

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Richard's Church of England VC First School, Evesham	
Address	Four Pools Lane, Evesham, WR11 1DU
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	Excellent

School's vision
<p>"I give you a new commandment: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13-24</p> <p>All of us are children of God, created uniquely, so at St Richard's we love one another as God loves us, we love to learn and we treat everyone with dignity and respect.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole school community shares a clear Christian vision for the school. This vision, and associated values, are clearly embedded and lived out daily in the life of the school. • Inspirational, affirming prayer during collective worship is actively embraced by all. There is opportunity for reflection and spiritual development, although there is not always have the opportunity for deeper spiritual thinking. • Uplifting, transformational collective worship in school, and in partnership with the church, is valued, biblical and affirming, positively influencing the lives of both pupils and staff. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity to evaluate worship. • There is a determined, effective focus on mental health and wellbeing. The school's knowledge and understanding of its pupils, and the interventions it delivers, provides effective support for the most vulnerable. • The talented leader for religious education (RE) ensures that pupils experience challenging, creative and appropriate programmes of learning. Pupils enjoy and retain their learning.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To further embed opportunities for spiritual development through deeper thinking, that run across the curriculum and through the whole life of the school and can be accessed by all pupils. • Further enhance working relationships with a range of places of worship, including the already established relationship with St Peter's, so that everyone benefits from greater involvement. • Enable opportunities for pupils to evaluate collective worship in order for them to better understand and refine their involvement.

Inspection findings

St Richard's is part of a wonderful community driven by a deeply embedded Christian vision. This vision, inspired by the words of Jesus, 'as I have loved you, so you must love one another', clearly drives everything at St Richard's. It is understood and articulated by all. The vision, underpinned by their values of friendship, caring, honesty, forgiveness, respect and trust, is understood by pupils and has a positive impact on many of their relationships with each other. They have an understanding that it comes from Jesus and it helps them to live their life better, 'we show everyone kindness because that's what Jesus would do.' As a result, the whole school community can articulate how this impacts on their lives, including enhancing wellbeing.

The headteacher, supported by a committed leadership team, enables everyone to flourish through his determined approach. Through his leadership there is a strong focus on the school's vision and values and as a result he is respected by staff, pupils and parents alike. The vision is having a positive impact on learning and relationships. Pupils, including disadvantaged and vulnerable, progress well because they are treated as unique individuals. Pastoral care, through dedicated wellbeing sessions with trained adults every week, is a strength. Those who need help are fully identified and supported through a range of specific supportive interventions. This ensures that all are nurtured and supported through difficult times, fully committing to their value of caring. Pupils talk about how the school vision and values help them to live their life. They explain how they are all unique, and how 'that will help us when we move to our next school.' Even the youngest of pupils can demonstrate an understanding of the school vision, and this is something that was repeated by parents.

Leaders use the vision to further shape and develop the curriculum. The focus on the 'uniqueness' of each child has helped to develop a bespoke curriculum to enhance personal development. All pupils are well-supported with their needs met effectively. Pupils and their parents value this broad and nurturing curriculum which flows naturally from the vision. This results in confident, independent learners who are ready and willing to contribute. Attitudes to behaviour and learning throughout the school are exemplary. Pupils treat each other with respect. Their actions and words show how important the biblical roots of the school vision are, that they love one another as God loves them.

When difficulties with relationships occur, they are restored with compassion. There is a biblical and practical understanding of reconciliation and forgiveness. A culture of reflection is valued across school and pupils explore spirituality through big questions across the curriculum. However, there is not currently a clear shared picture of how deeper thinking can impact on a child's spiritual development.

The school's vision of treating everyone with dignity and respect has widened pupils' perspectives to see a bigger picture and consider the needs of others beyond their own locality. Children value opportunities to try to enable change, including supporting charities which they themselves have identified. All children in Year 5 have a 'role of responsibility' and they take these roles very seriously. The link with a school in Malawi has had a profound impact on the children at St Richard's, being an ongoing part of the school's life.

Thoughtful, inspiring and inclusive collective worship is at the heart of this school and it expresses the Christian vision. Worship is a joyful and participatory experience. Periods of quiet and reflection are contrasted with joyous, interactive singing. It reflects the cycle of the Christian calendar. Worship, creatively planned by adults and pupils, ensures everyone is included, although there is not much opportunity for pupils to evaluate worship. The pupils' worship committee and prayer leaders, using prayers and traditions from the Bible and the



life and teaching of Jesus, are explored imaginatively. This ensures worship constantly refers to the school's vision and associated values, bringing the word of God to life. Innovative prayers written around the school vision, and the 'Trinity welcome', are key features of daily worship. Consequently, it is meaningful and accessible, although pupils would benefit from being more involved in evaluating worship. Ideas and initiatives brought in during the pandemic have continued, providing different ways for everyone to come together to worship. Pupils visit the church to celebrate key feasts and festivals. However, they don't have as much opportunity for involvement at other times during the year. Prayer and reflection spaces are treasured and accessible to all.

Religious education has a high profile in school. It is led effectively by the enthusiastic and knowledgeable RE lead, ensuring that learning challenges and excites pupils. Using the locally agreed syllabus and the 'Understanding Christianity' programme, it meets all statutory requirements. It presents opportunities to investigate, understand and reflect upon Christianity, major world religions and worldviews. Pupils flourish in RE because they are provided with a safe learning environment in which to explore the 'big questions'. They are developing a respectful understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to understand how they become global citizens. Pupils feel RE lessons are a safe space to explore religious, spiritual, and philosophical ideas, enabling them to be critical thinkers.

The school vision, embedded and supported fully by the inspirational headteacher and wider school team, ensures everyone connected to St Richard's has the opportunity to flourish.

Information			
School	St Richard's Church of England VC First School, Evesham	Inspection date	25 January 2023
URN	116810	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Worcester	Pupils on roll	319
Headteacher	Mark Ridlinton		
Chair of Governors	Katya Chaplin		
Inspector	David Dunn	No.	2105