

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School			
Address	Church Lane, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 2DH		
Date of inspection	23 January 2020	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary
Diocese	Guildford	URN	102593

Overall Judgement	<i>How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?</i>	Grade	Requires Improvement
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Requires Improvement

School context

St Mary's is a primary school with 199 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 (SEND) is in line with national averages. Since the previous denominational inspection, there have been substantial changes to leadership. An interim headteacher was appointed in September 2019 and governance has significantly changed.

The school's Christian vision

Live Life; Love Learning; Guided by God.

Key findings

- New leaders have rapidly ensured that the Christian vision and associated values are enabling pupils to 'Love Learning'. However, a robust monitoring system is not utilised by leaders, including governors, to effectively evaluate the school as a Church school.
- Pupils' attainment and progress are not good enough. Subsequently, pupils are not flourishing academically or spiritually.
- Pupils behave well as a result of effective support for wellbeing and within a strong culture of nurturing the individual. The improved behaviour of pupils is attributed to the consistent application of Christian values.
- Strong partnerships exist with the parish church and clergy. This enhances the good collective worship at St Mary's, which is 'Guided by God'.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum is effective. However, leaders at all levels do not monitor the subject effectively and teaching is not consistently good.

Areas for development

- Ensure that leaders, including governors, develop a robust and continuous process of self-evaluation and monitoring, so that they better evaluate the school's effectiveness as a Church school.
- Ensure that the Christian vision is fully applied to the whole curriculum, so that the academic and spiritual flourishing of all pupils improves.
- Develop the impact of RE subject leadership, so that teaching in RE is consistently 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?

Inspection findings

New senior leaders have reignited an inclusive Christian vision at St Mary's. The associated values of respect, honesty, forgiveness, kindness and thankfulness, are central to the school's journey of improvement. The vision reflects the context of the school community and is becoming known by all stakeholders. Recent and significant changes to staffing and governance means that the monitoring of the school as a Church school is in its infancy. Areas for development from the previous inspection have not been fully addressed. Governors are not effectively monitoring the school as a Church school and as a result, some self-evaluation is inaccurate. Governors are beginning to undertake training to enable effective governance of a Church school. Recent strides forward are recognised by parents, 'Our children are happy now'. Tangible links between the Christian vision and improvement are beginning to take hold within the school community. Leaders are supported on this journey by the local authority, Diocese and links with other local Church schools.

Leaders have ensured that the Christian vision and associated values are reviewed regularly to ensure a sense of collaborative responsibility for promotion within the school community. As such, staff understand the biblical roots of the vision. However, these roots are not fully articulated by governors nor by some pupils. Parents see the recent improvements within the school as a fresh start, appreciating how senior leaders, 'visibly model values to everyone'.

Achievement of pupils remains significantly below national expectations. Equally, progress from starting points is very low. Leaders have rapidly improved pupils' love of learning, by establishing the Christian vision as the driving force for school improvement. The Christian vision is not fully applied to the curriculum and does not drive all policies and procedures effectively enough. The spiritual development of pupils is improving as part of the school's journey, but a shared understanding of spirituality is lacking.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' character development is linked to the school's vision and values. Charitable works are planned by staff to enable pupils to explore their community and the wider world. Leaders have high aspirations for every pupil to 'Live Life' to the full. Leaders ensure that pupils explore the 'big questions' of life. Many pupils and families are supported by a drive to improve life chances for the most vulnerable. For example, support for pupils with SEND is robust, as it is based on passionate staff seeking to nurture the whole child, including building relationships with families. Clergy explains that a true sense of service to the most vulnerable, 'enables the school to be an anchor for these families'. A sense of nurturing the individual is at the heart of recent improvements. Links with the local community are developing. For example, pupils enjoy singing for residents of a local care home.

Pupils behaviour is good, as a result of consistent approaches and high expectations. Staff act as role models. A sense of respect and forgiveness is at the heart of this approach. Excellent behaviour is rewarded, which is valued by everyone. Pupils recognise the differences within their community and these are celebrated and shared with families. For example, a Jewish parent supported learning in RE and pupils have visited a local Synagogue, to learn more about Judaism within their community.

Senior leaders support the wellbeing and mental health of pupils and staff effectively. Leaders are approachable and support staff development robustly within a context of trust and honesty. As a result, staff are enabled to flourish as professionals. Adults and pupils can share concerns they may have in the knowledge that they will be listened to. A sense of dignity and respect permeates. Modelled by leaders, this upholds the values. Pupils explain that equality is well established. A pupil clarified, 'We learn from each other and understand our differences'.

Worship is central to the life of the school and is an expression of the Christian vision. As a result, the provision is good. Adults and pupils speak of the inspiration they take from a range of worship experiences and worship leaders. The teachings of Jesus, through parables, are well understood by pupils of all ages. A younger pupil explained that, 'Jesus is a gift to all of us. He cares about everyone, even people that make bad choices'. Worship is invitational and inclusive. Pupils explain the importance of prayer and reflection. They value every occasion to, 'speak with God'. An understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is articulated by older pupils. Anglican traditions of worship, such as liturgical colours of the Church year, are part of the worship life. Leaders and

clergy plan worship together. The use of opening liturgy ensures everyone present is focused on the symbolism of the cross, candle and Bible as links between Christian faith and their vision. Well established partnerships between the school, clergy and parish exist. Clergy support the school exceptionally well. The vicar regularly leads tailormade class worship. This enables pupils to ask questions and develop a respectful relationship with the vicar. Staff value input from clergy to support worship and RE lessons. Pupils are beginning to evaluate worship, but their involvement in planning and leading worship is in its infancy. Governors informally monitor worship; however robust evaluation is not used to drive improvements.

The RE curriculum and planning is effective as it follows the Diocesan scheme of work. This ensures that subject matter and skills are accurate and that RE expresses St Mary's Christian vision. Pupils use their love of learning in RE lessons and are confident to apply inquiry and questioning skills. Pupils enjoy learning about Christianity and other world faiths. Pupils' books show they take pride in their learning. However, the best practice is not shared across the school. Regular assessment takes place, but this does not enable teachers or pupils to understand progress. The leadership of RE is at an early stage. As a result, the impact and understanding of leadership are limited in supporting the development of good RE.

St Mary's is on a developmental journey of improvement. Green shoots of development are breaking through in many aspects. These are rooted in the Christian vision and with the associated values at the centre.



The effectiveness of RE Requires Improvement

The school's effective evaluation of teaching and learning in RE is limited. The RE leader reviews pupils' recorded work in books, but further monitoring of the quality of RE teaching does not take place. Some teaching in RE is good, but this is not consistent across the school. The proportion of pupils making good progress in RE is lower than expected. As a result, not all pupils are flourishing academically in RE.

Interim Headteacher

Steph Playle

Inspector's name and number

Toby Long 896