



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ravensden Church of England Primary Academy	
Address	Vicarage Close, Ravensden, MK44 2RW
School vision	
<p>‘Let your light shine’</p> <p>A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.</p> <p>Matthew 514</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders, including those at trust level, exemplify the Christian vision. The common language for its outworking is found in the school’s six values. This means that pupils and adults work in harmony to ‘let their light shine’. • The Christian vision clearly impacts on the curriculum, enabling all to learn and shine as well-rounded pupils. The ‘golden threads of learning’ ensure that all pupils experience high-quality provision, tailored to their needs and abilities. • The daily coming together of the Ravensden family for collective worship is deeply valued by all. It is at the heart of school life, inspiring everyone to shine their light to support and serve others. Partnerships with the church, other trust schools and the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust (DSAMAT) are strong and mutually beneficial. • Support for those who have additional needs and for positive mental health and wellbeing is exemplary. All staff are unstinting in their determination that every pupil is well supported so they may shine and flourish. • Religious education (RE) has a high priority, offering a rich and engaging curriculum. It is well-led and resourced. As a result, pupils make good progress because they make strong connections between learning over time. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop pupils’ awareness of the wider world, so they may respond to injustice and become agents of change. This is to extend their engagement through a broader focus that continues to support local concerns, whilst embracing global issues. • Provide more planned opportunities for spiritual development through the curriculum so that pupils may explore spirituality in greater depth. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Ravensden is welcoming and nurturing to all. Inspired by the words of Jesus, leaders are passionate that everyone at the school can ‘shine their light’. The vision permeates the daily life of the school through its Christian values. These include respect, friendship, courage, determination, equality and</p>	



excellence. Pupils are able to give examples of how these make them think in order to make better choices. For instance, they show courage to try harder when they find tasks difficult. They value friendships and show kindness to each other. Staff show determination that all their pupils reach their potential whatever their barriers to learning. As a result, there are positive relationships between pupils and staff, enabling all to flourish.

Leaders are clear about how the vision promotes strategic decisions. Examples include supporting staff in their professional development, so that they can shine in their careers. Close collaboration with other schools means that valuable resources are shared wisely. The partnership with the DSAMAT is a strength at the school. It provides support through training, networking provision and advice. This benefits every adult and child at Ravensden. The vision of the trust, 'enabling all to flourish, rooted in God's love', resonates well with that of the school.

In order for pupils to shine in their learning, leaders ensure that the curriculum provides broad, rich opportunities. This enables all pupils to discover their individual gifts and strengths in order to shine in different ways. Because of its inclusive, caring reputation, a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) attend Ravensden. These pupils are supported with love and care to ensure they access every aspect of school life, with strong provision for individuals. The use of intervention initiatives, such as 'Fresh Start', enable all pupils to flourish, whatever their needs. Opportunities for spiritual development are found across the curriculum. However, there is no school-wide shared understanding of spirituality and it is not made specific in the current curriculum overview. Pupils' individual interests and talents are well-developed through extra-curricular sports and arts clubs that offer enrichment. This can be seen in the way the junior librarian club, organised by pupils, promotes a love of reading. Friendships between each other are also fostered through this activity.

Collective worship is the centre of the school day. Everyone enjoys coming together for this special time. Pupils sing with particular enthusiasm and joy. They value opportunities to plan and lead collective worship. All are invited to pray and have time for reflection. This is extended to classrooms where each has a reflection area where pupils may post their thoughts and feelings. The weekly 'shine' assemblies are especially appreciated. It is a time to celebrate how adults and children have displayed the values and vision in action during the week. Pupils are made to feel special and receive their shine awards with pride. The shine ambassadors play an important part in worship, making sure that pupils are recognised for showing their light. The local clergy make a considerable contribution to worship and the life of the school. The lit cross on the church is highly significant because it shines on a hill above the school. This brings light, hope and motivation to everyone in the community.

The school is exceptionally good at addressing mental health and wellbeing. Families are supported in numerous ways. These include counselling services and mental health awareness days. These help adults and pupils to learn how to access support for their individual needs. Workshops enable parents to learn about what their children study so they can help them at home. Governors are careful to include staff wellbeing on every meeting agenda and encourage staff feedback. As a result, teaching and support staff are warm in their praise for the approachable senior leadership. The school values play a part in ensuring wellbeing is a priority. A scheme called 'soft skills' is used and valued by all. This develops character, enabling pupils to shine and participate fully in school life. These include an emphasis on teamwork, growth mindset and resilience. Pupils relate how this helps them to be more confident and independent. They particularly enjoy being presented with a 'soft skills teddy' and marbles for their team for demonstrating these aptitudes. The effective behaviour policy, based on the values of love and forgiveness, rewards pupils for making positive choices.

The school's vision to 'see your light in your good deeds' is reflected in the school's culture of helping others, especially those in need. This can be seen in the way pupils actively engage in community work, such as litter picking. Pupils study the lives of inspirational figures such as John Bunyan, Nelson Mandela and Malala Yousafzai. This enables them to celebrate the achievements of those who shine their light on others. Topics such as Black History month and International Women's Day help to grow awareness of equality. The harvest festival, held in the church, enables pupils to demonstrate support for their local community. Gifts collected are donated to the foodbank in Bedford. The school works with several charities such as the 'Shoebox appeal' and is rightly proud of this. However, pupils are less aware of global campaigns that tackle injustice or inequality.

Pupils flourish in RE because leaders invest in the subject and ensure that it meets the requirements of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement. This outlines the specific expectations of schools in terms of RE provision. Aspects of the RE curriculum planning have connections to the vision. For instance, pupils are invited to consider how core beliefs and values link to enabling them to let their light shine. Following very recent revisions, the RE curriculum now incorporates the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. This is not fully embedded as staff are currently being trained to familiarise themselves with the new additions. Pupils ponder on the big questions such as, 'Why is the word of God important to Christians?' This enables them to think deeply about religious concepts and ideas. For instance, they consider whether the sense of God as creator conflicts or is compatible with science. Pupils retell stories, suggesting how characters in faith stories 'let their light shine'. Support staff work with less able pupils before lessons to share RE concepts they may struggle with. This enables the vulnerable to keep up with the pace of learning. Monitoring of progress in RE is effective. Assessment systems capture development of skills as well as knowledge and this is a strength. As a result of the quality of teaching and the rich curriculum, all pupils make good progress in the subject.

Ravensden is an inspirational school, rooted in Christian love. All members of the school community are able to 'shine their light' and flourish in this happy environment.

The inspection findings indicate that Ravensden Church of England Primary Academy School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	5 October 2023	URN	148334
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	75
Diocese	St Albans		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Anna Spyropoulos		
Chair	Isabel Harker		
Inspector	Jenny Earp	No.	288