

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Michael's Church of England Primary School, Sunninghill			
Address	School Road, Sunninghill, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 7AD		
Date of inspection	30 January 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary School
Diocese	Oxford	URN	110019

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

School context

St Michael's Church of England Primary School is an average sized school with 203 pupils on roll. The school has low levels of religious and cultural diversity and 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 in line with national average. Since the previous SIAMS inspection there have been considerable changes to staff, including the appointment of a new headteacher in 2016.

The school's Christian vision

'Learning together through love, friendship, forgiveness and faith' are the golden threads that are woven throughout our daily lives in school. With our values, the 6Rs, we aim to prepare and ensure our children live their lives according to the teachings of Jesus. *'For we walk by faith, not by sight' 2 Corinthians 5:7*

Key findings

- The impact of the school's Christian vision and supporting values holistically infuses and shapes the strategic and operational direction of the school.
- The headteacher's dedication and infectious passion ensure that pupils and adults flourish in this church school.
- Pupils are inspired by the excellent quality of teaching and learning in religious education (RE) to think and explore Christianity and other faiths to a very high level.
- St Michael's removes barriers to inclusion so that the most vulnerable pupils are enabled to flourish.
- Pupils and adults value prayer and reflection within a supportive and safe environment created by school leaders.

Areas for development

- Develop a shared approach to the planning of collective worship so that all pupils contribute fully to the process.
- Explore global companion links so that pupils expand their horizons and think more globally.

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

A Christian narrative is used to firmly root St Michael's vision and supporting values in biblical teaching. All stakeholders articulate how the vision, encompassing the school's Christian values, enables pupils and adults to flourish. Policies and procedures enable the whole school community to live together according to the teachings of Jesus. Strategic and operational direction are also governed by the vision. Collective worship is shaped by this golden thread and, in partnership with RE, is given the highest priority. Development plans are rooted in explicitly Christian teaching. Leaders ensure that work with all partners is sustainable and informed by the 6Rs. Links with the diocese, parish church and wider village are very strong. Induction of new staff begins with a comprehensive exploration of the school's highly effective vision. This enables the whole school community to learn together through love, friendship, forgiveness and faith, which permeate all aspects of this excellent school.

St Michael's rich Christian character gives opportunities to all and supports the drive for inclusion and diversity. The curriculum, informed by the school's Christian vision, is tailored to meet the needs of every pupil the school serves. Leaders prioritise the inclusion of the most vulnerable. Staff are trained to a high level to effectively identify and support the needs of these pupils. Parents recognise the inclusive nature of the school where pupils are given a fresh start due to the inclusiveness of the school's vision. A parent said, 'staff go the extra mile to work with us for the best of our children'. Pupils attain highly within the safe and nurturing environment. Academic success is excellent and extra-curricular experiences enrich the provision. Progress is above average for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress from their starting points. By reducing barriers that exist, committed staff ensure pupils can do their best. Teachers weave the golden thread into learning by going beyond the planned experiences to make the most of pupils' interests and questions. Examples of this excellent practice are best seen in RE lessons. For example, debating the differences between Jewish and Christian views of God. A pupil said, 'I changed my views because I listened to others'.

Skilled governors are passionate about their school and articulate the vision effectively. The monitoring of the school as a church school is exceptionally rigorous and effective. As a result, governors plan strategically to enable pupils and staff to flourish socially and academically. School leaders are nurtured and valued by governors. This has led to a strong record of developing future church school leaders. Leaders' expectations are very high. Professional development for staff and governors enables ongoing improvement. Much of St Michael's innovative practice has been shared with schools in the local area. A recent example was when the local authority requested that the headteacher present to them about the charitable outreach work which St Michael's leads in the local community.

St Michaels' is recognised by the local community as a centre of reconciliation and support. Outreach has a high profile in the life of the school. Behaviour in the school is excellent. Pupils are welcoming and extremely polite. Forgiveness and reconciliation are fundamental to the school's success. Nurturing leaders are overwhelmingly supportive of pupils, families and staff. Staff wellbeing reflects the school's Christian vision as they are treated with dignity and respect. This serves as another example of excellence as all follow the example of Jesus.

The headteacher is instrumental in enabling the entire school community to live out the vision they share and is a role model to her staff. From the moment you are welcomed to the school, the infectious passion for getting the best out of everyone is most evident. Parents and governors recognise how the headteacher's leadership has transformed the school. The sense of teamwork is powerful.

Attendance is excellent because pupils love coming to school and do not want to miss a day. Pupils explain how their Christian values give them confidence. Parents say that, 'our children are proud of the values, reminding us to adhere to them at home'. Pupils are skilled at questioning, listening and exploring their learning within the school. The school supports a wide range of charitable causes, many of which tackle social injustice. Pupils who want to lead social action projects are supported and encouraged. Results are astounding. For example, a pupil who went beyond the norm for fundraising by shaving his head. Leaders are rightly proud of the pupils' willingness to act as advocates of change. Wellbeing ambassadors support younger pupils at playtimes to manage rare incidents of conflict. The school enables pupils to think globally through effective teaching, but this is not supported by overseas links.

Prayer and reflection are given the highest priority by the school. Pupils' spontaneous prayer is exceptionally thoughtful and frequent within the school environment. Meaningful prayer and reflection stations in each classroom develop as pupils grow through the school. A pupil prayer group ensures that requests are prayed for, and these are shared in the parish church. Links with the church are strong. Pupils and adults see collective worship as the heartbeat of the school. Planning ensures that pupils have rich experiences encountering the teachings of Jesus Christ. Liturgy and Anglican traditions are rich within worship. Pupils have an age appropriate understanding of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils and adults are enthusiastic about worship and messages they take with them from the variety of worship leaders, including regular involvement of local clergy. Some of the oldest pupils evaluate worship and offer ideas for planning, although this does not involve pupils of all ages. Innovative ways of introducing pupils to the Eucharist are evident. For example, the breaking and sharing of bread during reflection times in the Reception class.

Pupils are enthusiastic about learning in RE. Leaders ensure that pupils flourish through the high quality of provision. Woven throughout the curriculum is the richness of the school's vision and supporting values. In a typical lesson observed, a younger pupil said of the people not boarding Noah's ark, 'the "golden thread" wasn't being shown by them'. Interactive RE displays focus on the big questions and rich experiences pupils have for learning in the subject. A pupil said, 'we can think critically because we have time to reflect, play and share ideas with each other'. Older pupils speak passionately and knowledgably about the theology of Christianity as a living and diverse faith. They articulate how spirituality is developed in lessons and value the richness of provision in the safe space created for RE. All pupils value the contribution RE makes to building relationships with each other. They love learning from and celebrating cultural and religious differences.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Teaching and learning in RE is consistently graded good and much is excellent. Through the careful use of assessment systems both staff and pupils can accurately gauge attainment and progress. Pupils achieve extremely well in all year groups, which is at least comparable to other subjects, if not better. As a priority, the school is enabling the most vulnerable pupils to flourish academically in RE. Staff ensure the curriculum and deployed teaching and learning approaches enable challenge for all pupils, including SEND and the most able. Pupils are proud of the high standards of learning that are shared in class books and individual RE books. The RE leader teaches RE across the school and monitors her subject robustly. This leads to a cycle of continuous improvement and high standards in RE. Regular training is disseminated to all teachers to ensure a consistent approach.

Headteacher	Lorna Anderton
Inspector's name and number	Toby Long 896