

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Chesham Bois Church of England Primary School

Address	128 Bois Lane, Chesham Bois, Amersham, HP6 6DE		
Date of inspection	12 June 2019	Status of school	Primary academy inspected as VC Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust
Diocese	Oxford	URN	145033

Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Chesham Bois is a primary school with 219 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. Since the previous inspection, the school has become part of the Oxfordshire Diocesan Buckinghamshire Schools Trust (ODBST). There have also been changes to the staffing personnel.

The school's Christian vision

The school vision is rooted in the Bible and inspired by Matthew 19:14 'Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to children like these.' It is understood by all as preparing the pupils for the future and is explored through the Christian values of believing, achieving and caring together.

Key findings

- The Christian vision at Chesham Bois permeates the life of the school. This is fundamental to the school's success and results in pupils and adults alike being able to grow and to flourish.
- Support for the most vulnerable pupils is exemplary and is driven by the belief that every child is valued and loved by God. The school has adapted and evolved its practices, so it is innovative and resourceful in the way it provides for the needs of the school population.
- The overwhelming desire for all children to achieve and grow together has been fundamental in establishing and maintaining the extensive partnerships that the school has. The school is innovative in its work with others, within ODBST and with its local churches which impacts the school community and beyond.
- The rich curriculum has been designed and shaped in its entirety with the pupils at the heart of it. This leads to pupils being inspired, engaged and enthusiastic to explore Christianity and other religions in religious education (RE).
- The abundant opportunities for reflection, including in worship, are intrinsic to the school day. This leads to further opportunities for spiritual development.

Areas for development

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship in order to enrich their spiritual development.
- Building on existing excellent practice, promote the Christian vision of the school so it is explicit to the wider community.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Leaders have ensured the deeply embedded, inclusive vision of Chesham Bois is understood by all. Pupils and adults alike eloquently articulate what Matthew 19:14 means to them. Pupils talk about their belief that the kingdom of heaven is the future for everyone. They understand that they achieve through being resilient and attribute this to having to work hard to provide a better world for everyone to live in. One pupil said, 'We put children first because the Bible tells us that the kingdom of heaven is our future.' The staff work tirelessly and innovatively to provide for the needs of all its pupils. They have an aftercare service and hold mini welfare meetings for pupils in need. The highly respected inclusion team have a passionate desire to make sure every pupil is given the best possible opportunities for their future lives. The experimental, school based, young carers' group is an example of this. The leaders of the school are profoundly compassionate to all those in need and are relentless in trying to provide solutions to problems. This often involves seeking support and help, both practically and emotionally, from the network of local churches. Leaders talk about the positive impact of the 'Transforming Lives for Good' partnership with St. Leonard's Church. Parents enthuse about the way the school supports and works in partnership with them to provide the best outcomes for their children. They comment on how the school is preparing their child for the future and always puts their child at the centre of everything.

Leaders have ensured that the vision is true to its local population. This is due to governors being outward looking and finding ways to serve others within the community and within ODBST. They are rigorous, insightful and accurate in their self-evaluation and look for ways to share their exemplary practice with other schools. They have a desire for every pupil to have the best possible start in life. This is not just for their pupils, but for all pupils in Chesham. They are quick to provide support for other Church schools. An example of this is the chair of governors having been seconded to another local school to support it during a time of instability. The highly regarded headteacher ensures that all partnerships are two ways, meaning that relationships between the school, local churches and ODBST are exceptional. Leaders hold ODBST in high regard and speak about how the trustees engage with the governing body to create a culture of inclusivity for all. Likewise, ODBST is keen to disseminate the work of the inspirational headteacher and recognise her as a key member in the success of the trust. Leaders ensure that staff wellbeing is highly prioritised. Newly appointed staff talk about how they are supported and nurtured. Leaders are wholly committed to the future leadership of Church schools. As a result, they provide staff with many opportunities for career progression. The school is fully committed to training teachers for the future. A teacher training programme has been developed with the aspiration that staff will take the Christian values out of the school and into the wider community of Chesham.

There is an unequivocal understanding, by all leaders, that pupils need to be fully prepared for the future. This is at the heart of the exciting, inspiring and engaging curriculum. As a result, all areas of the curriculum contribute towards a rich spiritual experience for pupils. This was demonstrated by the empathetic way in which the teacher shared the outstanding book reviews in a Year 5 English lesson. Pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviours for learning and have continuous opportunities to reflect on their work. The high-quality work in the pupils' books demonstrates how individual reflections help them to make academic progress. The pupils attribute their progress to their understanding that they need to work hard because the future depends on them. Leaders are rigorous in monitoring provision to make sure the needs of all pupils are met. They are unswerving in ensuring that 'no one is left behind'. This results in pupils achieving above national expectations. Likewise, vulnerable pupils make the same rates of progress as their peers. Governors too, are committed to making sure that all pupils leave their school having had the best possible education. One governor said, 'We want to make sure every pupil leaves this school, having lived their school life to all its fullness and that they are fully prepared for their lives ahead.'

The RE curriculum is broad, balanced and stimulating. The highly effective RE leader has rightly identified which religions and faiths should be studied to ensure that the pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. This results in the RE curriculum being pertinent to the local community. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their work in RE and comment that they have nothing they would like to change. They have a wide understanding of the major world religions and are confident to discuss and debate different ideas and opinions. They are emphatic about valuing everyone's contribution. They have a deep respect for RE and see it as essential to their lives. One pupil said, 'It is important to know about and respect all religions so that when I am older, I can make a choice about my own faith.'

All pupils, regardless of their faith, are included in collective worship. Worship is well planned, is based on the church calendar and on the teachings of Jesus. The local church community takes an active role in leading and planning worship and pupils enthusiastically take part in 'Open the Book' worship. Prayer is invitational and pupils use this as a time to reflect on their own lives. They talk about how this helps them to make good decisions and to look after each other. Spiritual development has a high status and the opportunities for pupils to engage in spiritual discussions are woven through the school day. This is captured in the wonderful 'big book of thoughts' which pupils eagerly share. Even from an early age there are rich experiences for spiritual engagement. The youngest pupils are confident in using their personalised pebbles to help them to share their ideas and worries. Progress has been made since the previous inspection as pupils have an age appropriate understanding of the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, there are not enough occasions for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship. Likewise, pupils do not have enough opportunities to experience a wide variety of styles of different Christian worship and traditions.

Behaviour in the school is exemplary. The very clear and widely understood behaviour system focuses on forgiveness and reconciliation. Pupils talk openly about how they reflect on their choices and how this helps them to see their actions from a different perspective. Pupils demonstrate that there is a universal respect for all. They say that everyone is accepted and that there is no judgement in their school. All pupils have an opportunity to be an 'Action Kid' and as such, leaders have created a culture where all pupils are advocates for change. Pupils attribute their fundraising efforts to the vision of their school. They talk enthusiastically about their social enterprise projects and are passionate about challenging social injustice. An example of this is their efforts to make a difference to the lives of the children in Kiberia. One pupil said, 'We raise money so that the children in Kiberia can have lunch. Every child has the right to have food as all children are the future.'

Leaders at Chesham Bois have enabled everyone to thrive and flourish. This is a community where there is an articulated and agreed vision of making the future a better place for all God's children and where the pupils themselves are agents for change.

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