

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Andrew's Church of England VC Primary School, Bulmer	
Address	Church Rd, Bulmer, Sudbury CO10 7EH
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

School's vision
We serve our community based on the love of God for everyone. We support each other to persevere, have the courage and confidence to be creative, imaginative and care for one another. Our school makes every one of us welcome, responds to our needs, and ensures that we are fulfilled.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vision is lived out in the school. It is exemplified in the high-level provision, organisation and creativity in place to respond to the needs of all. This is seen by leaders as an outworking of the love of God on which the vision is based. The spiritual life of the school is highly developed. It is vibrant and well-expressed in words and actions. Collective worship contributes to the spiritual development of the school community and is enjoyed and appreciated. However, opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning, leading and evaluating are not consistently established. Adults and pupils treat each other with dignity and respect. These values are embedded in the inclusive ethos of the school. Although pupils learn about difference and diversity through the curriculum, their understanding of it in the wider world is not developed. The new religious education (RE) curriculum is developing and strengthening pupils' skills and knowledge of Christianity. Understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews is not as deeply embedded.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed the newly established RE spiral curriculum so that pupils have a deeper understanding of a range of faith and worldviews. Broaden the scope of collective worship to involve pupils and more adults in its planning, monitoring and evaluation so that everyone's spiritual leadership is developed. Increase opportunities for pupils to encounter difference and diversity in all its forms so they can grow as global citizens to take their place in the wider world.

Inspection findings

St Andrew's Primary School is driven by its well-established vision. Developed collaboratively by stakeholders, it reflects the context of the community. In line with this, leaders act with courage and confidence to make provision for everyone to flourish. This determination is reflected in the growth of the school both spiritually and through increased pupil numbers. The school's values of respect, love, trust and forgiveness are articulated and embraced by pupils. Parents attribute positive behaviour seen at home to these. Parents recognise and value that staff are dedicated to nurturing their children. They record their support for the thoughtful decisions their children make about faith.

The vision has been strategically applied as the St Giles' and St Andrew's (SGASA) federation of schools has grown from two to three schools, forming the Chorus Federation. This has been of benefit of St Andrew's, the other schools in the federation and the wider community. All appreciate the opportunities such as outdoor learning, the strength of music provision and the educational visits that have increased as a result of partnership between the schools. Pupils' shared educational and spiritual experiences with others in the federation, have enriched learning and expanded their friendships in the community.

Adults act as positive role models for pupils, resulting in a culture of respect, dignity and support for all. The behaviour policy, led by the vision, encourages everyone to 'be the best that we can be.' It incorporates the biblical principal of forgiveness and promotes an understanding and acceptance of recognised mistakes. Pupils have confidence in staff to help resolve any issues with their peers. They are then able to forgive and move forward. Respect and tolerance are demonstrated in pupils' discussion. Thus, they learn to disagree well. Pupils play together across age groups on the playground, pursuing a variety of imaginative activities and games demonstrating their inclusivity and care for each other.

There is a clear and shared understanding of spiritual development, embedded in the curriculum through questioning and enquiry skills. In communal areas of the school, pupils have the opportunity to add their reflections to thought-provoking displays. The range of books in the library and for class study are chosen with care by staff, providing opportunities to think, reflect and respond to a variety of ideas. Year 6 pupils describe empathising with fictional characters who experience dilemmas and ethical issues, for example. There is a clear rationale for the design of the curriculum which secures learning across subject areas. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), are able to progress in their learning and flourish as a result. New initiatives, including the outdoor learning in the forest school area, support beliefs in the importance of creation and love of the natural world.

Ensuring that staff flourish is a high priority for the leadership. Staff members speak enthusiastically about the valuable professional development they receive. They are encouraged and supported to undertake National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) through the Church of England and Teach First partnership to enhance their practice and for leadership development. This motivates church school leaders of the future.

Pupils know it is important to help others. Serving their community in the love of God, they wrote messages of hope to local residents during lockdown. To increase pupils' global outlook, the school took part in the 'send my friend to school' campaign. With other partner schools, they lobbied to improve the educational opportunities for children around the world. Pupil representatives presented these aspirations to the Home Secretary. This enabled them to be courageous advocates against social injustice. Mindful of the school's relatively small size, leaders ensure that pupils have 'big opportunities.' Pupils are keen to embrace an understanding of the wider world, however they are unclear why it is important to do so. Opportunities to reflect upon difference and diversity are not consistently planned for in the curriculum.

Collective worship is a special time in the school day and pupils express their joy at taking part. It enables them to encounter the teachings of Jesus and has spiritual development at its heart. Sensitive planning, worship resonates with the needs of pupils and the community. Themes are explored deeply over time. Reflection and invitational prayer are included. To accentuate the point that worship does not just take place in the hall, pupils journey physically as well as spiritually. They take candles to their classes and corridors, placing them with reverence. The lights symbolise their hopes and aspirations for themselves and others. Reflection begun in the worship space continues in classrooms with creative and imaginative responses deepening the experience as pupils express ideas and prayers. They add these to displays that hold further significance for the community. Staff members say that worship is “a blessing” to them. Music and singing form an integral part of worship.

A member of the clergy team leads worship weekly, continuing the chosen theme. This gives cohesion to collective worship. The school holds special services such as Remembrance, Christmas and Ash Wednesday at the church. These support an understanding of the Christian year. Families value taking part and sharing worship with their children. Governors attend and monitor collective worship as part of their evaluation of the vision. This does not consistently involve pupils and other adults in all aspects of planning, monitoring and evaluation, however.

RE is given a high priority. The curriculum is designed to build on pupils’ previous learning as they move up through the school. Drama and art are used to cover areas of knowledge and deepen understanding. Pupils explore big questions through discussion and reasoning. Their recall and understanding of Christianity is clear and coherent. Whilst pupils study world religions and beliefs other than Christianity, their understanding of them and other worldviews is less well-established. This is recognised by leaders as the new spiral curriculum is in the process of being fully implemented. A strong relationship exists with Diocese of Chelmsford who provide advice and support on RE.

Information			
School	St Andrew’s Church of England VC Primary Church Rd, Bulmer, Sudbury CO10 7EH	Inspection date	27/01/23
URN	115067	VC/VA/Academy	VC
Diocese	Chelmsford	Pupils on roll	70
Federation	SGASA/ Chorus		
Headteacher	Jinnie Nichols		
Chair of Governors/ Trust Board	Penny Doe		
Inspector	Linda Wiskin	No.	c.21/22