

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, Liss	
Address	Drift Road, Blackmoor, Liss, GU33 6BN
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
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
We nurture self-motivated, resilient, enquiring children whose friendships grow, as they learn to respect the needs of others and flourish physically, academically and spiritually. We educate them within a Christian ethos to unlock their innate God-given potential and to develop an understanding of wisdom, faith and human dignity.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing developments in religious education (RE) introduce new approaches which engage pupils, develop curiosity and shape beliefs. Monitoring strategies in RE are being refined to enable further support for vulnerable pupils, as well extending opportunities for more to work at greater depth. • Leaders create a culture of identifying the very best practice to meet pupils' needs so they can fulfil their potential. This shapes a strong staff team and grows future Church school leaders. • The vision drives staff to use a variety of strategies which enable pupils with a range of needs to flourish. The support for inclusion is outstanding, it builds trusting relationships with families so all feel valued. • The vision is central to driving improvements and creating a culture of high expectations. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to express their deepening spiritual thinking in a variety of ways. • Collective worship plays a major role in deepening pupils' understanding of the vision and what this looks like. Pupils' role in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship is not fully developed.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable pupils to have further opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship so they feel they have greater ownership in this area and can contribute to improvements. • Refine assessment strategies in RE to enable further support to be put in place for vulnerable pupils. • Ensure pupils have a wider range of ways of expressing their deeper thinking in spirituality. Support pupils to develop a language which helps them to verbalise their thinking easily.

Inspection findings

St Matthew's Christian vision effectively drives the school's aspirations for each pupil. This provides clear strategic direction for improvement. The vision addresses the needs of the community. There is an emphasis on welcoming everyone into this school family. The vision widens pupils' understanding of the world and raises self-belief. The vision promotes a sense of growing and fulfilling potential. Leaders articulate a thoughtful understanding of the theological principles underpinning the vision. They perceive their responsibility as enabling each pupil to become the best they can be. Jesus' teachings are used to show how all can live well together. Leaders create a culture of finding the very best practice to meet pupils' needs. This involves giving staff the autonomy to research initiatives and grow their own talents. A cohesive staff team see their role as living out the vision, so all see the difference it makes. Leaders astutely identify priorities for development. Governors are committed to their role, they challenge the school, developing their knowledge and skills. There are clear plans for monitoring all aspects of being a Church school. Areas for improvement are identified and acted upon.

The provision for meeting pupils' diverse needs fulfils the vision enabling all to develop faith in themselves. Pupil 'passports' give specific guidance, often individualised, to meet specific needs. Pupils develop a good awareness of their emotions, with some identifying specific strategies which help them when they are anxious. The quality and impact of nurture for pupils from all backgrounds is recognised by a local authority award. Staff build trusting relationships with families, enabling parents to further support their children. Pupil 'ambassadors' play an influential role in welcoming everyone, so they feel valued. The culture of supporting one another is embedded across the school. Pupils' mental health and wellbeing have a high priority with dedicated mindfulness sessions each day. This enables all to use approaches which help them to be calm. An affirming culture of aspiration underpins this work. Learning experiences are closely matched to pupils' needs, so they feel successful. The language of using mistakes as a springboard for further learning inspires pupils. Personalised next steps feedback and a variety of opportunities, for example, playing a musical instrument, grows self-belief.

There is a relentless drive to introduce best practice approaches in RE and refine initiatives so they deepen pupils' thinking. Pupils enjoy the challenges of responding to 'big questions'. They draw upon their good biblical knowledge and are confident to verbalise ideas. They listen to peers' opinions and recognise how these shape their thoughts. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of RE skills, such as enquiry. They know where and how they enhance learning. Knowledge of core religious concepts and Christianity as a living faith is growing. The RE leader enhances staff subject knowledge of Christianity and a range of worldviews. Visitors lead to pupils extending their understanding of worldviews, so they make insightful comparisons. Many pupils feel RE themes challenge and extend their thinking. They value new ways of sharing ideas, through debates and drama. Assessment strategies are being refined. Teachers are beginning to identify how further support enables vulnerable pupils to make better progress. The subject leader ensures the subject meets statutory requirements. She leads the local RE hub, sharing expertise and supports other schools.

A wide variety of learning experiences enable pupils to fulfil the vision of growing their curiosity. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual flourishing are woven through all subjects, encouraging greater reflection. Pupils confidently use a structure which helps them to organise their ideas. However, pupils are not able to express their thoughts in a variety of ways. Planned experiences progressively enhance pupils' understanding of global




communities. The school sponsors a child in Kenya, allowing pupils to explore cultures and customs. Every year each class initiates a project to enhance resources at this school and address inequality. This extends their awareness of cultures and disadvantage. Exploring rainforests extends awareness of caring for God's world, leading to a focus on recycling. Pupils enthusiastically articulate the impact of their project to protect Natterjack toads, who live in the area. This leads to additional action to support endangered wildlife. Pupils show a well-developed appreciation of diversity, showing respect for all. This comes from presentations by families celebrating their cultures, for instance Polish Christmas. A highly developed selection of literature texts stimulate pupils to wrestle with ideas on refugees, stereotypes and injustice. Pupils are confident to become agents for change, where there is a culture of reaching out to others. They increasingly recognise how their actions make a difference for others.

Collective worship plays an influential role in enabling pupils to live out the vision by deepening their understanding of wisdom and faith. This enables all to perceive what the vision looks like and the difference it makes. Planning for worship effectively supports all staff to lead class worship, where themes are explored at an age-appropriate level. Pupils enjoy the use of puppets who help them to understand new themes. These raise understanding of Christian values, who are depicted as bears. A 'bear' award recognises pupils who live out a value and the diverse areas where these make a difference. The awards are highly treasured and shape thinking. Pupils' understanding of prayer is deepened by the annual prayer room. For instance, pupils use pebbles to show when they reflect or where they are thankful. A detailed appreciation of Christian festivals is evident and their importance for Christians. Themes from worship are woven into other areas of learning so their importance is extended. These inspire pupils leading to their care for God's world. Pupils have a role in organising the space for worship, but their contribution to planning, leading and evaluating is not fully developed.

Leaders unlock pupils' innate God-given talents through focused partnerships which enrich provision. Links with a cluster of schools grows subject leaders' skills and shares best practice. The diocese offers specialised training. This has an impact, for instance raising the impact of reflection spaces. Collective worship is supported by the local church, they provide governors and give pastoral care. Together they contribute to building a sense of community in the locality.

The vision and linked Christian values show how all can live well together. Pupils of all beliefs appreciate how these shape their actions. They treat one another with dignity and respect. Everyone appreciates that they have a role in building one another up. Christian values are used to inform discussions when mistakes are made, so all can move on together. There is a real sense of being a family which the vision perpetuates.



	The effectiveness of RE is		Good
	<p>The subject leader has created a cohesive curriculum for RE. It draws on best practice, where staff questioning progressively deepens pupils' thinking. These resources are shared widely with other local schools. Teaching is good and there are some aspects of excellent practice. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. The school is aware that further planned opportunities would enable more pupils to explore themes at a greater depth.</p>		
Information			
School	St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, Liss	Inspection date	11 July 2023
URN	116352	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided
Diocese/District	Portsmouth; Winchester	Pupils on roll	208
Headteacher	Kay Pennicotte- Henrie		
Chair of Governors	Michelle Jenkins		
Inspector	David Hatrey	No.	844