

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Yattendon Church of England Primary School			
Address	Yattendon, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG18 0UR		
Date of inspection	22 May 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary
Diocese	Oxford	URN	110026

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

<p>School context</p> <p>Yattendon is a smaller than average primary school with 85 pupils on roll. Pupils at this rural school are taught in three mixed age classes. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. A large number of pupils travel from outside the catchment area to attend Yattendon. The headteacher was appointed in 2015 and has a regular teaching commitment.</p>
<p>The school's Christian vision</p> <p>We provide the rich soil that enables our children to develop deep roots and flourish. Within our rural community, our small Christian school nurtures growth, giving courage to face challenge, and abundant opportunities for unique strengths to blossom. Everyone feels valued and has respect for themselves and others, and hope for the brightest future. <i>The Parable of the Sower from Matthew 13.</i></p>
<p>Key findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision at Yattendon is instrumental to the school's success as it enables everyone within the school community to be nourished, to grow and flourish. • The headteacher's passion and dedication to the vision are exceptional and act as a role model for all members of this excellent Church school. • Strong governance harnesses an exceptionally rigorous and effective monitoring and evaluating system that enables the school's vision to be so effective. • Pupils' excellent behaviour is because of the school's highly effective policies which are rooted in the teachings of Jesus. Policies and procedures successfully ensure all pupils and adults at Yattendon are comfortable as the person God made them to be. • Rapid progress in religious education (RE) since the last inspection has resulted in all pupils being confident to explore Christianity and other religious traditions in exceptional ways.
<p>Areas for development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the range of Church school communities that you support, so that fellow leaders can learn from the remarkable impact of your school's vision, to create exceptional learning communities underpinned by biblical teaching. • Develop a greater age appropriate appreciation of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as well as the rich language associated with this, thus enhancing pupils' appreciation of this central Christian concept.

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

The parable of the sower is exceptionally well articulated by leaders and all within the school community. Governors rightly state their vision as the keystone of the school's success. A deeply rooted Christian vision with associated values is unique to Yattendon's context and serves the community extremely well. The phrase, 'A small school with a big vision,' is displayed proudly as you enter the school. This statement could not be more accurate. The vision at Yattendon is woven deeply throughout operational and strategic leadership, decisions taken and how people treat each other. Parents rightly acknowledge that leaders create a climate in which, 'the limitations of the village school bubble are overcome through the vision that expands children's minds beyond the school'. Clergy and parents acknowledge that, 'the parish would be less without the school at its heart'. The vision provides tangible growth for pupils and adults, thus enabling them to flourish academically and socially. Leaders' monitoring and evaluation systems are rigorous and effective in developing the school as an excellent Church school.

Pupils achieve exceptionally well throughout the school. Vulnerable pupils make sustained progress from their starting points and attain at least in line with other pupils. The rich soil and nourishment offered ensures that individual interventions lead to academic success well above national expectations. A curriculum tailored to the context of the community served is completely inclusive. As a result, the spiritual development of pupils is exceptionally strong and impactful. The application of the parable of the sower offers pupils and adults a multitude of experiences to develop personal spirituality. One example is the pots each pupil decorates with the Christian values and plants a seed to care for, as a sensory reminder of their shared vision. Extra-curricular opportunities richly support the range of experiences pupils receive. Gardening club has transformed the grounds. A well-used reflection area, featuring pupils' homemade windchimes and sculptures, visually enhances the environment and creates a tranquil space for prayer, stillness and reflection.

Parents enthuse that, 'older pupils are cracking role models for younger children and each other'. The headteacher is a fundamental role model of how to live out the vision and associated values. Parents explain how the school's inclusive approach has enabled, 'every child to be part of something special'. Pupils who have joined the school from other schools express how much happier they are at Yattendon, 'because of the family that is created and nourished'. Leaders make bold ethical arguments for inclusion and ensure that Yattendon is a beacon of respect and celebrates diversity and difference. A quiet room is used to support pupils and families, including the most vulnerable. This provides a comfortable and relaxing environment for discussion and intervention to take place. The vision is deeply applied to adults, as well as pupils, by supporting mental health and wellbeing. As a result, pupils and adults feel safe, listened to and know that leaders will help them.

