

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Cranbrook Church of England Primary School	
Address	Carriers Road, Cranbrook, TN17 3JZ
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
We provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating learning environment rooted in Christian values, enabling children to overcome obstacles, seek opportunities and aim high. We recognise the limitless potential of every member of our school and nurture their unique talents so that all can shine in their classroom and wider communities.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole school community is united by its vision that all should shine. Pupils and adults flourish because staff and governors are motivated by the example of Christ. • Everyone at this highly inclusive school is dedicated to nurturing the pupils and adults in their care. Leaders help children and adults to shine by prioritising their mental health and wellbeing. • The religious education curriculum helps pupils to flourish by stimulating them with a wealth of rich knowledge and ideas. They love to think and talk about what they learn, but they sometimes cannot remember and explain the vocabulary and ideas that they have studied. • Collective worship enables pupils and adults to shine because they are invited to reflect the light of Christ. All are invited to consider how they should act in the light of Christ's teachings, but worship does not always support every aspect of the school's own definition of spiritual development. • The school is a beacon of generosity. The Christian vision inspires adults and children to welcome and raise money for those in need. Leaders have not, however, developed broader opportunities for pupils to speak out and take action to challenge injustice.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire pupils and adults to enhance their own spiritual development by reflecting on broader spiritual ideas in collective worship. • Support pupils to reflect more deeply on what they have learned in religious education by strengthening their recall and understanding of the vocabulary and ideas they have studied. • Give pupils more opportunities to speak out and act to challenge and overturn injustice.

Inspection findings

The whole school community is united in its determination to enable adults and pupils to shine. Leaders and governors explain how this vision arises from the teachings of Jesus, and how it supports the school's original foundation. The underlying Christian values of perseverance, ambition, respect and kindness grow explicitly from the vision. Pupils talk about the impact of these values on the life of the school, and leaders and governors describe how they help pupils to shine in their relationships with each other. Pupils and parents in particular value the 'shine award' given to pupils who demonstrate the school's values. Pupils also aspire to be chosen as 'lighthouse leaders' with special responsibility for leading worship and promoting the school's values. In addition, the school 'buddy system' strongly supports the Christian vision. By pairing the oldest and youngest pupils, both grow in confidence and shine as mentors and friends.

Leaders have worked closely with the Diocese of Canterbury to establish the right Christian vision for the school. They know how they want pupils and adults to flourish at Cranbrook through a sense of belonging and purpose. Pupils joyfully talk about this sense of belonging to their school, and eloquently express an understanding of their school's purpose for them. This purpose is embedded in the 'shine curriculum', which enables all pupils to flourish. In particular, it supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to shine as brightly as their peers. The outdoor 'forest school' provides a welcoming and stimulating environment. Here, pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) can practise their new language skills in a safe and calm environment.

Governors monitor the school effectively, ensuring that the Christian vision enables adults and pupils to flourish. Foundation governors pay particular attention to the impact that religious education (RE) has on the life of the school. They also liaise with the local parish church to ensure that the whole school community can celebrate major festivals such as Easter there together. The local church also helps pupils to flourish by providing Bibles for leavers and inviting pupils to the popular 'messy church'.

Leaders of this highly inclusive school are proud to describe themselves as a 'light on a hill'. They actively welcome all pupils from the locality regardless of any vulnerability or need. Pupils have a well-developed sense of how to relate to people who are different from them. They do this by learning how to build positive relationships at school, and learning from the curriculum about how to live well with people with different characteristics. As a result, parents and pupils say that the school deals well with any occasional conflict that may arise.

This sense of generosity also affects pupils' attitudes to the world beyond their school. They learn about issues of global justice, such as what is fair and unfair about international trade. They also enthusiastically raise money for charities that help people in need. The Christian vision inspires pupils to welcome and befriend newcomers to their community. Some pupils demonstrated this by singing with a Ukrainian choir and even releasing a Christmas record with them. The curriculum does not, however, routinely offer all pupils the same opportunity to learn about issues of justice. As a consequence, they are not all supported by the school to speak out and take action to tackle injustice.

The school understands the importance of good mental health and wellbeing in enabling people to shine. Governors make sure that the budget provides for a well-trained team with responsibility for the mental health of pupils and staff. This has created a deeply-embedded culture where staff support and care not just for pupils but for each other too.

Leaders and staff enthusiastically take responsibility for leading collective worship. This is because they understand its crucial role in living out the Christian vision. Pupils encounter

Jesus and his teachings from the Bible, and learn and talk about key Christian concepts such as the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Worship also helps pupils to know about important seasons in the church year such as Christmas and Easter. Adults and pupils reflect upon how they might respond to what they have learned in the way that they act towards other people. This has a positive impact on relationships in the school. This is because the Christian vision has made pupils conscious of the importance of helping others to aim high, and not being an obstacle to someone else's learning or wellbeing.

Worship routinely expresses the idea of the light of Christ enabling adults and pupils to shine. It helps pupils understand that they should be 'lighthouses' who shine for the protection and benefit of others. This symbolism runs through acts of worship, particularly in prayers, songs and moments of calm. This creates a deeply loving and nurturing atmosphere. Leaders are clear about the kind of spiritual development they want adults and pupils to experience. There are, however, aspects of this definition of spiritual flourishing that are not fully explored in acts of worship. These include beliefs about, and emotional responses to, broader spiritual ideas. As a consequence, adults and pupils do not always flourish in the fullest spiritual sense.

Pupils enjoy a high-quality RE curriculum that enables them to learn and grow in their knowledge of religious faiths, including Christianity. The curriculum is well-sequenced, enabling pupils to build increasingly high levels of religious understanding as they get older. For example, pupils in year 5 build on their factual knowledge of Islam to learn about the beliefs and practices of Muslims today. The curriculum challenges pupils to read the Bible and other ambitious texts. This enhances pupils' knowledge and helps them to respond to the thoughtful questions that teachers ask. For example, year 6 pupils are asked if they think Christians believe that the world is getting better or worse. Teachers are well supported by the RE subject leader, who works closely with the Diocese of Canterbury to ensure that pupils enjoy a rich RE curriculum. The RE subject leader regularly shares her expertise with teachers to improve their knowledge of the subject.

Pupils enjoy talking about what they understand by key Christian beliefs such as incarnation or Jesus' role as Messiah. They also enthusiastically explain their understanding of other faiths and worldviews they have studied. Sometimes, however, pupils cannot accurately explain the vocabulary they are using. As a result, they can be unclear in their knowledge of the beliefs of different faiths. This sometimes limits the effectiveness of the RE curriculum to enable pupils fully to flourish.

Information			
School	Cranbrook Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	10 July 2023
URN	118600	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Canterbury	Pupils on roll	205
Headteacher	Francesca Shaw		
Chair of Governors	Marcus Bell		
Inspector	Richard Hopkins	No.	2234