

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Oakham Church of England Primary School

Address	Burley Road, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6GY		
Date of inspection	28 March 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Diocese	Peterborough	URN	120181

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

Oakham is a primary school with 268 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 above national averages. Within the school there is a Designated Specialist Provision (DSP) for pupils with autism or moderate learning difficulties. The school is federated with The Parks School, a specialist nursery school on the same site. The executive head teacher is shared between the two schools and has been in post for three and a half years.

The school's Christian vision

'Let all that you do be done in love'. In loving Christian fellowship, we equip everyone to have a passion for life and learning: to have pride in our local community and be thankful for all the parts which make us whole; building hope and resilience to persevere and develop a sense of humility and purpose in our lives.

Key findings

- A strong Christian vision that underpins and overarches every aspect of school so that all stakeholders understand how it impacts on their role within the school.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher, ably supported by other school leaders, governors and dedicated staff create a vibrant Christian learning community in which every member can flourish.
- Pupils' spiritual and personal development is very well supported through relevant and challenging religious education (RE) and collective worship.
- The fully inclusive nature of the school including forces children, children at The Parks School and those supported through the DSP ensure that adults and pupils understand what it means to live well together. They exemplify in their relationships the school vision statement 'Let all that you do be done in love'.
- A positive partnership with the local church makes a significant contribution to the school's distinctive Christian character and to pupils' and adults' spiritual development.

Areas for development

- Develop pupils' knowledge of Christianity as a world faith as well as other religions and world views, so that they increase their understanding of their part in living well together as global citizens.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to engage in prayer and reflection by creating an outdoor reflective area to strengthen their spiritual development and provide further opportunities for fellowship.
- Strengthen links with the local church so that opportunities can be found to deepen pupils' and adults' experience of Christian faith.

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 Christian vision of the school underpins every aspect of its life. It is inclusive and aspirational. It seeks to ensure that all are supported so that they can flourish, achieve and develop a love of learning. Pupils know that the strapline for the vision comes from the Bible and that it summarises the way Jesus wants people to live. Within the vision statement are both learning and Christian values. They are expressed as a partnership of values that enables everyone to achieve their best and to 'be the best people we can be'. This is a fully inclusive school. The vision is repeatedly referenced when adults and pupils speak of the relationship they have with forces children, those attending The Parks School and those nurtured in the DSP. Staff morale is high. They feel valued and respected because their well-being is considered at all levels. Staff benefit from targeted professional development. Training in the use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource to improve their skills and confidence as RE teachers is one example. Leaders have secured high quality leadership of RE and collective worship. As a result, both make substantial contributions to the school's distinctiveness and performance. Leaders and governors have established an effective Church school self-evaluation process. Through regular monitoring visits governors have a clear idea of school performance, achievement and the way the vision is being lived out. Monitoring and evaluation systems ensure that pupil progress is tracked and individual needs identified. Standards of attainment are generally in line with or just above national expectations. The school has been on a trajectory of improvement over recent years. It continues to improve because leaders keep the vision at the heart of decision making.

Pupils enjoy all the school offers. They are inspired in their learning by a broad curriculum, enhanced by visits and extra-curricular activities. Vulnerable pupils and those with special needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported by both adults and pupils. Financial and human resources are used effectively so that all pupils can flourish. Expectations are high. The vision ensures that all pupils have a passion for learning and to achieve their very best. Pupils are eager to rise to the challenges they are presented with. They have positive attitudes to life and learning. Parents confirm that their children are happy and feel supported in every aspect of their life. They value the pastoral care that is given not just to their children but to whole families. Staff at every level of the school make themselves available to parents and spend time with them offering counsel and support.

Provision for pupils' spiritual development and emotional well-being is well considered. RE and collective worship make substantial contributions to their spiritual growth. Pupils are eager, confident and articulate. Reflection is integral to learning across the curriculum, through which the Christian values are threaded seamlessly. Pupils express their ideas creatively through art, drama and prayer. The quality and depth of their responses can be seen in displays, the RE class books and in collective worship reflection books. Big questions are used in RE and these challenge pupils in their thinking because they are often asked to explain or consider the validity of their own and other points of view. Pupils make clear links between Jesus' teaching, the school's Christian values and their own actions, such as supporting charitable causes. They talk about these as an expression of the value of fellowship. Through their work in RE pupils have some understanding of diverse cultures and beliefs but this is limited. Through the use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource, pupils are developing an age appropriate understanding of Christianity as a living and diverse faith. They are able to explain some key concepts of the faith including Trinity and incarnation. Well planned and resourced RE lessons ensure that pupils get the very best out of each RE learning opportunity.

Collective worship is an important part of the school day. Pupils' attitudes towards it are positive because they feel included and involved. Thorough planning by a committed member of staff enables the school community to explore values and themes imaginatively. Worship constantly refers to the school vision and values. Pupils and adults are invited to participate through prayer, song and simple liturgy which involves the lighting of a candle. Pupils engage fully with this and enjoy being nominated by their friends to do this through writing a 'candle letter'. These letters also contribute to recording the impact of collective worship themes. Stories used in worship enable everyone to reflect on the Bible so that pupils have a good understanding of key Bible stories. Class worship is held once a week so enabling everyone to discuss and reflect together on the Christian message for the week introduced by local clergy on a Monday. Pupils can therefore talk about ways in which the Bible stories are relevant to them in their life and in the life of the school. One pupil spoke of how hearing stories about Jesus helps them to think about how she should treat other people both at home and at school. Worship is led by staff and clergy with some involvement from pupils. The previous rector supported the planning for the collective worship programme. During a period without a rector links with the church were maintained by two curates

from the parish. Along with the newly appointed rector they are working closely with the school exploring ways in which the partnership can develop. The church is used for special services. Parents attend these services, as well as worship in school, because they value the opportunity to share in the worshipping life of the school. Prayer and reflection are integral features of worship. Pupils know and use traditional prayers and graces. They write and use their own prayers for personal and public use. Further opportunities for reflection are being considered by the school in the creation of an outdoor space. Reflection books demonstrate the way in which collective worship themes are developed. Time is provided for each class in rotation to reflect on their experiences, question and deepen their understanding. Worship therefore makes a good contribution to their personal and spiritual development. Staff are well supported by the lead teacher for worship. Through this support they are developing in their own spirituality.

All members of Oakham's distinctly Christian learning community are united in their belief that the school's Christian vision and values are lived out daily. The vision makes a powerful difference to the lives and outcomes of pupils and adults. The school is therefore well-placed to move confidently forward.

Executive headteacher	Stephen Cox
Inspector's name and number	Jane Lewis (27)