

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Staplecross Methodist Primary School	
Address	Bodiam Road, Staplecross, Robertsbridge, TN32 5QD
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>At Staplecross we learn together look after each other and work to achieve our very best. Our school is a community where, reflecting a Methodist ethos, we all play our part in making sure every child matters.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staplecross is a school founded on the Methodist 'For all' principles. It is a highly inclusive learning community which has built a 'Bridge' between its Anglican partner school. This respects the uniqueness of each partner. However, monitoring of the impact of the vision is not explicitly informing school development plans. • Support for pupils who are more vulnerable is excellent. Lives are transformed. All ages at Staplecross learn together, look after each other and so flourish in their learning and personal development. • Spiritual flourishing occurs across the curriculum and through collective worship. Adults and pupils delight in expressing their thoughts and feelings in words and creative arts. At this time, a shared understanding and language around spiritual development is less developed. • Collective worship is well-planned and honours the Methodist foundation. 'Assemblies' enable pupils to reflect and respond to Christian teaching. The impact of worship on adults is limited as not all attend on a regular basis. • Religious education (RE) is outstanding. Pupils have an impressive depth of knowledge and understanding of topics studied. RE makes a significant contribution to pupils' awareness of their place in our diverse and multi-faith world.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure leaders' monitoring references the Christian vision so that it explicitly drives the direction of the school as a Methodist school. • Review the provision for collective worship so that it has a wider, positive impact on the flourishing of adults and pupils in the school community. • Develop a shared understanding of spirituality in order to support adults and pupils to better articulate their spiritual growth.



Inspection findings

Staplecross's vision is securely rooted in John Wesley's teaching. The school is a living testament to his commitment that all should feel able to come close to God. Wesley's mission of making Christianity accessible to all people led to the founding of schools such as this. Staplecross is built from goodness and encourages all involved to pursue a good life in the service of others. Adults and pupils live and breathe this vision, so simply expressed and such a touchstone to guide actions and learning. Pupils talk with insight that 'love is not just hugs, it is about being a good person'.

The commitment to accessibility and sharing of learning is exemplified in the federation with Salehurst Church of England School. The Bridge Federation unites the schools. Their shared commitment means both schools thrive as respected partners while honouring the distinct heritage of each. Leaders receive encouraging support from the Methodist regional leader of education. Staff benefit from sharing professional development and exchange good practice across the Bridge. Several key staff work across both schools, and this allows for considerable flexibility in provision. For example, the support for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is adapted to different needs. As a result, more vulnerable pupils blossom and thrive. Pupils and families who experience additional needs find a listening ear, sympathy and practical support. Often, staff help parents to access specialist help for their children. Undoubtedly, the federation makes both schools stronger. Their unique partnership is an example of a flourishing cooperative model between different traditions of schools. Leaders, including governors, plan for the ongoing development of the school. At this time, their plans are not directly informed by their consideration of the Christian vision.

Staplecross is a very special place. It provides a warm and caring setting for all pupils to flourish. Staff know their charges extremely well. They nurture talents and interests through a varied and highly creative curriculum. Learning is enriched by the wonderful range of outdoor spaces. Close partnerships with the local community and parents benefit the school. Parents coordinated and renovated the delightful outside areas for younger children. The multi-use games area (MUGA) was jointly funded by the local community and so school and villagers share the excellent facility. Pupils receive an enviable offer of sports, arts and outdoor activities in addition their timetabled curriculum. As a result, they enjoy school and overall attendance is much improved. While this remains an ongoing task, leaders are determined that every pupil makes the most of the learning opportunities in school.

Every day there are chances for pupils to do good work for others. A number of pupil leadership roles develop their ability to provide support to others in need. For example, pupils helped coordinate a fundraising cycle which raised over £2800 for charity.

Across the school, there are many opportunities for spiritual growth. The curriculum encourages pupil to reflect and consider life's 'big questions'. Adults and pupils are at an early stage of developing their shared understanding of spirituality. Nevertheless, teachers work hard to make learning thought-provoking, engaging and fun. Impressive provision for early years gives children the best possible start. Teachers are ably supported by classroom assistants who share the same commitment to show love in their work with and for pupils. Staff are well supported and feel valued. Many accurately describe the exceptionally caring, family feel of the school. This supports them professionally and personally.

Collective worship provides additional spiritual nourishment. It gives due reverence to the life and teachings of John Wesley, so that pupils are aware of the context of the school. However, some pupils are unclear how Methodism connects to Christianity. Worship has



clear, Christian elements, including rejoicing in Wesleyan and other songs, Bible stores and time for prayers or reflection. It is not always clear that pupils are invited, not expected, to pray, as their views allow. Time together is inclusive of all pupils, but not all staff. This limits the impact worship has on adults over time. Pupils greet each other warmly and listen attentively to the themes explored. They particularly enjoy celebrating the good work they do in lessons. They express their thoughts and views on faith with refreshing honesty and confidence. Links with the local Anglican church and Methodist minister means that pupils are aware of different traditions of worship within Christianity. Overall, time for worship has a good impact on the school, however there are weaker elements that require attention.

Religious education is simply stunning. The subject makes a profound contribution to the global perspective of pupils' lives. RE is exceptionally well considered to reflect the vision of ensuring every child matters, wherever they are in the world. The Methodist principle of 'all we can' is strongly represented in the confidence of pupils to articulate their learning. Teachers have a wide and broad depth of knowledge of the religions and worldviews studied. Consequently, pupils' horizons are widened. They are well-informed of the shared humanity and diversity in our world. RE is a significant strength of this school. The excellent work here has the potential to support other schools in delivering work of such high quality.

Staplecross is characterised by the care, compassion and commitment. This is a natural and faithful reflection of the original foundation of the school. The school visits Wesley's famous tree in Winchelsea. Adults and pupils, therefore, know the roots of the school's foundation go deep into the heart of their community.

Information			
School	Staplecross Methodist Primary School	Inspection date	11 July 2023
URN	114531	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Methodist	Pupils on roll	93
Executive Headteacher/ Head of School	Liz Avard/ Jo Meeds		
Chair of Governors	Gill Atkinson		
Inspector	Allyson Taylor	No.	768