Pupils behaviour is excellent. Cases of bullying are extremely rare. Behaviour management systems are innovative by enabling pupils to understand how their choices are influenced by the parable of the sower. Pupils' names are moved from stony or thorny ground to good soil, as a metaphor for excellent behaviour. Breaktimes are happy and energetic moments enriched by wide ranging experiences that meet the needs of every pupil. For example, a prayer walk with stations around the grounds offers spiritual development through quieter times for prayer or to discuss deep questions the resources pose.

Pupils apply their vision beyond the school to benefit others locally, nationally and globally. Curriculum choices ensure learning is rooted in understanding of cultures around the world. By choosing charities and projects to support, pupils are developing as exceptionally active advocates for change. One example is a recent project to tackle loneliness within the local community. Pupils planned and researched a memory café to which they invited and welcomed many members of older generations. Clergy explained that such projects, 'demonstrate how children want to help others and have led to strong partnerships being nurtured'. Clergy explain that the school, 'is feeding the whole community through shared values'. Community members speak passionately about the benefits outreach work has. Several sustained partnerships exist, including a Peruvian school for street children. As a result, pupils think deeply about global issues whilst challenging injustice.

Long-established relationships meet the needs of this rural community. Eco Warriors have created innovative ecological initiatives which impact on the rural community by setting an example of how to care for the whole

environment. Strong partnerships with the local estate ensure that pupils have rich experiences of God's creation by creatively utilising a woodland classroom.

Since the last denominational inspection, the impact of RE has markedly improved. Fundamental to this is the headteacher's enthusiasm and passion. Staff training is given priority and ensures that the good soil created is cultivated by pupils. The curriculum for RE richly enhances the vision. Leaders strategically plan visits and visitors to expand pupils' understanding of Christianity and other faiths. A recent visit to a gurdwara was described by a pupil as, 'a chance to learn from other British people who practise faiths different to mine, which really helped me think about respect and how similar we all are'. Pupils say that RE and PSHE lessons give safe spaces, 'to encourage us to agree and disagree kindly'. Pupils explore deep questions of theology with success and demonstrate high levels of understanding.

Worship is an excellent expression of Yattendon's vision. Pupils confidently plan and lead acts of worship in various settings. Pupils rigorously evaluate the quality of worship so that more visual stimuli feature. The teachings of Jesus drive planning for worship. Pupils' knowledge and theological understanding of Bible stories and Anglican traditions is exceptionally strong. Pupils articulate how messages in worship stay with them, 'it helps me be a better person'. However, not all pupils have an age appropriate understanding of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Partnerships with other schools, local parish and diocese are strong. For example, a Pentecost Day shared with the local community, was developed with clergy and diocesan support. Clergy established an inclusive child-friendly Eucharist service. Innovation is seen in a pilgrimage linking local churches with the diocesan cathedral enabling the community to experience a true sense of spiritual journey. The headteacher is active in supporting local schools through sharing best practice and mentoring as a strong Church school leader.

Yattendon enables everyone to be watered, nourished and grown by the rich provision in place. As one of the youngest children said, 'my teacher waters my soil so I can blossom like a beautiful flower'.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is consistently good and much is outstanding. Governors ensure that standards are high through accurate monitoring systems that lead to improvements. As the RE leader, the headteacher ensures that assessment is used robustly to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

As a result, regardless of their starting points, all pupils make rapid and sustained progress in RE. Every pupil is rightly proud of their work, which is of a high standard. All groups of children flourish academically in RE. Vulnerable pupils are enabled to achieve highly in RE because of the tailored interventions applied to learning for each individual. Consequently, pupils say, 'We love RE lessons because our good soil is fed by our teachers and if we get stuck on thorny or stony ground, our teachers make sure we can still grow'.

Headteacher

Rachel Manley

Inspector's name and number

Toby Long 896