

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

All Souls' Church of England Primary School			
Address	Stanley Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 4LG		
Date of inspection	15 January 2020	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA Aquila, The Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust
Diocese	Canterbury	URN	146950

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

All Souls' is a primary school with 288 pupils on roll. The school has some diversity, including pupils from the nearby Royal Gurkha Rifles barracks. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly above national averages as is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The school joined the Aquila Trust in April 2019. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2018, following a lack of secure leadership. She previously served as the acting headteacher.

The school's Christian vision

Each member of the All Souls' family supports each other to flourish as happy, confident, respectful and resilient lifelong learners, valuing and celebrating the diverse community we share. By working together, trusting in God and living out our Christian Values, everyone will reach their full potential and realise their dreams.

Key findings

- The school has developed a Christian vision which is well suited to its context and focussed on highly effective inclusion. It is lived out in ways which ensure that relationships and partnerships are very supportive and that most pupils make expected progress.
- An emphasis on each individual as wonderfully made by God results in a very caring community, effectively meeting the needs of each person and celebrating what they contribute to the school.
- Pupils and staff value and draw on opportunities for personal reflection. This is, however, not yet based on a shared understanding of spiritual development.
- Collective worship contributes well to inclusion, to a growing understanding of the vision and to the embedding of associated values. Opportunities for regular pupil leadership are limited.
- The religious education (RE) syllabus has been securely implemented and their thinking is being increasingly challenged. However, their next steps for progress in RE are not clearly understood.

Areas for development

- Embed a shared understanding of spiritual development in order to extend the prayer life of the community and the impact of reflection in daily life.
- Extend the role of pupil leaders within worship to provide more frequent and regular opportunities for them to contribute to this aspect of school life.
- Ensure that feedback and assessment in RE enable pupils to make effective next steps of progress in their learning.

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 vision which celebrates the diversity in the school and seeks to be wholly inclusive has been implemented and is beginning to shape the school day by day. Senior leaders have ensured that it is understood and owned by staff, governors and pupils. The development of this vision has been well supported by the Aquila Trust. Confidence in explaining the vision is growing, building on a set of values which is modelled and applied consistently. Both the vision and the associated values form a sound basis for strong and supportive relationships throughout the school community, including with families. The depth of relationships, founded on trust and forgiveness, provides a sure foundation for each person to reach their full potential as stated in the school's vision. Governors support the daily activities of the school well. They are now beginning to develop a strategic approach to evaluating the school as a Church school.

The school lives out its belief that all can flourish despite what has gone before. Pupils who have not succeeded elsewhere find a place of welcome and affirmation in this context. One comment made was, 'All Souls' gave us a fresh start'. Mental and emotional support for vulnerable pupils and families forms the basis for a secure learning environment through which an engaging curriculum is offered. The increasing use of big and philosophical questions means that pupils are beginning to deepen and progress their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The focus on the needs of each individual means that most pupils make expected progress and that interventions are in place for those who do not yet do so. Each individual is supported holistically which often means 'going over and above'. This is a description used often in speaking with different stakeholders. Strong links with the community add to the support networks offered within school. Diversity in the community is valued, for example by sharing in the religious celebrations of different faiths. Effective links are made with local partners, including the church, to the benefit of all. Support for charities and good causes helps pupils to understand and to respond to the needs of others with some appreciation of why there is injustice and deprivation in the world. This is being further developed through a specific link with a school in India.

The associated values of the school provide an excellent foundation for relationships at all levels. Wellbeing for everyone underpins the school's success. Staff members are asked 'What has gone well this week?' at staff meetings which affirms and encourages them. They are well supported, both personally and professionally, by senior leaders, and also by the Aquila Trust and the local hub. Parents are confident that staff know their children well, and that everyone is included whatever their need or vulnerability. They are confident that their concerns are addressed quickly and sensitively. Pupils feel that they are treated equally and that their voice is heard – an older pupil said, 'we are all heard no matter who we are'. They often refer to being a part of God's masterpiece and being important in the school which relates to the theological underpinning of the school vision. This underpinning is reflected in the strapline of the school, 'Individually, we are wonderfully made. Together, we are God's masterpiece'. There are several opportunities for pupils to pray and reflect in school, for example in areas in each class and in prayer books in some classes. Some pupils can talk about the importance of these opportunities, but others are less clear about them. A shared understanding of spiritual development and how the school encourages this to develop is not in place.

Collective worship is inclusive of those of all faiths and none and helps the community to celebrate that each person is part of God's masterpiece. One pupil said that this means that 'we are not loved more, we are not loved less', explaining that this is because everyone is different but equally special. The associated values of friendship, forgiveness, trust, respect and thankfulness are explored in ways which mean they can be better lived out in school and beyond. Pupils' own prayers are sometimes included in worship. They are quiet and reverent in preparing for worship and when asked to pray or reflect. Yet they also participate and sing with a great deal of enthusiasm, understanding the diversity of mood and expression expected within worship. Class worship seen in a Reception class engaged young children, helping them to worship in an age appropriate and responsive way. Parents and carers talk about the good links with the local Anglican church that are strengthened through worship for the major Christian festivals. Visitors from other churches also contribute rich and varied experiences. The worship group members currently plan and lead special services, but they are not regular and frequent leaders in daily acts of worship.

RE in school is well led and managed. It has a focus on providing a safe space in which pupils can explore Christian concepts and big questions. This led one pupil to say, 'Most of our work is reflecting not just learning'. Others explained how they felt able to share ideas even if they disagreed with others in their class. The environment is increasingly focussing on pupils' questions and thoughts to deepen their thinking. Pupils have a growing understanding of the importance of RE for their current and their future lives. For example, they can explain that RE helps them to understand their values better which means that they are able to respect those of all faiths. Creative approaches to RE, drawing on art and interaction, are those which pupils enjoy the most. Assessment is in place and is continuing to be developed in line with diocesan advice.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Teaching and learning in RE have improved because of the successful implementation of a new syllabus based on Understanding Christianity resources and better support for world faiths. Consequently, pupils make expected progress in RE as their thinking is deepening and they are enabled to express their views in an informed and confident manner. Although their knowledge and understanding is generally secure, they are not able to articulate their next steps of learning.

Headteacher

Lisa Ransley

Inspector's name and number

Virginia Corbyn 86