

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Peter's Church of England Primary School			
Address	Windmill Street, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4UU		
Date of inspection	11 June 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled
Diocese	Rochester	URN	118614

Overall Judgement	Grade	Good
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	Good

School context

St Peter's is a primary school with 143 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 is below national averages. Pupils come from a range of faith backgrounds. There have been considerable changes in teaching staff since the previous denominational inspection. A major new building and expansion programme are in process. There are well-established links with St Peter's Church.

The school's Christian vision

St Peter's CEP School is centred upon the love and teaching of Jesus. We inspire children to grow in the knowledge of God and his world, and to live in wisdom and faith. We nurture each pupil so that they can make the most of their God-given gifts and skills and be fruitful members of the community.

Key findings

- A Christian vision with clear biblical foundations has been written and shared with the community. The school is at an early stage in developing the vision throughout its policies and the curriculum.
- The school provides a broad curriculum with an impressive programme of extra-curricular activities. These are tailored to enable each pupil to explore and develop their gifts and skills. However, opportunities for spiritual development in the curriculum are not always recognised.
- There is a strong focus on mental health and well-being that encompasses pupils, staff and parents. The school knows its pupils very well and provides effective support for vulnerable pupils so that a large majority reach expected standards.
- Collective worship provides an arena in which the school vision and values are consistently developed. Pupils' reflection and application of their learning has had a positive impact on behaviour and relationships.
- Religious education (RE) enables pupils to engage with a range of cultures and beliefs in a safe environment where different ideas and opinions can be explored. A relatively small proportion of pupils are currently working at greater depth in this subject.

Areas for development

- Develop the vision throughout policies, practice and the curriculum, ensuring that all stakeholders, including parents and new staff, understand its aims and application.
- Develop a shared school understanding of spirituality so that opportunities throughout the curriculum and in the environment are realised, enabling pupils to grow and deepen in their spiritual development.
- Further develop pupils' enquiry and analysis skills in RE, to support them in exploring theological concepts and allowing them to work at greater depth in RE, in line with other core subjects.

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

School leaders have developed a Christian vision with clear, biblical roots. An inclusive ethos welcomes pupils with a wide range of backgrounds, beliefs and abilities. Leaders are well informed about developments in church school education, engaging conscientiously in relevant training. The school has begun to review its policies and curriculum in the light of its vision. Partnerships with the church, other organisations and Christian groups provide additional opportunities for pupils' academic, spiritual, social and cultural development, enriching their experiences. Daily collective worship provides a values-led programme in which the school's vision and values are consistently explored. The vision has been shared with parents via the website and newsletters. New staff are given support and training in church school education. The school has actively supported staff within and beyond the school in their professional development as leaders of church schools. Governors monitor the school's effectiveness through a programme of formal visits and by supporting the school in practical ways. They know the school well, contributing effectively to plans for school improvement. In response to their previous denominational inspection report recommendations, parents have shared their views showing extensive engagement and great appreciation of the school. Staff questionnaires have promoted discussion on well-being and flexible working arrangements.

The school knows its pupils very well. It is quick to identify any concerns and thorough in its provision and support for vulnerable pupils. Consequently, a large majority of pupils reach expected standards with many working at greater depth. Currently, vulnerable pupils are less successful at reaching higher levels but targeted support is in place to help them to do so. The school provides a broad, balanced curriculum with an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. These are tailored to the needs and interests of pupils so that, in line with the school vision, they can develop their individual gifts and skills. The school has a gold school games award celebrating its provision for sport, a great achievement on a challenging split site without a field. RE and collective worship provide good opportunities for spiritual development. However, a shared, school understanding of spirituality is not fully developed. As a result, the scope for exploring spiritual and ethical ideas is less established in other subjects and in the school environment.

The school vision aims to help pupils fulfil their potential and live fruitful lives in the community. It is successful in helping pupils realise their academic potential and develop other interests and skills. Values, including determination and courage, are developed through 'growth mindset' strategies which promote resilience and perseverance. The school community engages in various social action projects each year, including supporting a local food bank and visiting a care home for the elderly. The curriculum offers some scope for pupils to consider issues such as disadvantage, deprivation and exploitation of resources, however, this is not fully developed. Although the school supports charities with global reach each year, there are no ongoing international church connections.

Values, connected with the school vision of being centred in God's love, are embedded in school practice. Consequently, pupils behave very well and relationships throughout the school are strong. The school adopts a firm approach to low-level disruption resulting in a calm, productive learning environment. A restorative justice approach helps resolve any conflict, drawing on values of friendship, forgiveness and respect. RE provides an arena in which pupils can explore differing views and opinions safely. Attendance is above national averages. The school is diligent in working with parents to tackle unnecessary pupil absence so that learning is not compromised. There have been no exclusions for many years. The school has successfully included pupils who have had difficulties in other settings. There is very good identification and support for mental health issues. A counsellor, well-being clubs and other interventions help create an environment which promotes good mental health. Staff keep reflective journals to support their personal and professional development, in line with the vision to make the most of their skills.

There are no recorded incidents of prejudicial language or behaviour. The curriculum allows pupils to learn about a range of cultures and beliefs and facilitates discussion about healthy relationships and social responsibility. Pupils respond to unacceptable behaviour by being 'upstanders' rather than bystanders. External partners say that pupils are responsible and considerate out of school; fulfilling the vision to be fruitful members of the community. There is a well-thought out, age-appropriate policy for sex and relationships education.

Worship is varied, enabling pupils to encounter biblical teaching and Christian belief. The use of music, film clips, drama and quietness help pupils' engagement. The worship programme includes the celebration of Christian festivals. Links are made between Bible stories and the school vision and values. Pupils are encouraged to take their learning into daily life. For example, in responding to how they were 'growing together in knowledge, wisdom and faith', pupils said, 'We have grown in patience and confidence'. Pupils monitor worship, influencing the choice of music. The school has tried various approaches to pupil leadership of worship. Currently, pupils take part in leading class worship and termly services. Their role in regular whole-school worship is continuing to develop. The school is well-supported by several local Christian organisations who lead worship in the church each week. Pupils have some understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and learn about the Eucharist in RE lessons. Parents enjoy attending seasonal services.

The RE scheme of work follows the Kent Agreed Syllabus. The school has adopted 'Understanding Christianity', a resource that supports the teaching of Christianity. The school allocates appropriate time to RE, in line with Church of England requirements. Pupils progressively learn key theological concepts, develop religious literacy and engage well with texts. In support of the school vision, they visit places of worship, learn about different major faiths and make effective links and comparisons between them. An assessment system tracks pupil progress. Currently, only a few pupils are working at greater depth in this subject. Good use is made of the partnership with Rochester Diocese, with staff benefitting from relevant courses.

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