



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Lea Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Lea, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7JY

School vision

Our school is a welcoming, inclusive community where everyone counts. We strive to provide a strong sense of self-worth in all our children by encouraging and celebrating curiosity, aspiration and respect.

Our Christian vision, everyone counts, is inspired by the parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13: 31-32) which tells us that from a tiny seed, a great tree will grow so that all the birds of the air can make their home in it. We believe that our school is like that great tree, providing a safe and nurturing place in which everyone, however small, can have the chance to flourish, explore faith and reach their God-given potential.

School strengths

- The community of Lea Primary school lives out the Christian vision of 'everyone counts' on all levels. Pupils, staff and leaders embody the vision in their relationships with each other.
- Collective worship is a highly valued and impactful part of life in this school. Pupils and adults know all are welcome. They are inspired by varied activities and highly engaged in moments of spiritual development.
- The school embodies the vision of 'everyone counts' in its provision and advocacy for all pupils. As a result pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and vulnerable pupils are valued and do well.
- A strong culture of justice and responsibility leads to pupils feeling confident to express their opinions and make ethical choices.
- School leaders and staff prioritise religious education. Secure teaching of a well-balanced and structured curriculum means most pupils have good knowledge of religions and worldviews.

Areas for development

- Increase opportunities for spiritual flourishing across the whole curriculum, planning more explicitly for spiritual development in different subject areas.
- Ensure the planning, monitoring and assessment of religious education (RE) is of consistent quality and implementation. This is to ensure all pupils flourish fully in this area and make progress in all year groups.
- Develop policy and practice to ensure pupils encounter positive representations of minority groups and learn about different cultures. This is so that pupils are enabled to learn within a fully inclusive and equitable culture.

Inspection findings

Life at Lea Church of England Primary School is defined and driven by the Christian vision ‘everyone counts’. The parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13: 31-32) reflects the powerful belief that every pupil has huge potential. Leaders, staff and pupils demonstrate commitment to this by prioritising the individual needs of pupils in decision making and day-to-day processes. Adults' determination to achieve good outcomes for all pupils truly embodies core school values of compassion and service to others. Governors offer effective support and challenge for school leaders. The Christian ethos sub-committee is a key contributor to the school's strategic life. They monitor the impact of the vision regularly and listen to the views of parents and pupils. For example discussions are held with Year 6 pupils before they leave each year. Changes to the Church school are often suggested from these conversations. Visual posters about the school vision are now displayed in classrooms as the result of a pupil request. Governors are proud of the impact the school vision is having on its community.

The curriculum and learning opportunities for pupils at Lea clearly reflect the school vision. This is particularly well achieved through four drivers of resilience, curiosity, aspiration and independence that underpin curriculum development. Partnership working within the Gateway Federation is having important impact on the development of both schools. For example, new extra-curricular opportunities are now offered at Lea School following the impact they made at the partner school. The oldest pupils enjoy a residential trip to London, to engage with a number of cultural experiences. Other varied enrichment activities are offered to broaden pupils' experiences and increase aspiration and curiosity. The school has a programme of residential visits for Years 4 and 5 which build confidence and increase self-worth. Pupils speak with excitement and are grateful for these opportunities to flourish in a different setting. Staff and leaders demonstrate clear thinking around spirituality and spiritual development. After some recent training, a model of ‘spiritual capacities’ is now used as a framework for shared language and understanding. Pupils explore ‘big questions’ and enjoy activities such as reflection time and prayer, enriching their spiritual flourishing. However, there is not always clear planning for spiritual development and opportunities have not been identified across all curriculum areas.

Nurture, support and aspiration are modelled by leaders who listen carefully to the needs of their staff, parents and pupils. This leads to inclusion being central to all practice and decision making. Strong decisions are made with inclusion in mind. Examples include a nurture room for pupils with SEND or who are vulnerable, and timetabling changes for teachers and support staff. As a result, these pupils demonstrate considerable progress in their learning. They attend school more happily and develop increasingly positive relationships with peers and adults. Parents describe the profound difference this makes to their wellbeing and how positively it compares with experiences they have had elsewhere.

Collective worship provides a valued focus point for the gathering of the community. Varied models of whole school and class worship are inclusive and offer opportunities for all to participate at their level. Leaders use familiar structures of Christian worship to begin, engage with interesting stimuli and close with invitational prayer. Pupils are calm, reflective and engaged and value opportunities to participate and lead. For example they talk with partners and make thoughtful responses after hearing a Bible story. Some enthusiastically lead the school in actions for the Lord's prayer. Staff express the varied ways that collective worship impacts them personally, feeling particularly nourished by festivals at the local church. Worship is enriched by a variety of Christian partners such as the local church and clergy and hugely appreciated ‘Open the Book’ team. This leads to pupils experiencing different types of Christian worship, nourishing their different spiritual styles and preferences. Parents value worship as a key part of school life for their children. They report that Church festivals and termly class worship events connect them with their own faith and spirituality.

All members of the community at Lea Primary treat each other well, led by the vision and values of compassion, respect and service. Staff say their wellbeing is prioritised, that they feel valued and listened to and are part of a school 'family'. Pupils demonstrate care and empathy and visibly demonstrate the 'everyone counts' attitude. They willingly ask those who are alone if they would like to join them in play. They show heart-warming relationships between older and younger age groups in the playground. Behaviour is good and where support is needed, respectful communication and trusted relationships underpin approaches used by adults. The emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) provides vital targeted support to pupils who need help with social and emotional needs. Therefore pupils feel safe and secure.

Pupils at Lea develop a strong sense of justice and fairness. Older pupils are empowered to change the local environment, as result of taking part in the powerful 'stories of change' River Wye project. Pupils talk about the importance of equitable approaches to the differences of others, understanding that everyone has varied needs. Despite excellent approaches to diversity within the community, pupils do not learn about a broad variety of minority groups. They do not encounter many representations of these groups or learn about many different cultures other than through their RE curriculum. This means the curriculum and culture of the school is not as equitable and fully inclusive as it could be.

RE is well led and managed with clear action planning and provision for staff development. This is supported by partnerships with the diocese and foundation governors. Teachers are enthusiastic and delivering the improved scheme of work well. This ensures most pupils build knowledge of a variety of worldviews over time. Pupils enjoy the subject and some demonstrate good factual knowledge about Christianity and various different faiths. They think deeply and ask meaningful questions, for example talking about what they and Hindu believers think happens when we die. However, the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. Clear progress through year groups is not always evident in books and assessments. Teaching methods and assessment processes are not consistently embedded to impact progress and flourishing in all classes. The curriculum is balanced and well sequenced. It includes a variety of creative approaches such as drama and art which help pupils enjoy and remember their learning.

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

Information			
Inspection date	4 March 2024	URN	116892
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	104
Diocese	Hereford		
MAT/Federation	Gateway Federation		
Executive Headteacher	Simon Manning		
Chair	Mark Dunning		
Inspector	Laura Harris	No.	2202