritual development. • Thoughtful, caring and reflective leadership at all levels is a strength, encouraging bold, innovative practices. The inspirational headteacher is well supported by talented colleagues. Governors, through the highly effective 'faith matters' committee, robustly evaluate the empowering impact of the vision upon the community. • Spiritual development is excellent. Adults and pupils appreciate the rich opportunities they have to respond prayerfully to the wonderment of God's world. Pupils are encouraged to look beyond their locality and widen horizons through a global outlook. • Religious education (RE) is superb because leadership is inspirational, and the curriculum carefully planned and delivered so pupils flourish. Teachers inspire pupils to respond enthusiastically and knowledgeably to big questions asked, showing excellent religious literacy. Adaptations to RE ensure that pupils learn about a range of religions and world views and expand their appreciation of diversity. • Collective worship is remarkable because planning is exemplary. It is creative, follows the liturgical calendar and captures the pupils' interests and aspirations. As the heartbeat of the school day it involves pupils and adults in joyful reflection.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable pupils to develop an even deeper global outlook as they progress through the school. This is to ensure they develop the skills to become thoughtful and successful citizens of the world.

Inspection findings

This is an excellent Church school. It embodies the vision of a mustard seed planted and enabling pupils and adults to flourish. The well-established Christian vision underpins school life. Consequently, pupils are confident and aspirational, building interdependent and harmonious relationships. The vision is inspirationally introduced and motivates all to widen their horizons. The youngest pupils are empowered by the idea that small acts have a big impact on the world. The school community is fully alive to, and impacted by, the vision. Each person understands they are valued as a child of God.

The Christian vision empowers leaders at all levels to make wise decisions on the growth and development of this exemplary Church school. Partnerships are strong including exceptional links with the diocese, parents, community and local church. This facilitates sharing the innovative RE curriculum with, and supporting leadership in, other Church schools. The highly effective governing body rigorously reviews and provides excellent strategic direction in this distinctively Christian school. Wise decisions, informed by the vision, including introducing an independent nursery enhance family wellbeing. The 'faith matters' committee play their part in supporting changes to RE and improved opportunities to extend pupils' cultural awareness. The community, parish and school combine to make this a wonderful educational provision.

Pupils excel, are independent learners and make extremely good progress. The Christian vision drives aspiration so they develop wisdom, knowledge and skills to achieve well in life. The vision, embedded in the school's culture, nurtures the potential of all. It is at the heart of planning, teaching and subsequently, learning. Skilled, dedicated staff are determined to support and enhance learning experiences and therefore pupils are challenged and succeed. Pupils are extremely articulate. They ask searching questions and confidently use the language of Christian values when discussing ethical and spiritual issues. The creative curriculum encourages enthusiasm and ambition, enabling pupils, including the most able, to respond positively and flourish. Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are sensitively supported to be aspirational, broaden their horizons and thrive. Opportunities for deep thinking are woven throughout the curriculum. Although not yet fully developed, the curriculum encourages pupils to be inquisitive and curious about the wider world. An exciting range of extra-curricular opportunities are well supported.

Spirituality is a key to pupils' development. Throughout the curriculum there are learning opportunities to enable and expand it. The school's shared understanding puts creativity at its heart with peaceful worship areas deepening the pupils' experiences. Pupils respond to spiritual dimensions of learning with high level discussion, beautiful artwork and thoughtful writing. They are provided with opportunities to experience wonder and awe, encouragement to develop curiosity and time and space to think and reflect. The spiritual development of all deepens through opportunities for thoughtful responses, stillness and prayer within worship.

Families choose this school because of its Christian vision, values, warmth and welcome. They are proud of its reputation for aspiration and encouragement. Christian values including compassion and hope, arise from the deeply held vision permeating every aspect of school life. Behaviour is exemplary, characterised by a culture of forgiveness, reconciliation and respectful relationships. Pupils learn how to cope in adversity, disagree well, know how to stay safe and learn that bullying is unacceptable. A seemingly ordinary rewards system inspires pupils to work collaboratively, sharing experiences and creating interdependence. Pupils are exceptionally considerate and caring with a mature understanding of right and wrong. They value honesty, dignity and fairness. Year 6 buddies nurture and encourage the




newest pupils, engaging them in play so they immediately feel welcome and valuable members of the school community. As excellent role models they make a difference. The Christian vision shines through the excellent transition arrangements in place. This means new pupils quickly become independent and confident members of the school community. Equally, Abbots Ripton's ambition of 'learning for life' enables continued flourishing at secondary school.

To develop pupils' appreciation of diversity in society, the school designs cultural opportunities, such as hosting a Nepalese visitor. This enhances pupils' awareness and understanding of global issues like water poverty. Pupils have a strong sense of social justice, want to bring hope and make a difference to the disadvantaged. This makes them courageous advocates for others. Understanding the circumstances of Ukraine led to pupils making the Christian response of practical support through translation devices. From the small beginning of pupil discussions with social workers came the greater outcome of continuing support for a foodbank. Adults compassionately support all pupils, accepting and embracing needs and difference. A parent described this as rescuing pupils by believing in them. Staff actively promote good mental health, helping pupils overcome anxieties including those resulting from the impact of the COVID pandemic.

Worship is inspiring, inviting, inclusive and supported by pupil worship leaders. Meticulously planned, using the school's vision and values, worship celebrates the liturgical calendar, local and national priorities. It is the joyful heartbeat of school life, sustaining the community and addressing the needs and aspirations of all. Memorable, highly valued worship enthuses and energises all. The headteacher, staff, pupils and church partners collaborate to lead worship that is creative and biblically based. It demonstrates the breadth of Anglican tradition including the Eucharist. Pupils build on their experience of participating and evaluating worship to plan and deliver their own. 'Wise words' bookmarks were excitedly received by pupils who led a harvest service for the local care home. Leading worship is considered a privilege and pupils are respectful, responsive and reflective. Classroom worship tables, cherished by pupils, include wonderful artwork illustrating Christian values that encourage moments of reflection. Christian symbols are introduced skilfully and the youngest pupils understand why Christians have a cross. A versatile and inviting outdoor reflection area inspires pupils' spirituality, encouraging spontaneous prayer and quiet thoughtfulness.

At the centre of the curriculum is inspiring RE that engages and empowers. Pupils are proud of their work and enjoy the many opportunities for creative responses. All pupils are encouraged to excel in RE. Skilful questioning enables pupils to make deep, meaningful responses and shine in lively theological debate. Staff are delighted by their pupils' religious literacy and visitors astounded by the high standard of interactions. The accomplished RE leader facilitates staff development to ensure teaching and learning is of the highest order. Bold choices are made. Assessment ensures pupils understand their work and make progress. This approach, embraced by staff and pupils, is transformational, impacting on other subjects and motivating pupils to learn. In this, RE is an exemplar for the wider curriculum. Visitors and experiences, including the Bedford faith tour, enrich pupils' appreciation of religious diversity and world views.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Excellent	
	<p>RE is superb because the inspirational RE lead has developed a high quality RE curriculum and uses carefully chosen resources to underpin it. Staff deliver engaging lessons about Christianity as well as major world faiths. All pupils, including those with SEND, make exceptional progress as a consequence of the rich and engaging curriculum alongside the emphasis on debate and creativity.</p>			
Information				
School	Abbots Ripton CofE VA Primary	Inspection date	6 October 2022	
URN	110850	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	
Diocese/District	Ely	Pupils on roll	101	
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Matthews			
Chair of Governors	Dr Robin Price			
Inspector	Lynne Golding	No.	2124	