



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hunton Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Bishop's Lane, Hunton, Maidstone, ME15 0SJ

School vision

Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life in all its fullness.'
John 10:10.

Following in Jesus' footsteps, pupils at Hunton are encouraged to make positive and courageous choices to open up the world, challenging themselves by stepping outside their comfort zone in order to 'live life in all its fullness'.

We relate to the story of Peter stepping out of the boat and walking on the water. He decided to follow Jesus, and was stepping out of his comfort zone and taking a risk. When he started to sink, Jesus caught him and helped him. (Matthew 14)

School strengths

- The Christian vision and accompanying Bible story have inspired the transformational journey of the school. Placing pupil needs at the centre of decision making, the vision has provided stability and focus during a time of change.
- Pupils are challenged by an engaging curriculum that offers a range of experiences. This enables pupils to grow in individual confidence, as well as embracing and enhancing collaborative success.
- The value placed on each individual as a unique child of God is fostering exceptional nurture. Pupils and staff feel safe stepping out of their 'comfort zone' and are effectively supported in embracing 'life in all its fullness'.
- Collective worship is a central part of the school day where Hunton's vision and values are shared and reinforced. This creates a community that is bonded around mutual love for each other and a growth in spirituality.
- Careful planning allows for a progression of skills and knowledge in religious education (RE). Together with a vibrant scope of activities, pupils enjoy their learning in the subject.

Areas for development

- Ensure governors monitor and evaluate the impact of the vision. This is so that this analysis regularly informs strategic decision making.
- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality. This is to ensure that planned opportunities within the curriculum and other activities facilitate rich and relevant occasions for spiritual development.
- Inspire a sustained curiosity, knowledge and understanding of world religions and worldviews. This is to enable pupils to reflect deeply on the personal relevance of the themes.

Inspection findings

Hunton has been on a transformational journey of improvement. The vision and accompanying biblical story form a bedrock for school development. This has drawn the school community around a shared identity and purpose. Placing the needs of pupils at the centre of decision making has united the school's focus 'to live life in all its fullness'. The image of Jesus rescuing Peter provides a source of inspiration. Pupils and adults report that they feel empowered to be bold and overcome challenges through this illustration. The school recognises that to thrive is a collective endeavour, both within the school team and beyond. As such close working partnerships with other local schools have fostered an outward face. This has encouraged staff to work alongside others in the sharing of good practice. Governors have a secure understanding of the needs of pupils. Regular monitoring enables them to have a sound knowledge of the daily work of the school. However, a lack of evaluation and challenge within this limits the ability to guide future school strategy.

Setting the vision at the heart of curriculum development ensures that pupils are engaged in their learning. Curiosity and the joy of discovery stimulate absorbing topics enriched by a range of activities. Learning regularly embraces exploration, imagination and creativity, which promotes enthusiasm for the gathering of knowledge. Access to London has inspired regular trips to enhance class work. For example, visits to the London Eye and the National Gallery. This has enthused pupils in their studies, offering opportunities to gain experiences out of their 'comfort zone'. Further diversity in the curriculum is provided through special days, such as the 'Vision and Values' day. This offers pupils different encounters, for example through outdoor learning or rock climbing. These chances foster the growth of individual confidence as well as strengthening collaborative work and shared success. In this way strong character formation is central to academic achievement. The value of each pupil as a unique child of God is evidenced in individual provision. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are nurtured through specific teaching programmes and strategies. The school provides some opportunities for spiritual development through the curriculum, particularly in the form of awe and wonder. However, there is not a shared understanding of spirituality, nor consistently planned opportunities to develop this across the curriculum.

The vision and values of Hunton form a focus and create a strong sense of belonging within worship. Pupils take great pride in their part as 'leading lights'. Their joint role with staff and local clergy in leading worship reflects the respect that is held for pupils. This involvement reinforces their self-worth and builds individual confidence. Pupil participation in the storytelling and activities to deepen thinking inspire the school. This unifies Hunton around a shared understanding of the significance of the teachings of Jesus. It also creates many moments of joy. In this way a happy environment is formed, bonded in Christian love. The stories of Jesus enable pupils to reflect on the school values and how these influence their daily life. For example, the re-telling of the Good Samaritan enabled pupils to think deeply about who is their neighbour. This in turn inspired charitable collections for a range of neighbours. Weekly worship linked to reflections on world events has inspired a growing awareness of injustice and subsequent social action. Consideration of the school's linked bible story motivates a community that is eager to embrace change. Profoundly enriching moments of stillness and reflection contribute positively to spirituality within worship. Staff equally benefit from the worship in providing a sense of inner calm and strength.

Hunton is a community rich in exceptional relationships where adults and pupils live well together. All work to care for others, aware that the happiness of others has an equal impact on their own wellbeing. This creates a harmonious school environment built on respect and kindness for the individual. Specific staff are assigned to nurture pupils and a counsellor is available as required. Pupils' right to have a named adult as a point of contact generates sureness that they are treasured in this school. It also means that their emotional needs matter and are met. Staff feel equally valued,

trusted and respected. They are individually empowered to play their part in the school's vision for 'life in all its fullness'. At the same time, they work collectively to give each other confidence to step out of their 'comfort zone' and embrace change. Their mental health and wellbeing are prioritised creating a cohesive and happy team.

Pupils are valued partners with school leaders in decision making. They gain assurance in an environment where their voice is heard, highly valued and acted upon. Pupils eagerly embrace specific roles such as on the school council or as digital leaders. This imbues each one with a high level of personal responsibility for the success of the school. In turn this has built confidence for them to reach out to others within the local community. The trust placed in pupils' ability to make wise and courageous choices has stimulated bold actions by many. For example, one pupil organised a bird watch. Others took great pride in finding out about the work of a charity for the homeless and raised funds through a cake sale. The school is beginning to make global links with charities, such as one linked to lifeboats. The fostering of intergenerational relationships within the locality encourages an understanding of the intrinsic worth and dignity of all. Retired individuals generously support the school. Pupils in turn bake cookies, sing or write cards to bring enjoyment to them.

The carefully planned RE curriculum is well-sequenced and balanced. Pupils enjoy being creative and the opportunities for drama and role play which enrich their learning. They are enthusiastic about their interpretations of the themes, which are invariably artistic and original. Pupils' knowledge is secure within RE. At present there are few opportunities for pupils to reflect more deeply on the personal relevance of world religions and worldviews. They enjoy discussing big questions, listening to each other carefully. They recognise that others have valued opinions. Pupils also note how ideas from their peers can help them formulate their own opinions and be secure in their thinking. Partnerships with local schools support the monitoring of pupils' work and the sharing of good practice. This has inspired new ideas and initiatives in classroom teaching. Training from the diocese has nurtured teacher confidence in delivering the range of religions and worldviews. Carefully considered activities at the start and end of units of work support teacher evaluation of pupil learning. Pupils' progress is tracked termly and individual pupil discussions help evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. This allows leaders and teachers to support and challenge learning including the identification of areas that may need further exploration. Thus, pupils make good progress overall within RE.

Hunton is a school where all are cherished and valued as unique children of God. This creates an environment where courageous steps have been taken to enable each one to 'live life in all its fullness'.

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

Information			
Inspection date	12 March 2024	URN	118726
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	99
Diocese	Rochester		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Anita Makey		
Chair	Iain Simmons		
Inspector	Elizabeth Pettersen	No.	557