

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Icklesham Church of England Primary School	
Address	High Fords, Winchelsea, TN36 4BX
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>We are a school built on Christian foundations where every individual is celebrated as unique. We aspire to be curious, compassionate, tolerant and active in a diverse world. We gather together to build a community that finds each person's gifts and nurtures them that their light may shine. We hold a vision of success for all. Let Your Light Shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven. Matthew 5:16</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian vision drives the rapid improvement in the school. Leaders are consistent and relentless in prioritising aspiration leading to flourishing in many areas and rich opportunities for all. • A rich seam of associated values which are lived out day by day mean that relationships are excellent. Pupils feel safe and trust all adults to help with their concerns. School staff experience and offer mutual support especially in times of professional and personal challenge. In no small part, this is the result of school leaders prioritising the wellbeing of all. • A high value is placed upon equality based upon embracing inclusion and fostering uniqueness. Difference and diversity are celebrated. All of this creates a community where all belong, thrive and are loved. • Collective worship provides a calm and safe spiritual space for all members of the school community. However, a shared approach to spiritual growth across the whole curriculum is less developed. The very strong relationship with the local church enriches prayer and reflection, both in school worship and in school services in the church. Pupils want to play a more active part in the leadership of this daily aspect of school life. • Continuing professional development to improve religious education (RE) results in high and consistent expectations, enhancing learning for all. Assessment is underdeveloped but there is a very firm foundation on which to build.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed an explicit and shared language of spirituality. This is to strengthen planned opportunities for spiritual flourishing across all aspects of school life. • Enhance opportunities for pupils to lead collective worship. This is to enable them to make full use of their unique talents and enthusiasm to enrich worship for all. • Develop manageable and meaningful assessment systems which support pupils' next steps of learning, enabling all to flourish in RE.

Inspection findings

Leaders' decisions to review the Christian vision drive Icklesham's rapid improvement as a Church school. This is because the vision is relevant for the current time and context of the school community. Pupils, staff and governors are motivated by a desire to 'let their light shine' for themselves and for each other. Associated values of joy, forgiveness, justice, service and love are the practical daily outworking of the vision. More recently, these have been extended by adding courage, excellence, perseverance and integrity, in order to support the pupils in fulfilling their full potential. Governors monitor and review the school closely, setting their priorities in line with the vision. School leaders never stand still in their efforts to support the wellbeing of all staff, pupils and families. They have made bold choices in order to create mental and emotional readiness for teaching and learning day by day. As a result, aspiration and flourishing lie at the heart of school life.

The principles of a 'curious curriculum', embedded prior to COVID, energise and motivate pupils within the current curriculum. It is based on enquiry and on making the most of each person's unique and God-given talents. Parents value the rich offer in school, beyond the academic. This enables their children to succeed because their gifts are recognised, nurtured and celebrated. It develops personal confidence which supports them into the future. The school's approach to spiritual development is in its infancy. The curiosity which underpins the curriculum provides an implicit recognition of spirituality. The extent to which there is an explicit shared understanding of spirituality and intentional planning of it is less evident.

The local vicar summarised what many others express, 'I am enjoying coming to school, they give and so I give back'. This giving is based upon deep relationships at all levels and these flow from a genuine engagement with the vision and values of the school. Pupils know that forgiveness is their first port of call when something goes wrong. They understand that this will help to mend broken relationships. Forgiveness and reconciliation also underpin effective policies, for example those which support improving attendance and the behaviour policy. Staff say that they are listened to and extremely well supported. They describe how their individual needs, both professional and personal, are always accommodated by the school. This creates a cohesive and close staff team, helping all in challenging times. Pupil voice drives changes and improvements. By listening, school leaders are able to make the best decisions about meeting individual needs and enabling each person's unique light to shine. For parents and carers, it is this which makes the school so special and effective. Whatever gifts their child has are discovered and nurtured to set them on the road to success.

The school's focus on fostering the unique gifts of every individual means that difference and diversity are simply accepted. Pupils say, 'We are different because we are unique'. For them, this is a positive feature of their daily lives. Living out their values day by day is a natural way of showing that all must be treated equally. Newcomers into their school community are actively and joyfully welcomed. For example, pupils learning some Ukrainian words, phrases and songs made a new family feel extremely welcome. Exploration of difference and diversity across the curriculum develops a growing understanding of how to challenge injustice. This is enhanced through studying the lives of people such as Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King. They relate their school value of courage to these figures and to themselves. Classes are named after contemporary people whom they identify as being relevant and effective advocates. This means that they strive to fight for justice as have these 'heroes'. Pupils' experiences of living in a small and loving community mean that they feel safe. They know that they can speak to a trusted adult or friend if they are worried or anxious. The close 'buddy' relationships across the age groups means that they look out for those who are sad, lonely or in need of support. This means that there is a strong culture of dignity

and respect.

Collective worship is a time for the whole school to find the space to reflect on the ways in which everyone seeks to let their light shine. Pupils speak with confidence about the practical application of their school values during worship. They can relate the teaching of Jesus and the example of Bible characters to their behaviour and attitudes. They understand that the heart of the Gospel message is about treating others as you would want to be treated. Sung worship is joyful. An invitation to offer suggestions for prayer is taken up by pupils and used by worship leaders. There is a clear sense that the messages heard in worship will be lived out. Worship planning and implementation are very well supported by the local vicar. Pupils express a desire to be more actively involved in leading worship in interactive and creative ways. Services in church are an important part of being a Church school for parents and carers. They feel welcomed. They speak of Christian teaching being made accessible and relevant for them.

RE is well led and managed. There has been a rapid improvement in teaching and learning in RE in line with the latest East Sussex Agreed Syllabus. Staff subject knowledge has been improved through training. This has contributed to high and consistent expectations for teaching and learning in the classroom. In turn, this leads to improved knowledge and understanding about a range of religions and worldviews. Pupils are able to compare and contrast beliefs and teachings with increasing confidence. They are encouraged to consider a 'wondering' question in each lesson. This helps them to ask and then seek to answer increasingly challenging questions. Effective assessment which sets the next steps for pupils is not yet established.

Information			
School	Icklesham Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	14 June 2023
URN	114527	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Chichester	Pupils on roll	103
Headteacher	Paula Robinson		
Chair of Governors	Karen Moore		
Inspector	Virginia Corbyn	No.	86