

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Lee Common Church of England School			
Address	Oxford Street, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, HP16 9JH		
Date of inspection	20 th March 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled First School
Diocese / Methodist District	Oxford	URN	110428

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

School context

Lee Common is a first school with 65 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 (SEND) is below national averages. The school opened a nursery in 2018 under the leadership of the existing headteacher. Numbers are increasing due to its popularity, prompting the school to consider further expansion. The school serves a prosperous and socially advantaged area.

The school's Christian vision

Our vision at Lee Common CE School is to start as little mustard seeds and grow into strong trees. Each one of us making a difference to our world. 'Together, we grow stronger in our unique, nurturing community'. Our vision is based on the parable of the mustard seed, Matthew 13:31-32.

Key findings

- The vision, which is deeply rooted in biblical teaching, nurtures all within the community. This has a transformational impact on pupils and adults alike, enabling them to flourish academically and spiritually.
- Inspirational leaders throughout the school strive for excellence. They demonstrate an exemplary use of the Christian vision to drive strategic thinking, shape an exciting curriculum and serve the community.
- Outstanding pastoral care enables pupils to be respectful and understand discipleship towards others.
- Impressive leadership of worship fosters; a deep knowledge of the Bible, the imaginative use of prayer and opportunities to praise God. Further thought could be given to the impact on worshippers' lives.
- Highly effective leadership of religious education (RE) results in excellent teaching which enhances other aspects of the curriculum whilst promoting a deep understanding of the diversity within God's creation.
- Prayer is woven and celebrated throughout the day leading to further opportunities for spiritual development.

Areas for development

- Further develop opportunities for pupils to explore their spirituality through creative and practical activities within the outdoor curriculum.
- Continue to support a range of Church schools so that fellow leaders can learn from the remarkable impact of your school's vision, to create an exceptional learning community underpinned by pastoral care.

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 skilfully established an inspirational Christian vision at Lee Common which permeates through relationships and the learning culture. Pupils and staff thrive within the highly inclusive and pastoral community, using the strongly held values to influence their discipleship towards each other. Each pupil and adult feels nurtured like a tiny mustard seed so that their wellbeing and impressive academic success is surrounded by God's love. Rates of progress for all groups are exceptional, with pupils benefiting from a rich and diverse curriculum, where they are creatively inspired and challenged by a dedicated teaching team. Pupils consistently achieve above the national average in both Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Imaginative Holy Week diaries and visiting the local synagogue deepen an understanding of various religious beliefs and practice. Attendance for all groups is above national averages because pupils love their school and the rich learning opportunities it provides. The headteacher, supported by governors, works insightfully to ensure that the school's vision effectively shapes policy and decision making. For example, the decision to open and further extend the nursery is in direct response to the needs of the community. Leaders confirm that the school now nurtures the youngest pupils, like mustard seeds, providing high quality teaching within the context of deeply rooted Christian values. Parents truly appreciate this, valuing the vision for the richness it brings to their family life and the encouragement it offers when significant pastoral support is required.

The painting of children looking at a flourishing tree, which was commissioned to depict the vision, serves as a constant reminder of the school's purpose. Pupils articulate how this affects their daily lives, reinforcing how the vision helps them with learning and their inclusive service towards others. Pupils explain that playground disagreements are solved without adult intervention because they refer to their strongly held values of kindness and forgiveness. The parent association now lives out its part of the vision in the community by holding regular coffee mornings in the local Baptist Church.

Governors and senior leaders monitor rigorously to ensure that pupils continue to make exceptional progress. The whole team creates an atmosphere that values all God's children. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides outstanding support for individual pupils in addition to her collaboration with another church school. This provides others within the diocese with support to use innovative and effective support for vulnerable learners. The headteacher also makes it his mission to collaborate with other Church schools, sharing excellent practice, particularly where schools are developing their vision to have an impact on pupil progress.

The school expertly enables pupils to express their spirituality regularly. The RE leader recognises that this is an area for even further development, particularly using the outdoors. Class reflection areas are highly engaging, inviting pupils to pray for others, reflect deeply on their mistakes by burying them in the 'sorry' sand and celebrate the wonder of God's beautiful creation. An example of this is found within the Reception Class where shells, fir cones and plants prompt high quality spiritual reflections. Forest school enables pupils to experience profound learning which can be seen on the vibrant display in the library.

The school has successfully addressed the development point since the previous inspection by expertly shaping the RE curriculum to reflect the diverse nature of beliefs and practice. Pupils confidently talk about their knowledge of Judaism, enjoying visits to the local synagogue and the activities presented as part of RE week. Parents also value the invitation to join in with reflective activities such as the multi faith meal and liturgical dance day, which they feel fosters a deeper understanding of the wider world and a sense of spiritual being. By involving parents, the school is communicating the intrinsic link between RE and the school's vision, that by respecting others a difference can be made throughout the world.

Worship weaves it way into various times of the school day, creating a prayerful community. Songs at lunchtime and the end of the day enfold everyone, reminding them of their relationship with God. Outstanding leadership by young Year 2 pupils reinforces that worship can be creative and inspirational. For example, the use of drama and highly expressive dance to tell the story of Jesus' temptation in the impressive act of worship observed. Enthralled younger pupils learn about the Bible and the person of Jesus as a result of such spirit-led presentations. However, more could be gained by prompting greater thought about the message within stories. Worship is enhanced by local clergy who share innovative ways to teach stories. As a result, pupils demonstrate an impressive knowledge

of the Bible. Parents feel welcomed to worship both at school and in local churches which leads to successful partnerships. There is a strong sense that all within the community are committed to nurturing the pupils, like mustard seeds. The exceptional contribution by Year 2 girls to the Women's World Day of Prayer shines as an example of the school creatively taking significant opportunities to foster links with the local church. This activity had a deep impact on the parents who spoke about the quality of prayer and reflection on the day.

Vision Ambassadors speak passionately about the role they hold within school. Their planning of worship and the organisation of charitable giving for 'African Revival' provides them with a real sense that they are making a difference to the world. Pupils proudly share that they enjoy receiving and nominating others for 'leaves' awards which are collected in value jars. These serve to remind pupils that the vision is living and being celebrated daily. Vision ambassadors confirm that this is the reason for exemplary behaviour across the school, which is supported by the excellent relationships between pupils. Working with the headteacher and RE subject leader also enables the ambassadors to plan or evaluate worship and make an excellent contribution to the wider life of the school.

The new leader for RE is passionate about improving teaching to foster a deep respect for world faiths. Learning within books is of a high quality. Pupils readily refer to displays in class, reinforcing their love of learning about a diverse range of religious beliefs and practice. One pupil proudly shared his creation of a house out of playdough, to say 'thank you for his own home and as a reminder that homeless people require houses too.' Expert leadership has ensured that all teachers are confident to deliver and assess RE. Teachers value strong partnerships with the diocese and have further enhanced practice since the previous SIAMS inspection. This has also established the school as a shining example of a creative learning culture, driven by a strong Christian vision dedicated to nurturing pupils like tiny mustard seeds until they flourish.

Headteacher	James Edwards
Inspector's name and number	Helen Crolla 918