

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Elham Church Primary School	
Address	Vicarage Lane, Elham, Canterbury, CT4 6TT
School vision	
<p>At our school, we embrace creation in our rural setting, striving to learn, contribute and achieve. As #TEAMELHAM, we respect, support and inspire each other. We are a community that holds each other to high standards, helping everyone to be the best they can be, held safe in the loving hands of God.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The well-known vision, rooted in the parable of Jesus feeding the 5000 is strongly enhanced through a set of associated values. The school has created an ethos that supports, inspires and respects pupils, parents and staff. This creates a strong sense of belonging impacting positively on learning and behaviour at all levels. Each unique individual is valued and loved. • Partnerships within the local community are strong and support the school in its ambition for all to flourish. Governors work closely with leaders; they challenge and support in line with the school's Christian vision. • Collective worship offers a safe place for all for thinking and reflecting. This plays a key part in pupils' understanding of the schools' Christian values and the relevance to their lives. They are confident in introducing and closing worship in addition to leading prayer. • Religious education (RE) is lead and taught well. Staff receive training to support with curriculum delivery. As a result, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice as well as an understanding of a range of world religions. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a shared understanding of spiritual development so that explicit opportunities for delivering this across the curriculum can be planned for. • Enhance the robustness of the monitoring of collective worship. This is to ensure that it continues to offer inspirational opportunities to enriches pupils' spiritual development. • Enhance planning and assessment in RE so that the curriculum provides greater opportunities to challenge and extend thinking for all. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Elham offers a warm welcome to all. The dedicated leadership team, staff and governors wholeheartedly promote the deeply Christian vision. Inspired by Jesus' teachings, respect, support and inspiration are spoken as gifts that enfold the school. Adults demonstrate Jesus' teaching in the love they show the school community. Therefore, pupils learn to respect, support, inspire and are inspired, shaping the citizens they are now and those they aspire to become. These Christian values have been carefully chosen to express the vision. Pupils understand the vision, and how it applies to</p>	

their life well. As an example, one pupil commented, 'If we all respect each other's beliefs the world would be a better place.' School values are celebrated at regular collective worships. Pupils aspire to be awarded Team Elham school pins recognising their contribution to school and community life within the school values.

Partnering with the diocese and local schools, supports staff in the enhancement of professional development opportunities. Strategic improvement plans ensure training needs at all levels are addressed in school. Teachers at an early stage in their career, are very well supported. As a result, all staff have high levels of skill and confidence. Committed governors know the school well. They challenge and support school leaders on the impact of the Christian vision. Governors have responsibility for areas within the school development plan. Their involvements, such as offering bespoke training make a positive difference to the school community.

Personalised intervention and small group sessions are effective in aiding pupils with their learning. Pupils feel they are listened to and supported in school. Hence, all pupils, including the most vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those considered vulnerable flourish. Regular forest school activities expand pupils' understanding of their outdoor environment. Pupils particularly enjoy forest bathing and the stillness this brings. Planned opportunities for pupils to engage in spiritual reflection are evident in some curriculum areas. A lack of shared understanding of spirituality limits the ways pupils can describe the impact of opportunities for spiritual development on them. This limits the way they can describe the impact of these experiences across the wider curriculum.

Collective worship is welcoming. All are included regardless of background, faith or need. It strongly expresses the vision of a school centred around support and community. Leaders utilise a carefully planned and sequenced worship plan underpinned by Christian values. This develops pupils' understanding of biblical texts and how they can be applied to life's choices. Pupils understand the importance of inviting all to worship and lead prayers daily. However, pupils' ownership of leading collective worship is limited. As a result they do not benefit from opportunities to develop their own understanding of spiritual growth. Families are welcomed to join in regular worship both in school and in the local church throughout the year. Consequently, worship unites the whole community. Worship is inclusive with staff supporting those of different beliefs and those of no faith. As a result, worship helps to guide the actions of all enabling pupils and adults to flourish. However, leaders have rightly identified the need to increase formal worship monitoring to ensure greater spiritual growth.

True to the vision, respect and support shine through all relationships. Committed leaders and supportive governors prioritise the good mental health of pupils and adults. In this small village school adults comment on the support offered to enable them to be the best they can be. Supported by community funding, the school has also created a nurturing space called 'The Nest.' Older pupils relish the opportunities to become buddies for their younger peers. They are encouraged to use their voices in being courageous advocates for change. Parents speak highly of the support offered to all pupils enabling them to thrive. Leaders voice how they are driven to reach out to pupils and families. Through this, they live out the teachings of Jesus.

Pupils behave well and talk about how they can support each other in making wise choices. They rightly say, teachers always help us to sort things out. Parents feel listened to and appreciate the open-door policy that is offered by staff. They enthuse about the school's Christian values and share how these influence the way their children treat others well. Pupils come from a wide catchment area to attend Elham School. Families who have moved away, continue to attend the school as they highly value the caring Christian ethos. Staff are highly committed to the school; turnover is low. They feel valued by leaders who support them professionally, personally and emotionally.

Therefore, both pupils and adults feel valued, loved and treated well.

The presence of God’s love is a living reality at Elham. All pupils, families and staff are celebrated for their own uniqueness. Valuing everyone equally shapes a culture where all are supported and treated with respect. Through focused events and planned curriculum opportunities, pupils gain an understanding of injustice. Living out the values of respect, support and inspire, generosity is evident in the fundraising actions of the school community. Through active research, and having the desire to challenge injustice pupil leaders identify charities to support. This is lived out supporting families in Ukraine, the Salvation Army Christmas appeal and the local food bank.

Pupils, staff and families have a deep understanding of their roles within the community. This is evident in the way Christian values model the actions of school leaders. Whole staff charity events inspire pupils with an awareness of local needs and issues. Pupils understand their responsibility to inspire the next generation. They enjoy being involved in making their village a sustainable community. School leaders, staff and pupils actively support the community by planting trees to commemorate significant events.

Effective leadership ensures RE reflects the school’s vision and the foundation of this school as a Church school. Using a resource called Understanding Christianity, RE is well-planned and builds on pupils’ prior learning. Bold decisions regarding timetabling across classes and year groups, enable staff to work collaboratively. Leaders benefit from the supportive partnership with the diocese who provide guidance on improvements to the quality of RE. As a result, pupils and staff flourish. Pupils say they enjoy RE and speak knowledgeably about worldviews and a range of faiths. The diversity of Christianity as a worldwide faith is well-understood by pupils. Ultimately, pupils are confident in discussing their own views and respect different ideas and beliefs. As a result, pupils are well-equipped to be caring global citizens who value and celebrate diversity.

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

Information			
Inspection date	9 November 2023	URN	118741
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	119
Diocese	Canterbury		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Dan File		
Chair	Trevor Gasson		
Inspector	Geraldine Shackleton	No.	2244