

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Shefford Church of England Primary School	
Address	Wantage Road, Great Shefford, RG17 7DB
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
<p>"I have come that they may have life; life in all its fullness"</p> <p>John 10:10</p> <p>Our two Church schools are committed to enabling all pupils to achieve their full potential. We do this through developing a love of learning within a creative, supportive environment, built on strong Christian foundations, where everyone aspires to 'Live life in all its fullness'.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school vision, coupled with the dedication of all staff ensure that this Church school is a transformative community where the needs of all are met, and all are enabled to flourish. • This is a school where the pupils' unique talents and gifts are understood and nurtured. As a result, the ethos of the school inspires them with exciting and relevant learning. • Partnerships between the school, families and members of the local community are highly valued. However, wider-reaching partnerships with the diocese and local schools are underdeveloped. • Collective worship offers pupils and adults a secure space for spiritual development, where thinking and considering the important questions of life is highly valued. • Pupils develop high levels of subject knowledge in some aspects of religious education (RE). There are, however, limited opportunities to deepen their knowledge of religions other than Christianity.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable pupils to study people from a range of faiths more frequently and in a greater depth. This is so that they can extend their experience of cultures and differences, enhancing their appreciation of diversity. • Strengthen partnerships with local schools and the diocese to share good practice and learn from them in order to further enrich the school's provision. • Develop the monitoring and evaluation process of leaders at all levels to produce an in-depth picture of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Inspection findings

Shefford is an inclusive and loving Christian community. With close links to the church, leaders ensure the biblically underpinned vision is central to all decisions they make. This vision 'to live life in all its fullness', inspires all and is effectively coupled with carefully selected Christian values. These are shared and celebrated by the whole school community. The school values of friendship and compassion have a significant impact on the flourishing of all. Combined projects and wide-ranging provision for local families make the school an integral part of the local area. Consequently, all pupils and adults work together effectively to create a harmonious atmosphere. Leaders consistently champion the school's values, rightly explaining how courage and wisdom have been integral throughout recent challenges, including the pandemic. This has led to successful federation with another local Church primary school. However, wider-reaching and enriching partnerships are as yet underdeveloped. The federation with another local school enables the viability of both schools. However, at the time of inspection, all pupils and staff were located on one site.

Governors are successfully involved with the promotion and development of the school's Christian vision and character. During times of challenge and change, they have supported the school with care and diligence. Leaders ensure the curriculum is developing pupils who are considerate, thoughtful and confident citizens. They have a well-established understanding of how the school's Christian vision underpins all aspects of daily life. However, opportunities for leaders at all levels to routinely monitor and evaluate school improvement are missed. Parents champion this small school's inclusive nature as 'a nurturing family, which welcomes all and provides endless support'. Consequently, all pupils feel safe and rightly declare Shefford to be a 'happy' school. The school value of friendship is pivotal. Staff highlight the importance of the school's Christian vision and values in their own lives. As a result, strong bonds are formed between pupils and across the whole school community. Church links are a particular strength, with joint projects and the regular gathering for Christian festivals and other services. These rich opportunities are appreciated by pupils, staff, governors and parents alike. All speak of the togetherness that they bring, enabling everyone the opportunity to achieve.

The school's vision shapes the way spiritual development is fostered throughout the community. Governors describe their role to support the school as they 'cherish every child'. Leaders ensure spiritual development is achieved through explicit curriculum planning. This secure and widespread understanding of spirituality ensures that pupils can reflect on themselves, others and their place in God's world. This is coupled with a safe and trusting environment in which everyone can ask questions. Pupils know that their views are listened to and fully respected. Staff seize every opportunity to pause and ask thought-provoking questions. Effective reflective opportunities are provided, in and around the school, where pupils can think and pray. This provision develops the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. They are confident to speak up about matters of injustice. Staff encourage thoughtful discussions, fostering reflection and the consideration of solutions. The school remains in touch with its families to provide support for all. There is a tangible sense of fellowship and family throughout the community. Committed support of charities is championed and celebrated. Leaders explained that their Christian value of compassion compels them to support those in need of help. This is in line with the findings of the inspection. Together, with pupils, leaders create a united school in which everyone is enabled to flourish.

The effective pastoral care that wraps around all pupils and adults in school, is inspired by the vision. Leaders ensure that all decisions made are thoughtful and compassionate. Pupils



with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well-supported. Leaders strategically allocate resources to meet all pupils' needs. This care and consideration is mirrored by the pupils who know that it is important for them to show respect to all people, regardless of their background. Fostering links with the local community, both with the local church and beyond, is highly valued by all. As a result, the school's inclusive nature ensures that all are welcomed and celebrated.

Pupils demonstrate powerful voices because of the wide range of leadership roles that they undertake. Pupil leaders meet with staff to evaluate school initiatives and discuss the next areas for potential improvement. They articulate and highlight their views on the value of every person. Local and worldwide problems are recognised and discussed. Pupils cite their school value of friendship as an inspiration to how they treat others. Alongside this runs an ingrained sense of forgiveness and reconciliation, as promoted in the school's behaviour policy. This in turn develops appreciative and well-rounded individuals whose achievements are recognised. Consequently, relationships are harmonious and conveyed in mutual respect for all those around them.

Collective worship is the heartbeat of the school. It is uplifting and relevant, as well as embodying the school's vision. Worship ensures the key Christian messages permeate all aspects of school life. They are also able to talk about the Christian values that underpin it. There is a recognisable structure and pattern to the liturgy that creates familiarity and routine. Invitational prayer and reflection are spontaneous and treasured by everyone. This provides pupils and adults with time to focus, thereby effectively enhancing their spiritual development. The singing and praise in worship is joyous and energetic. Christian traditions are clearly visible throughout the school, with pupils able to articulate the Christian belief in the Trinity. They display impressive knowledge and understanding of Bible stories. Pupils keenly lead worship. Storytelling and skilful questioning provide opportunities for pupils to consider and reflect on their own roles in society. As a result, they demonstrate a positive influence on the school community and beyond.

RE has a prominent place within the curriculum because of the vision. Leaders effectively weave together the locally agreed syllabus with additional high quality learning resources. Learning objectives, framed as key questions, invite thoughtful responses. These develop pupils who are inquisitive and respect each other's views. Teachers ensure that pupils are challenged to think and apply prior learning in lessons. The school cultivates pupils who appreciate that the world is a diverse place. As a result, they recognise and are respectful of difference. However, pupils do not have a deep understanding of a range of world religions and worldviews. The school has not provided sufficient opportunities to listen to faith leaders from religions other than Christianity, or visit their places of worship.

Shefford is an inclusive, Christian community where leaders ensure that pupils and adults flourish. Its deeply theologically rooted Christian vision is at the heart of the school's success.



Information			
School	Shefford Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	1 December 2022
URN	109975	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Oxford	Pupils on roll	80
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Stephenson		
Chair of Governors	Mr Jim Hazelwood		
Inspector	David Scorer	No.	841