

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Wootton St Peter's Church of England (VA) Primary School

Address	Wootton Village, Boars Hill, Oxford OX1 5HP		
Date of inspection	20 June 2019	Status of school	VA Primary
Diocese	Oxford	URN	123223

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

Wootton St Peter's is a primary school with 89 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. 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 averages. There are a significant number of families with a parent who is serving in the military. There has been a significant number of new staff, including the headteacher, since the last inspection.

The school's Christian vision

Unlocking hearts and minds to a love of learning and love of one another

In the Christian tradition we walk in the footsteps of St Peter (John 21:15 – 17) to nurture the wellbeing and development of everyone in the community, enabling adults and children of all faiths and those of none to reach their potential.

Key findings

- The school has developed a vision that is understood by all to reflect the life and example of St Peter. It drives pupils and staff so that all show a love of learning and love of one another.
- Pupils are seen as 'jewels', enabled to reach their potential because the headteacher and her staff care deeply about the pupils, know them well and nurture them every day.
- Governors work hard and know the school well. Monitoring is not yet focused enough to ensure that the vision is seen to drive both policy and practice.
- Class worship times are special, enabling pupils to deliver thoughtful sessions, using biblical teaching on topics that really matter to them.
- Religious education (RE) lessons unlock a love of learning because they are imaginative, use high quality resources and set clear expectations for pupils.

Areas for development

- Ensure that all governors are pro-active in monitoring this Church school so that it can be clearly seen how the Christian vision drives school improvement in policy and practice.
- Develop a clear and secure understanding of spiritual development that is separate from personal, social and health education (PSHE). Enable pupils to grow in their understanding of their own spiritual journey, including the use of prayer and reflection, as they move through the school.
- Encourage pupils to think more globally by widening their personal experiences of people from communities other than their own so that they take action on behalf of others in ways that move beyond a sense of compassion.

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

St Peter's has a vision that is expressed in every area of school life because staff are determined to enable all pupils to achieve their very best. It is rooted in the life of St Peter enabling all stakeholders to readily explain how Jesus inspired St Peter and so inspires them. Staff take Jesus' instruction to St Peter to 'feed my lambs', very seriously. All children progress well because the headteacher and her staff have worked hard over recent years to raise academic standards. The school has found new ways in which to 'unlock potential' across the curriculum. This has included new initiatives in reading and in RE so that pupils are now routinely challenged to think more deeply. All pupils take part in regular forest school sessions where they are encouraged to 'climb higher' and think creatively. Pupils have a very good understanding how the school vision is relevant to their lives. They explain how the school gives them the keys to unlock learning for their future lives. 'Just like St Peter has the keys to unlock heaven', explained a child in Year 3. Pupils understand how to live and work in school because the three core values are used consistently in the expectations of staff. Compassion, generosity and perseverance are all illustrated by examples from St Peter's life. Through this, pupils see how biblical teaching is relevant to their own lives.

Pupils feel nurtured and cherished at St Peter's. When joining, staff and pupils are asked to choose a coloured glass pebble (jewel) to put in a special box. 'It shows we are special to God and to the school', explained a child in Year 4. This is brought into worship, demonstrating every day how everyone is treasured as part of the whole community.

The school has close links with the local church and community. They have found various ways in which to support each other so that pupils feel valued and nurtured. This includes the events that the school shares with the elderly in the village. In this way, the school raises pupils' aspirations because they feel secure in their community. The school has not yet really engaged with national or global issues so that pupils' understanding of diversity and difference is limited.

Governors worked with all stakeholders to determine a vision for the school. It successfully reflects the school's Christian context and its place in the community. Following the last inspection, governors drew up an action plan to evaluate the school's performance as a church school. This was wide ranging and shows a good understanding of their strategic responsibilities. At present the monitoring of this action plan is left to too few governors. Notes of visit do not focus on what needs to improve. This is because the role of governor visits is not clearly understood to be an essential part of driving forward school improvement. School policies do not routinely reflect the vision of the school.

