

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

East Claydon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School			
Address	St Mary's Road, East Claydon, Buckinghamshire MK18 2LS		
Date of inspection	9 July 2019	Status of school	VA
Diocese	Oxford	URN	143643

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	Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

East Claydon is a primary school with 70 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 national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. This is the first time that the school has been inspected under Section 48, becoming a voluntary aided Church of England school in May 2017. At the same time, it changed from being an infant school with 18 pupils on roll to be a primary school. In June 2019, Ofsted reported this to be a good school.

The school's Christian vision Inspiring All God's Children

At East Claydon, we strive to live our Christian values every day, putting our children's wellbeing at the heart of everything we do. Through personalised and immersive learning, we nurture curiosity, creativity and emotional resilience whilst inspiring every child to excel. Here everyone will be supported to fulfil their dreams, whilst learning to value each other, our community and all of God's creation. (Matt 5:2-14)

Key findings

- This is a new church school where leaders and staff are excited about the journey they are taking. The vision, rooted in theology, clearly drives all aspects of the school's work.
- An inclusive curriculum that truly seeks to inspire each and every child, so that learning is personalised, challenging and fun. It meets their academic and spiritual needs extremely well so that all pupils flourish.
- The visionary headteacher is dedicated to ensuring that the school's Christian vision and values imbue life at East Claydon. Pupils hold staff in high regard, knowing that they are there to help them achieve their best.
- Collective worship is enjoyed by all and successfully helps pupils to see the school's vision within its Christian context. This makes the teachings of Jesus relevant to their everyday lives.
- RE enables pupils of all ages to think deeply about the world around them so that they are learning to treat others with dignity and respect.

Areas for development

- Further embed innovative practice, which sees the school's Christian vision driving and securing personalised, immersive learning for all pupils, so that the school becomes a beacon for excellence within the wider community.
- Work proactively with the local church, so that there are varied and interactive prayer and reflection activities throughout the school, which help pupils to articulate their own spiritual journey.
- Enable pupils to broaden their experiences of world religions and faiths so that they have a better understanding of a range of religious and world views.

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

Since becoming a church school two years ago, East Claydon has grown from strength to strength. 'Inspiring all God's Children' is understood by everyone to reflect the vision, based on the teachings of Jesus. This is a school where leaders and staff are truly determined to make a difference to every child, no matter what their needs are. The governors, wishing to serve the needs of the community, are growing the school from an infant school to a full primary. There are now more than three times the number of children on roll, which includes a high number of pupils with special educational needs. This is because the school is seen as a place where all children, whatever their needs, are welcomed and nurtured. Families and pupils celebrate difference because they have confidence in the headteacher. Staff routinely put the wellbeing of the children at the heart of everything they do, so reflecting the school's Christian vision.

Governors monitor the school as a church school extremely effectively. They have accessed training from the Diocese so that they are clear about their role. Visits to the school are sharply focused and have led to improvements both in practice and in the strategic direction of the school. Governance is a strength of the school.

The vision of the school is underpinned by the teachings Jesus gave through the beatitudes, commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. All stakeholders speak of how pupils at East Claydon are treated as individuals, with daily decisions being made to support their personal needs. This is because the vision not only underpins the daily life at East Claydon, it drives it.

The curriculum for the school engages pupils and enables them to personalise their learning in a meaningful way. It has four curriculum drivers, community, spirituality, possibilities and contribution. In this way the school is living out its vision to nurture creativity, curiosity and emotional resilience. Pupils achieve well at East Claydon. Staff know pupils well and all children make good progress, especially those with SEND. The regular influx of new pupils has budgetary implications. Governors support the headteacher in her decision that the school is open to all, irrespective of need. This is because they understand that East Claydon's vision of inspiring every child to excel as a child of God, means just that. Every child.

Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured carefully. The 'Holistic Learning Strategy' sets out how the vision is to be lived out through the curriculum. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, they enjoy asking questions and debating with one another. This is because there are increasingly deeper experiences to be found as children move through the school. Prayer corners in every classroom and the reflection area outside are some of the ways that pupils are encouraged to engage with their inner thoughts. At present, these areas are not fully owned by the pupils and so engagement with them is sporadic.

Pupils behave well at school. Pupils who find it difficult to regulate their own behaviour are supported to develop and apply successful strategies. This is because the behaviour policy is modelled on the school's values of commitment, love and respect. All pupils point to how these values help them to develop other skills such as resilience and perseverance. They know that they are important to help them lead successful lives. Pupils are quick to point out how these values reflect Jesus' teaching and his life.

'Zones of regulation' used throughout the school support pupils emotional wellbeing. Workshops for parents explained the philosophy behind this approach so that pupils benefit from a joined-up approach to developing emotional resilience. Regular team building days, together with additional release time ensure that staff feel supported by each other and by the headteacher.

The junior governors are modelled on the two full governing body committees They take their role seriously because they know that they are making a real difference in school. Elected by their peers, they meet regularly with the headteacher. Their work has seen the school going on more visits, because 'they make the learning more real'. Pupils have high aspirations because they know that lessons must be challenging for you to 'really learn'. This reflects the school's Christian vision that pupils will be supported to fulfil their dreams and potential. The school works hard to enable pupils to understand that they are privileged. Pupils understand that this doesn't give them

more rights, simply more responsibilities. They have a close link with a school in Uganda. Under the direction of the junior governors, pupils arranged a sponsored walk. This mirrored the average distance that a child at Bukingala had to walk to their school, 4 miles. 'They should have the things we have', explained a junior governor in Year 3. In this way, the school is taking practical action to support communities other than their own, encouraging them to be agents of change.

Collective worship is understood by all to be a key way that pupils learn about how the vision and values are relevant to their daily lives. Close links with the local church ensure that pupils understand how the beatitudes are relevant today. The newly appointed vicar is taking time to explain them in an age appropriate way. Pupils are able to discuss these complex ideas in ways that show they understand their relevance today. They understand the image of Jesus teaching them, depicted beautifully in the hall, to have real resonance with their own lives. They spoke of how 'blessed are those who are persecuted' means that 'you should keep doing the right thing, even if other people tease you'. Pupils plan and lead worship regularly, showing their understanding of how the school's values are important at home and school. Pupils have a good understanding of the Eucharist and the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They understand the link between the colour of the cloth on the worship table and the church calendar. They are less sure about other aspects of Anglican practice.

RE expresses the Christian vision of the school well. It enables pupils to critically reflect on their own religious and spiritual convictions. Pupils feel safe to do this because they understand that 'everyone is unique and we all believe in different things'. They treat each other with dignity and respect because 'we are all part of a family'. They articulate how this is the same for everyone and not just for those in school. The RE lead is proactive. She has undertaken training with the Diocese and has introduced 'Understanding Christianity' throughout the school. She has introduced an effective assessment system and developed a new curriculum for RE. This is ensuring that lessons more closely reflect the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for all pupils.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Pupils make good progress in RE because pupils are enabled to ask and answer questions of depth and meaning. In the best examples, RE books showed that standards are generally good and pupils are encouraged to work at greater depth. Teaching is predominantly about Christianity, but also about Judaism and Hinduism. The RE lead has extended the curriculum to include the teaching of Islam in Year 5 and 6 as the school grows. Pupils, including those with SEND, are challenged to answer 'big questions' which are enabling them to make links between different faiths. Where teaching is of the highest quality, pupils are able to demonstrate high levels of learning both orally and in writing.

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