

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Shere Church of England VA Infant School	
Address	Gomshall Lane, Shere, Guildford, GU5 9HB

School vision
<p>At Shere Church of England Infant School, we believe that all our children are growing together in God's garden. We work to nurture this growth, helping our children develop deep roots of Christian understanding, spirituality and guiding values. We empower our children to blossom in God's image, to do things with great love and to know that faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains. 'It is like a mustard seed; it grew and became a tree.'</p> <p>Matthew 13:31</p>
School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The clear Christian vision drives the strategic direction of the school. Decision making focuses on the development of all, enabling flourishing within a supportive environment.</li> <li>• The carefully planned curriculum is rich with opportunities for growth. The learning experiences, inspired by the vision, create moments for spirituality and an appreciation of God's creation.</li> <li>• Partnerships within the community are enriched by the vision of the school. This creates a safe space where all feel valued and supported to achieve great things.</li> <li>• All who gather for worship are respectful and recognise it as a time for spiritual prayer or reflection. The strong link with the Church of St James provides opportunities to learn about the teaching of Jesus.</li> <li>• High quality, well- planned religious education (RE) enables children to develop their understanding of Christianity within the local community.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broaden opportunities for children to experience a variety of invitational collective worship.</li> <li>• Embed the new Surrey Agreed Syllabus for RE to ensure children are developing their understanding of the diversity of religions and world views.</li> <li>• Deepen children's understanding of environmental issues so that they can make a difference in the wider world.</li> </ul>
Inspection findings

Shere Church of England Infant School is committed to the clear vision of growing children like young plants in a garden. This reflects the rural setting of the school in the Surrey Hills. All leaders interpret the vision of growth and nurture to apply to all members of the school family. Children are valued as individuals and flourish as a result of the Christian vision of the school. Teachers translate this into routines, creating a calm, welcoming atmosphere that enables children to thrive. There is a commitment to the needs of all, with early support organised for vulnerable children. Leaders utilise resources well to ensure all children achieve their best and develop confidence. For example, those who need help with their emotions benefit from reading to a local dog, when she visits. Parents

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appreciate the extra kindness for those who require emotional support. They value the care taken by the school to nurture positive working relationships with families. Governors contribute to the quality of support for vulnerable children through their monitoring. Governors are dedicated to maintaining the wellbeing of adults which helps to provide development and grow future leaders of church schools. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of all, so adults say they feel valued and listened to.

The partnership with St.James' Church enriches the Christian vision of the school because it supports the nurturing of children within the community. Members of the clergy team regularly lead collective worship, which is inclusive and engaging. They welcome children to the church because this enables them to enjoy and understand more about the Bible. Children are encouraged to be active during worship so that they can explore the theme or story of the week. For example, children showed their understanding of the example of St. Francis by sharing how they would be kind to an animal. Teachers also provide additional opportunities for reflection or stillness during the school day. By creating low-lit areas, they invite children to reflect in a meaningful way and to experience the nearness of God. All adults value the significance of Christian festivals because they encourage everyone to gather together. Leaders are dedicated to providing age-appropriate worship both in school and when visiting the church for festivals. This reinforces the sense of belonging for the school. Parents also appreciate visits to the church because this provides their children with opportunities to learn about the Christian faith.

The staff team deliberately utilise forest school learning to enhance the spiritual wellbeing of children. Time outdoors creates moments of awe and wonder. The shared understanding of spirituality expresses the vision through the phrase 'a child's way of being with God and God's way of being with the child.' Consequently, adults are able to articulate how spirituality is woven through the rich spiritual curriculum. Teachers also provide mirrors within classrooms, which offer children time to reflect on their uniqueness in the eyes of God. Through such strategies children are learning that they are loved for who they are. Leaders and teachers share the importance of caring for God's creation through the wider curriculum. The Eco Club is a real strength within the school and something that draws the local community together. Parents tend the school garden and lead environmental projects such as the 'Swap Shop.' Children are encouraged to walk to school, which raises their awareness of reducing traffic on their local roads. Through the school's participation in the church eco-fair, children are encouraged to be agents of change locally. This teaches children about conservation and reusing materials, which they share with their families. Due to this focus, children live out the school's guiding principle of community, respecting their immediate environment. However, they have limited experience with environmental issues in the wider world.

Because of the way they learn from the school's focus on its values, children have a good

understanding of right and wrong. However, they do not fully understand injustice. They are visibly caring towards each other. Leaders provide some opportunities for children to extend this love beyond the school through local charitable events. For example, children make cakes for the local open gardens. Leaders provide opportunities for children to learn about diversity through enriching activities. For example, the 'Country Day' organised by the School Council enabled children to discuss places they like to visit and sample a variety of cultural food. Diversity within families is celebrated by the school, which helps all to feel valued within the school community. For example, the stay and play for dads and father figures highlights 'special bonds' within families.

Leaders ensure RE has equal status within the curriculum, supporting teachers to develop high quality learning experiences. Because of this children have the opportunity to respond with their own beliefs and views. Children experience a well-planned sequence of learning about Christian beliefs. This increases their understanding of Jesus and the church as a place of worship. The decision to teach RE over a week is allowing children to develop their understanding. Leaders encourage visitors to talk about their faith, where possible. For example, children benefited from

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listening to a visiting muslim share his faith. Despite such activities, children are still developing their awareness of the diverse nature of religious beliefs and practice. Teachers value all children's learning because it is recorded in high quality floor books. Children who are deemed to be disadvantaged are fully supported within RE, helping them flourish alongside their peers. Teachers monitor children's individual progress so they are able to share with parents whether children are meeting age expectations. Teachers are provided with timely, relevant training from diocesan advisors, which inspires them to teach RE to a high standard. Governors monitor RE because this provides time to evaluate the impact of the Christian vision on all children. As a result of their commitment to RE, children receive their entitlement, and make progress in their learning.

Leaders believe that all children have the capacity to achieve great things. They are motivated by their Christian vision when faced with decisions that require wisdom to ensure they benefit all. For example, the formation of the Newlands Federation with another school delivers the vision but recognises Shere as a distinctive community. The vision underpins the school's guiding virtues of friendship, kindness, and community, nurturing all to live well. Children and their families within the local area are provided with a nurturing environment to help them grow as individuals valued for their uniqueness.

The inspection findings indicate that Shere Church of England Infant School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	5 October 2023	URN	125246
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	64
Diocese	Guildford		
MAT/Federation	Newlands Church of England Federation		

Executive Headteacher	Vicky Voller		
Chair	Jeni Colbourne		
Inspector	Helen Crolla	No.	918