

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Eastchurch Church of England Primary School	
Address	Warden Road, Eastchurch, ME12 4EJ
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
<p>"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" Philippians 4:13</p> <p>Through a journey of faith and exploration, we strive to enable all to grow as resilient life-long learners who value themselves and others. Rooted in God's love and our Christian values, we are a nurturing, inclusive community where all can flourish and achieve their full potential.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's Christian vision serves its context very well. It ensures that aspiration, perseverance and resilience underpin the learning and the wellbeing of the whole school community. The explicit connections between the biblical story chosen by the school, the vision statement and the values are not fully developed. • Secure and loving relationships form the bedrock of everything that happens within school. This means that staff, pupils and families have the confidence to flourish educationally, socially and emotionally. • The curriculum continues to be developed with sensitivity for the community which it serves. An approach to spiritual development which helps pupils to embrace new experiences thoughtfully is starting to impact positively on learning. • Collective worship is a key part of each school day, creating a strong sense of loving inclusion. It provides a safe space for personal reflection, day by day, so that pupils are inspired to live out the message they hear. • Religious education (RE) has been developed effectively to ensure consistency and high expectations which promote good pupil engagement.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make clear connections between the school's Christian vision statement and its biblical story, theology and the school's values in ways that are accessible to everyone. • Embed the school's shared approach to spiritual development across the emerging curriculum, in order to further raise aspiration and increase awareness of the wider world. • Ensure that the new RE curriculum builds on current good practice in order that meaningful links are made across a wider range of religions and worldviews.

Inspection findings

Following a period of considerable change and re-adjustment, this school has become a place where everyone values themselves and others. A challenging journey of school improvement and enrichment has been well supported by Aquila (the academy trust to which the school belongs) and by the Diocese. Above all, it is wholly committed leadership that has shaped this school which lives out its Christian vision in powerful ways. The inspirational headteacher provides the loving example for a dedicated and determined team at all levels across the school. All leaders and staff serve and nurture their school community, including its wider families. 'Being wanted', 'being loved' and 'being part of a family' are consistently offered as reasons by parents and governors for children's enthusiasm for school. The Christian vision and the school's values fit perfectly with the local context where there is a high level of financial and social need. All pupils and staff are encouraged to learn and develop which means that they achieve their personal goals and aim high. Governors and Aquila ensure that the school is monitored and reviewed through the lens of its Christian vision. Pupils are confident in their application of the school's values to their everyday lives and learning. They have some understanding of how the vision relates to the school's Bible story of the fishers of men. However, the links between the vision statement, the biblical story and the values is not clear to them.

The school is developing a curriculum which develops resilient life-long learners in a context where aspiration is needed. There is a determination in pupils to persevere and to aim for careers which are ambitious and help others. They know that their school value of courage helps them not to give up when learning is challenging. The launch of 'Fantastic Fridays' aims to promote creative subjects in immersive ways. It offers even more experiences that will be new to pupils in the school's particular context. Alongside this, the school has recently adopted a shared approach to spiritual development. This encourages pupils to look out at the world, reflect on what they see and then take the bold step to experience and embrace new things. This fresh outlook is beginning to enhance the pupils' journeys of faith and exploration. It has the potential to be expanded more widely across the whole curriculum which is not yet fully developed.

The basis of whole school flourishing lies in the high quality of relationships at every level. The consistent message across all stakeholders is that they are loved, cared for and nurtured. Each child is known by every member of staff. Families are included and supported in any and every way as needs arise. Practical and emotional support are offered unconditionally to ensure that pupils love to come to school and are ready to learn. All staff go well beyond what is expected of them, following the example of their leaders, to ensure that all are included and valued. Those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) thrive and are well prepared for secondary school, as are all pupils. They know where to go when they need to calm down or to resolve an issue. They understand how to disagree well because not everyone thinks or believes the same things. Staff members feel loved and supported by the team around them. Several speak of personal situations in which care has been exceptional. This has enabled them to heal and then to be in a position to extend a helping hand to others.

Pupils have respect for difference and diversity, including those of a range of religions and cultures in the school community. The school aims to raise awareness and discussion of the issues which those charities that they support seek to address. These include the needs of children throughout the world and the challenges of those who have disabilities. Parents speak of the ways in which younger and older pupils know each other well and are completely accepting of each other. Pupils feel safe in expressing their opinions about the world in which

they live, even when they differ from that of their peers. By applying values of love, forgiveness and kindness, they actively acknowledge the right of everyone to dignity and respect. Difficult conversations, such those about attendance, are undertaken with honesty and respect, which has resulted in improved attendance.

Pupils understand that collective worship is a time for being together and for personal reflection. This means that they are able to take steps on their spiritual journey by living out the messages they hear. 'Leading Lights' (pupils from Year 6) act as leaders and everyone joins in confidently with responses, songs and prayers. The songs are chosen by pupils and pupil voice feeds into improvements, for example by the introduction of more interactive elements. Staff feedback is regularly taken. Their reflections have deepened understanding of what makes a good act of worship in the classroom. Conversations between pupils, including with staff, during worship provides opportunities for everyone to value their own and others' ideas. Pupils' excitement about Friday worship demonstrates the importance of their personal aspirations and their joy in sharing what others achieve. A parish vacancy means that the school is seeking to establish links with other clergy on the island, whilst visits to the church building continue.

RE is well led and managed. Over the course of the past year, the new subject leader has established high expectations for teaching and learning. Her professional development has been well supported by the Diocese and by the Trust. Pupils' engagement is particularly evident through their responses to questions, especially the big questions posed in the 'Understanding Christianity' materials. Creative strategies are popular with pupils and provide effective ways through which to express their RE thinking. Teachers are increasingly using their shared approach to spiritual development to help pupils to make links between religions. This provides a secure foundation to strengthen these connections when introducing the new syllabus from September 2023.

Information			
School	Eastchurch Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	25 May 2023
URN	148118	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Canterbury	Pupils on roll	180
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Canterbury and Aquila MAT		
Headteacher	Naomi Ivory		
Chair of Governors	Aaron Janes		
Inspector	Virginia Corbyn	No.	86