



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Horton Kirby Church of England Primary School	
Address	Horton Road, Horton Kirby, Dartford, DA4 9BN
School vision	
<p>Our school vision is to be a centre of excellence by providing a stimulating, safe, enjoyable and happy community where every child reaches their full potential to prepare for adult life. We wish for every individual to have a life-long passion for learning while creating memorable experiences and staying true to themselves.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspired by a well-known set of school values, a deeply supportive and nurturing culture ensures that every adult and pupil are championed. The wellbeing of all is a priority, and as a direct result of this, the whole school community thrives. • Leaders have created a wide range learning opportunities that meet the needs of all. Pupils regularly encounter life beyond the classroom through engaging experiences and trips . This promotes curiosity and a life-long love of learning. • Recent improvements to the religious education (RE) curriculum have transformed the provision, profile and place of the subject in the school. Pupils are engaged and have a wide appreciation of diversity within religions studied. • Pupils are encouraged to think about others and are empowered to be responsible citizens locally and globally. Kindness, service and mutual respect shape how everyone treats one another. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and trust leaders have not ensured that there is a theologically rooted Christian vision for the school that is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Therefore, school leaders should construct and embed a distinctively Christian vision that reflects the school’s context and Christian foundation. • Leaders, at all levels, should put in place robust systems to regularly monitor the effectiveness of Horton Kirby as a Church school. This is to enable the continual identification of strengths and areas of development to inform next steps. • School and trust leaders have not ensured that collective worship is enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. Therefore leaders should widen the opportunities for the school community to become more engaged and involved in acts of worship. This will ensure it has a greater impact on their life, actions and behaviour of all. • Continue to develop opportunities for pupils to actively respond to situations of injustice and disadvantage. • Further embed a shared understanding of spirituality, across all areas of school life. This will ensure that all moments of spirituality are celebrated and recognised. 	
Inspection findings	



Horton Kirby Church of England Primary School is a place where all feel included and known. Kindness and nurture root the culture of the school. Intentional decisions by school leaders ensure that the well-being of all is at the forefront of every policy and action. Parents and staff rightly champion the school's positive impact on the local community, as well as on their own lives. All are heard when sharing their concerns and have confidence in leaders to ensure everyone flourishes. Pupils and adults are supported through their darkest of times through practical guidance and counselling services. There is strong provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils thrive and make good progress in all areas of school life.

Led by the headteacher, potential in everyone is identified, cultivated and recognised. School staff are actively championed and their skills developed. This enables them to continue learning to further develop themselves and their practice. A myriad of learning experiences and extra-curricular clubs span across the arts and sport. These empower pupils to seek out and realise their talents. All interests and gifts are regularly celebrated during Friday worship.

The school's Christian values of responsibility, resilience, respect and reflection, 'the 4Rs', are deeply embedded across the school. However, there is not a clear understanding of how these values are recognisably Christian or linked to biblical teaching. 'The 4Rs' act as a moral compass, shaping behaviour and decisions at all levels. Pupils are regularly rewarded, through stickers and certificates, for living the values out. All age groups hold key leadership responsibilities. Pupils rightly describe the privilege of sitting with and supporting younger children at lunchtime. High value is also placed on leading elements within daily acts of worship. Moments of reflection are built into each day. Dedicated spaces around the school provide space for those who want to take some time out to reflect or pray. As a result, staff and pupils recognise the positive impact taking time to reflect can have on their well-being.

School and trust leaders have not ensured that there is a theologically rooted Christian vision for the school. Following input from the Trust and diocese, school leaders made attempts to root the vision biblically. Despite this guidance, the biblical passage is not clearly connected to the vision or the school's context. Through discussion with pupils and staff, it was clear that the chosen passage of scripture is not embedded or fully understood. As a result, it is not a lived reality within school. There are not robust systems in place to monitor and evaluate how the theologically rooted Christian vision is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Therefore, leaders understanding of how actions and decisions are linked to the vision is variable. As a consequence, leaders are not able to articulate how pupils and adults flourish as a result of the vision.

Local governors are incredibly supportive and work tirelessly for the school. They have a shared desire to ensure the pupils are at the centre of every decision and policy. Governors regularly challenge and question staff through their monitoring and meetings. This ensures money is spent wisely to allow leaders to put in place the best provision for all.

Horton Kirby benefits positively from being part of Aletheia Trust. The collegiate approach draws out and shares best practice across all schools. Regular meetings for leaders, led by the trust team, develops high quality provision and practice. As a result, leadership strength, curriculum opportunities and outcomes for all, have been positively enhanced through this guidance and input.

Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of learning opportunities. These inspire curiosity and new enriching interests. Rippled through each term are trips and experiences that expose pupils to life outside the classroom and village. Through planned and organic moments, spiritual development opportunities are evident. However, there is not a consistent approach to or articulation of spirituality across the school. As a result, some instances go unnoticed, so are not fully celebrated

or reflected upon. Texts within the English curriculum have been specifically chosen to mirror the '4 Rs' and global issues. This allows pupils to see the school's values enacted in everyday life. Focused studies also provide pupils with a realistic window into the world. Pupils understand the responsibility that comes with being a global citizen. They are beginning to advocate for others through charity work and raising awareness in and out of school. However, deeper opportunities for pupils to consider how they might respond to a situation of injustice is currently underdeveloped. The school community is incredibly generous, supporting many different charities locally and internationally. This has developed a deep respect and tolerance of those whose lives are different to their own. Being curious and asking questions is actively encouraged. Through effective speaking and listening strategies, pupils are given confidence and language to communicate well. This is evident in the language rich environments and the way pupils converse with all members of the school community. As a result, pupils flourish and develop a deep love of learning.

Adults and pupils value the opportunity to gather as one school within collective worship. It is an important part of the school day whether in the classroom or hall. All are invited to take part in worship, with pupils sharing how they enjoy acting out the stories being told. Singing brings joy to all. Invitational prayer opportunities happen throughout the school day. Pupils speak about places where they can go to reflect and record their prayers. However, the deeper impact of worship on the lives of all is less clear. Consequently, not everyone in the school community is flourishing spiritually.

Leaders have recently updated the RE curriculum following input from the diocese and connections with other church schools. It is now more relevant and engaging. Additional support, resources and training have been put in place for staff. This has empowered them to teach RE effectively. To enrich the pupil's understanding of believers, planned opportunities to visit places of worship has been built into the curriculum. They are encouraged to record their thinking and learning in RE in a variety of ways. This promotes greater creativity and captures a deeper level of thinking.

The inspection findings indicate that the school has strengths as a Church school but that there are issues that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. These relate to the school's Christian vision and collective worship. These are listed in the areas for development.

Information			
Inspection date	4 October 2023	URN	144099
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	236
Diocese	Rochester		
MAT/Federation	Aletheia Anglican Academies Trust		
Headteacher	Glenn Pollard		
Chair	Mark Till		
Inspector	Rebecca Swansbury	No.	970