

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Chappel Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	The Street, Chappel, CO6 2DD
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	Requires Improvement
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
The Chappel family nurture independence and courage whilst promoting faith and a lasting passion for learning (John 10: 10).
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All are personally known and embraced within this small school community. The vision and associated values bind all together as a family who actively pursue the flourishing of all. • A clear, shared vision animates all aspects of school life. The distinctive Christian nature of the school vision has not been sufficiently explored. • Collective worship is a joyous expression of the school's vision. A well-planned and varied offer provides rich opportunities for spiritual reflection. Leaders and pupils are not yet involved in monitoring or evaluating worship. • Pupils develop independence, self-belief and a love of learning through an engaging curriculum offer. This offer is punctuated by opportunities to explore ethical issues. A shared definition of spirituality is not yet in place. • Religious education (RE) contributes well to pupils' religious literacy, allowing pupils to recognise and respect a diversity of beliefs.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore the theological roots of John 10: 10 so that a distinctive Christian vision is widely understood which shapes and enriches all aspects of school life. • To apply a shared understanding of spirituality across all areas of school life so that the spiritual needs of the school community are more fully met. • To enable collective worship to have a greater impact on pupil's spiritual development through opportunities for them to plan, lead and evaluate worship.

Inspection findings

The school's vision and associated values permeate many aspects of life at Chappel. Leaders readily articulate how the vision inspires them to provide a nurturing education for all and access to a range of new experiences. As a result, pupils benefit from a broad curriculum offer and an impressive range of extra-curricular opportunities; this includes all pupils learning musical instruments. Six values of courage, perseverance, respect, faith, compassion and independence have been recently revised by the school community. This revision has led to a shared pursuit of who the school wants to 'be' as a family. Some pupils can suggest biblical stories which link to these values. This sense of family is palpable, with values providing a shared language through which staff, governors and pupils pursue the flourishing of all. The distinctive Christian nature of their vision, however, has not been sufficiently considered. There is a shared secular understanding of the vision but school leaders have not explored what John 10: 10 means. As a result, a distinctive Christian vision is not in place. Leaders need to establish and sustain a shared Christian vision that recognises the school's foundation and robustly monitor the impact vision has across all aspects of school life.

Leaders have shaped a culture where all are embraced and personally known within this small school community. Pupils state how 'all are welcome here' and 'we all look after each other'. As a result, relationships are strong and bullying rare. The compassion of the school community is evident through a range of charitable partners the school has, such as Jeans for Genes and the Royal British Legion. The motivation to support others flows from the school's values; this outward-facing aspect of school life is not attributed to the vision. Pupils also write letters to residents of a local care home, which has a positive impact on those receiving. There do not currently exist opportunities for pupils to initiate their own ideas as agents of social change. Teamwork and the outliving of the school's values in a community-oriented way are celebrated and recognised through points for each house group.

Dedicated staff have ensured that pupils have opportunities to reflect upon the school's vision and values throughout the curriculum. Pupils cited how their thinking about Jonah and the whale helped them to think about courage, and the Qatar World Cup prompted reflections on treating others with respect. In addition, leaders have encouraged pupils to think critically and compassionately about a number of ethical issues. These include deforestation and the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Pupils link these encounters ably to wider curriculum thinking, such as the concept of stewardship in Christianity. A shared understanding of spirituality is not in place. As a result, how each curriculum area might contribute to pupils' spiritual development is currently underexplored. Those opportunities that do help pupils reflect spiritually are not currently recognised and often missed. Pupils are proud of their work and value opportunities to think hard, challenge themselves and respond creatively across the curriculum.

Partnerships forged with a local church school and Diocese of Chelmsford are positive and purposeful, enriching the daily experience of pupils and staff. The values of the school are an evident driving force in governor decision making. This has led to careful deliberation and action regarding staff well-being and professional development through school partnership. How governor decision making constellates around the school's vision is less clear from documentation and discussions. The link with St Barnabas' church contributes meaningfully to the spiritual life of the school. As well as marking significant periods of the church year together in church, the recent opportunity to reflect on the Queen's passing in church was a powerful moment for many.

Staff articulate how they see and interpret the vision in their roles. They bring their passion

for learning to their leadership and teaching; pupils are therefore excited by their studies and keen to learn. Staff express how the vision inspires them to offer a broad and enjoyable experience for all pupils rooted in the exploration and modelling of values. This lived experience of pupils is evident from displays around the school, celebrating a myriad of ways the community focus upon living compassionately toward one another. Staff do not see the vision as distinctively Christian. A deep sense of belonging and purpose has led to a collegiate culture where all staff support one another personally and professionally. A dedicated well-being governor also provides valued pastoral support through her presence and advocacy.

Collective worship is a striking expression of the school's vision. Pupils, staff and parents explain the importance of this shared time together where all are able to reflect deeply about self, others, God and how to live well as a 'family'. It is a joyful and participatory experience for the school community in ways which are inclusive and invitational. Pupils facilitate aspects of worship and offer their own prayers which are shared in the school's newsletter. Opportunities for pupils to contribute fully to the expression of the vision through independently planning and leading worship are limited. Worship is enriched by a range of leaders and worship styles which allows the school community to go deeper into its values. It inspires pupils to reflect on how they can live more respectfully, courageously and compassionately. Opportunities to reflect through story, prayer and celebration enrich worship; singing, in particular, unites and 'lifts' the community, contributing significantly to pupils' and adults' spirituality. A robust and continuous cycle of monitoring and evaluation of worship, which involves school leaders and pupils, is not in place. Consequently, leaders do not fully recognise the impact of worship on the life of the community.

RE has a high profile in the school. Leaders have shaped a well-sequenced curriculum offer which allows pupils to progress well in their subject knowledge and skills. Pupils talk about its importance in helping them to understand and appreciate a range of world religions and belief; this enables them to show respect and compassion to others. Rich exploration of religious texts helps pupils to reflect upon religious concepts, their own lives and the school values. For instance, the Good Samaritan and Jonah narratives helped pupils to reflect on what it means to live courageously. Pupils value the challenge of the subject and the space to raise and discuss big questions. With the absence of a biblically-rooted vision, RE is not yet understood as an expression of the vision. Pupils have a limited understanding of Christianity as a diverse, global faith. The new subject leader has accessed diocesan RE training which has been shared with other staff, developing collective expertise.

Information			
School	Chappel Church of England VC Primary School	Inspection date	25 November 2022
URN	115073	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Chelmsford	Pupils on roll	103
Headteacher	Julie Ingram		
Chair of Governors	Stephen Thompson		
Inspector	Ryan Parker	No.	982