New behaviour procedures in school ensure that everyone knows what is expected of them and pupils report that behaviour has improved. Where behaviour falls below the expected standard it is swiftly and fairly addressed, using the school vision as its benchmark. Regular sessions, called democratic circle time, are led by pupils for pupils. Older children lead discussions so that provision within the school is improved. This is another way that pupils are developed within the life of the school. The school welcomes pupils from a range of backgrounds, including some with parents in the military. The school has a trained member of staff who supports pupils' emotional literacy. This is because the school has recognised it must address a growing need to support pupils' mental health. This ensures that more vulnerable pupils, whatever their needs, are enabled to reflect on their lives in a positive way so that they are ready to learn. Staff too are nurtured and developed in many ways. They speak of the close relationships that they have with one another and how this is supported by leaders in very practical ways when required. Staff training is seen as a high priority, another way in which the vision to 'develop everyone in the community' is lived out.

By 'unlocking hearts and minds', there are a wealth of ways in which pupils are encouraged to think more deeply. Spirituality areas in each classroom are prized by the children and they appreciate how these change regularly to reflect their current learning. Planning for spirituality is not consistent across the school because at present there is no consensus of how pupils might develop spiritually as they mature. Whilst prayer is seen as an essential part of school life, pupils show a limited understanding of the purpose or variety of prayer. They appreciate the times for reflection and quiet, particularly after lunch, and enjoy using the imaginative quiet area outside.

All pupils have a love of learning because the broad and balanced curriculum flows from the vision. Pupils are excited about the topics explored and relish the way that they are expected to ask and answer difficult questions. Pupils are compassionate and enjoy raising funds for charity. Pupils are at an early stage in thinking how to challenge injustice and inequality. This is because their understanding of global events and their place in the world is not sufficiently developed.

The school is developing a curriculum in RE that clearly expresses the school's vision to enable children of all faiths to reach their potential. Assessment systems are rigorous enough to enable staff to plan lessons that interest pupils and stimulate learning. Pupils are increasingly confident to ask questions and engage in debate around 'big questions'. This is because staff are now using the *Understanding Christianity* resource. The RE lead has undertaken training with the diocese. She has used staff training time well to support and encourage teachers to use the new resource effectively. This, together with the syllabus agreed within the Diocese, enables pupils to develop a good knowledge and understanding of a range of faiths. Pupils do not yet have a secure understanding of links between faiths. This is because the school is at the beginning of its journey exploring the similarities and differences between them. Pupils' understanding of a range of Christian traditions is good and Christianity is taught well.

Collective worship is valued by all, including staff. It celebrates the Anglican tradition of the school, in a variety of ways. Pupils understand the three candles lit at the beginning of worship to reflect the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Children see collective worship as a time when they can learn about Jesus and God. Stories from the Bible are regularly used to explore how the school's values are relevant to their own lives. Prayer and reflection help pupils understand 'how we should act'. Once a week, worship is held in class. These 'thought for the day' worships are led by small group of pupils in turn. They are encouraged to choose the theme for the day and to lead it independently. These times are really valued by pupils, helping them to develop a 'love of learning and love for one another.'



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Teaching and learning in RE is good. Pupils' work is generally of a good standard because expectations are clear. Where teachers use 'I wonder...' questions, pupils' responses show thought and a deep understanding of the issues raised. However, a reliance on worksheets in some classes prevents more-able pupils from really showing what they are capable of. Children are excited to ask and discuss questions in a way that respects each others' point of view. This is because lessons are well planned and imaginative. The use of art and other stimuli, help pupils to understand and debate difficult concepts such as Pentecost. Pupils understand the need to learn about different faiths so that they can show understanding and respect to others when they are older. Pupils have limited experiences of people from a variety of faiths. This is because there isn't a planned programme of visits to places of worship or of visitors to the school.

Headteacher

Fiona Rose

Inspector's name and number

Karen Surrall 842