

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Ryecroft Church of England Middle School</b>	
Address	Ashbourne Road, Rocester, Uttoxeter, ST14 5NW
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>'Love each other as I have loved you' John 13 v 34-35</p> <p>We aim for every pupil to achieve their God-given academic and personal potential so they can make a positive impact in the world. We seek to be a community built on knowing God's love. Our values underpin all we do. We welcome all into our loving, happy and safe school.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is exceptionally well led with integrity, humility and kindness shown by senior leaders. Together, with committed governors, they ensure the Christian vision impacts positively. Adults and pupils are empowered to fulfil their potential. Structured and robust monitoring by governors is not fully embedded.</li> <li>• Collective worship supports all in the school community in a deep understanding of how they can both receive and show love. It leads to pupils being inspired to undertake acts of kindness both within the school and the wider world.</li> <li>• Positive partnerships with local churches assist leaders in sustaining the distinctiveness of the school as a Church school. Opportunities to build these more widely across the community are less well developed.</li> <li>• A deep understanding of spirituality sustains the school community, contributing significantly to wellbeing and personal development. Opportunities for individual reflection in form group worship are valued by pupils and adults.</li> <li>• Pupils enjoy religious education (RE). They are clear of its benefits in understanding the beliefs of others. They are less secure in their ability to discuss such beliefs in depth.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the vision and good practice of the school more widely in order that relationships can develop with a broader range of local community partners.</li> <li>• Embed a more structured approach to governor monitoring of the impact of the effectiveness of the school as a Church school. This is so that improvement planning is driven by the Christian vision and self-evaluation by all stakeholders.</li> <li>• Review the curriculum in RE to improve pupils' capacity to talk about religious concepts and ideas in greater depth.</li> </ul>

## Inspection findings

The Christian vision, founded on Jesus' commandment to love, is at the heart of Ryecroft Middle School. It underpins all relationships, policies, and practices. As a result, staff at the school have high aspirations for pupils to achieve their God-given potential. Through the embedding of the vision, they understand how choices made today influence their future. A well-structured Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education programme (PSHCE) supports this. It includes visits to universities and exploration of future career opportunities.

Senior staff lead with humility, kindness, and integrity. They ensure that the vision is at the centre of all the school is and does. Governors are passionate about the vision and its impact within the school. Together, they ensure the school's Christian foundation is recognised by all. However, governors do not currently have a robust and embedded approach to monitoring the impact of the vision.

Associated biblically based values including trust, inspiration and perseverance express the vision. They are embedded in the life of the school. Woven through pastoral care and collective worship, pupils think deeply about the relevance of them. They help shape the citizens they are now and those they aspire to become. Well-structured opportunities to experience diversity ensures pupils treat others with respect. Pupils recognise similarities of life in Cambodia with their own lives. They acknowledge that 'we are all just people, trying to live our lives'.

The vision inspires curriculum design. Specialist staff in different subject areas provide expertise for pupils in both key stages. As a result, engagement in lessons is high. The vision drives staff to encourage all to reach their potential and they are dedicated in their support. Routine intervention and small group sessions provide effective opportunities for pupils to receive help with their learning. Within lessons they are encouraged to ask for help independently. They value, and benefit from, this. As one pupil rightly said, 'teachers are always ready to help me.'

Care for all pupils, but especially the most vulnerable, is underpinned by love. Leaders speak of that love as being like 'the yeast in a batch of dough'. They know their pupils and families well and acknowledge that the needs of whole families matter. Parents and pupils see love expressed through acts of kindness. Practical and emotional support are offered to everyone. Pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) grow in confidence. Parents are rightly fulsome in their praise for the impact these expressions of love had on their families.

The vision drives the approach towards behaviour management. Forgiveness and reconciliation are key. Reflection upon how their actions today can shape their futures is commonplace for pupils. Additionally, effective emotional and wellbeing support is provided by a Christian youth worker. In expressing God's love through the vision, all adults care deeply for the wellbeing of pupils. The uniqueness of individuals is carefully considered and celebrated. This enables each one to feel proud of who they are.

Partnerships with local churches are strong. Clergy from the local parish, alongside a Christian youth worker, enhance many aspects of school life. Their involvement is highly valued. It ensures that the school is recognised as a distinctive Christian community in the locality. However, partnerships with the wider community are less impactful. Leaders benefit from the partnership with the diocese who provide guidance with Church school development, alongside improvements to the quality of R.E. The Uttoxeter Learning Trust knows the school well. They work in partnership to enhance positive outcomes for pupils and staff. There is a shared commitment



to encouraging and supporting one another, to enable all to reach their God-given potential. The approachability of leaders at Ryecroft enables staff to feel valued in their roles. The sense of community and support for one other is strong and so staff flourish.

The vision drives pupils to think deeply about others, alongside care of the earth. They routinely advocate for causes within school and beyond. Providing support to others who are feeling anxious through a wellbeing club being one example. Alongside this the 'Go Girl' initiative, led by pupils, encourages more girls into sport. Consequently, all know their wellbeing is important, not just to staff, but to each other.

Collective worship effectively inspires many of the causes for which pupils take action. Following worship that focused on Kenya, a 'Think Tank' was set up. Pupils discussed how they could effectively respond to the needs they had been made aware of. Resources were collected to support a Kenyan school.

Opportunities for reflection occur throughout the school day, including across the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to think about their learning and questions arising from it. This aids their engagement with global, as well as more personal, issues. A room known as '3:16' provides a space for reflection. Pupils appreciate it as a place to 'take time out' and 'think about God and me'.

Acts of worship, alongside prayer, unite the school and strongly express the vision of a community centred around love. The highly effective pupil worship group, 'God Loves Our Worship' (GLOW) assists with the planning and leadership. Opportunities for their own spiritual development are valued. 'Being part of GLOW has helped me think more deeply about God and God's plan for me', rightly exemplifies this. Worship in form groups provides time for deeper, more personal reflection. Such occasions are appreciated by pupils and staff. They say that it gives time to 'calm down' and 'be with God'. Where creative responses are made, these are displayed in classrooms. They are referred to at other times in form groups, providing a regular reminder of the relevance of Christian faith to life today. Monitoring takes place through pupil voice. As a result, they feel involved.

A newly appointed leader for RE is driving forward improvements. The curriculum enables pupils to think critically about faith, engaging with beliefs from a range of religions and worldviews. They have a good understanding of Christianity as a living world faith. However, their ability to talk about such faith and beliefs in depth is limited. RE is enjoyed because lessons are thought provoking and based on enquiry. As a result, they are deepening their understanding of life in a multi-faith world.



Information			
School	Ryecroft Church of England Middle School	Inspection date	7 July 2023
URN	145375	VC/VA/ Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Lichfield	Pupils on roll	196
MAT/Federation	Uttoxeter Learning Trust		
Headteacher	Annie Grattage		
Chair of Governors	Oliver Howlett		
Inspector	Jane Lewis	No.	27