

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Shillingstone Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Augustan Ave Shillingstone, Blandford Forum Dorset, DT11 0TX
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
'For the body is not one member it is many.' 'Christ is like a single body, which has many parts; it is still one body, even though it is made up of different parts. For the body itself is not made up of only one part, but many parts.' 1 Corinthians 12: 14
Key findings
• Leaders are passionate and completely dedicated to enabling pupils to flourish. They inspire others shaping a cohesive team who live out the vision daily. However, there is no robust or systematic plan which ensures that all aspects of a church school are fully evaluated. • The vision is fundamental to creating this warm caring school family. It drives leaders to welcome all pupils. The quality of support for vulnerable pupils effectively meets their needs, raising aspirations, enabling them to flourish. • The vision and associated Christian values influence pupils attitudes and behaviour. Pupils show a high degree of dignity and respect to everyone. • Influential partnerships, particularly with the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust (SAST), provides invaluable support through high quality training and monitoring. At present pupils have limited opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate collective worship. • Religious education (RE) has a good profile in school life. New initiatives ensure pupils enjoy and are challenged, recognising the subject's relevance. Pupils' knowledge of world faiths and views is less well developed and they are not confident to articulate their understanding.
Areas for development
• Ensure that leaders consistently identify key areas for improvement by creating a robust approach to monitoring. This will enable them to evaluate the impact which the Christian vision has on all aspects of a church school. • Enable pupils to have a greater role in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship so they take greater ownership and lead improvements. • Extend pupils' knowledge of world faiths and views so they are confident to articulate how faith shapes peoples' actions and responses.

Inspection findings

The school's distinctive Christian vision effectively meets the needs of the community. It brings together pupils and families from three separate localities and nurtures them to becoming a caring family. Pupils thoughtfully articulate their understanding of the vision by referring to the image of a tree. They explain that the roots are their Christian values which allow them to grow and have a strong foundation. Pupils make links between trees which grow from small seeds and their own development. This then enables them to make a difference for others.

Leaders have a good understanding of Christian principles underpinning the vision. They talk about everyone being special to God, part of his family. Leaders see their role as developing each pupil's talents so they flourish. A cohesive staff team work well together, they perceive their role as living out the vision. This enables pupils to see the difference Christian values make. Leaders are passionate and inspiring, using the vision to drive improvements. This is evident in the ongoing initiatives to care for individual pupils and families. The best example is nurturing individual's emotional health. It has led to redesigning the curriculum to enrich pupils' understanding of diversity and the wider world. Leaders continuously evaluate the impact of the vision on the work of being a church school and make refinements. Governors are enthusiastic and committed. However, there is no systematic approach which evaluates all aspects of being a Church school.

The vision drives leaders to welcome all pupils regardless of their needs. There are impressive examples of where vast changes have been made to meet the diverse needs of pupils. This has meant specialised equipment being purchased and additional spaces built. Individualised support from skilled staff raises pupils' self-esteem. Emotional nurture is a strength where particular needs are identified. Pupils talk about strategies they use and how these help them with learning. Staff set ambitious targets for pupils, encouraging them to work at greater depth. There is a positive culture of aspiring to be the best you can be. Mental health is a priority. Pupils use strategies in class which help them to be calm and recognise their emotions. This is equally valuable for staff.

The vision of being 'part of one body' fundamentally shapes this caring community. There is a tangible sense of being a family. Pupils treat one another with a high degree of respect and dignity. Pupils are aware of everyone being unique and precious. They draw on the vision and Christian values to inform their relationships. Behaviour is of a particularly good standard because expectations are high. Pupils of all ages play together with older pupils taking their roles as buddies seriously. There is a growing understanding of injustice or stereotypes and how pupils can challenge these. Pupils are confident to develop leadership skills, such as being part of the school council. Suggestions from all pupils are considered. The council then plan actions for initiatives which fulfil the vision of making a difference for others or supporting families. Raising funds for a local hospital children's ward or funding musical instruments to nurture mental health in school are fine examples.

The vision challenges leaders to redesign a curriculum which meets the needs of all learners. This ensures that learning is progressively developed with frequent opportunities for pupils to work at greater depth. This has led to pupils having a more informed understanding of

difference and diversity by exploring for example, black history and inspiring leaders. Their understanding of deprivation is being extended through their partnership with a charity which flies aid to various countries. Staff use an agreed understanding of spirituality. Pupils flourish spiritually through opportunities to reflect in a variety of curriculum areas and beyond. They record their ideas thoughtfully in floor books which indicates their growing understanding.

Significant partnerships enhance the school's development and their vision of support for all pupils. The relationship with SAST is influential with impressive support for vulnerable pupils. Their monitoring is well-focused and leads to key targets for improvement which make a difference for pupils. School leaders supported local schools as they moved through challenging times. They have worked with others on developing their vision and values. Subject leaders' skills are growing through meetings with local schools. The diocese provides focused training, supporting the introduction of 'Understanding Christianity', an RE resource. This enhances pupils' and staff knowledge of Christianity. The local church makes a full contribution to governance and supporting collective worship. School leaders take a leading role in community life, for instance, organising harvest festival.

Collective worship has a central role in enriching pupils' understanding of the vision by exploring Christian values in depth. The coordinator continues to make improvements raising the impact and profile that worship has. The introduction of class worship enables pupils to reflect on the key theme for the week and determine its significance for them. Pupils value the use of a visual image each week representing the theme which focuses their thinking. A consistent structure to worship provides continuity and familiarity. There are good opportunities to reflect, with the spiritual garden playing a major role. More interactive prayer stations allow pupils to be still or pray, these are increasingly important. At present however, pupils have limited opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate worship, they feel they have limited ownership in this area. Pupils have a good understanding of festivals such as Easter, confident to explain their meaning for Christians. They articulate a secure understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Planning is in place with guidance for all staff, supported by an enthusiastic leader. Evaluations by governors have led to improvements in music and a greater emphasis on festivals.

The diligent RE leader makes thoughtful improvements ensuring the subject has a good profile. RE draws on Jesus' teachings offering examples of how people can live well together. New approaches engage pupils in learning which they enjoy. Questions of meaning and purpose are increasingly discussed in depth where pupils learn from one another and how to disagree well. Pupils increasingly have a better knowledge of religious concepts. They recognise that Christianity is a living faith, shaping peoples' attitudes. Systems to track pupils' progress are more robust. More pupils are confident to undertake questions which involve them working at greater depth. However, pupils find it difficult to articulate their understanding of world faiths or views. They are not able to make links between how faith influences people's attitudes and actions. The subject leader effectively supports staff drawing on recognised good practice.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good	
	Teaching and learning in RE is good and is improving. Pupils generally make good progress in RE in-line with other core subjects. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. Their progress is rising as their verbal responses demonstrate a better understanding of ideas. The majority of pupils value their learning and feel it makes an influential contribution to their thinking.			
Information				
School	Shillingstone Church of England VA Primary School	Inspection date	13 October 2022	
URN	147141	VC/VA/ Academy		
Diocese/District	Salisbury	Pupils on roll	116	
MAT/Federation	Sherborne Area Schools' Trust			
Headteacher	Jane Whitehouse-Sharpe			
Chair of Governors	Sharon Proyer			
Inspector	David Hatrey	No.	844	