

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ticehurst and Flimwell Church of England Primary School

Address	Steellands Rise, Ticehurst, East Sussex. TN5 7DH		
Date of inspection	12 June 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Diocese	Chichester	URN	114524

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	Requires Improvement
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Ticehurst and Flimwell is a primary school with 95 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. There have been a significant number of staff changes since the last inspection. An interim executive board (IEB) has been in place since September 2017. An independent nursery shares the school site.

The school's Christian vision

Ticehurst and Flimwell is a nurturing environment, which enables everyone to succeed in developing their unique God-given talents and potential. We hold our Christian values at the heart of all we do, supporting each member of the school family to live life in all its fullness. John 10:10

Key findings

- The school vision has recently been revised and biblically underpinned, but there has not been sufficient time for this to impact on the school community, drive developments or inform policies.
- The school's caring and nurturing ethos results in good relationships within the school community.
- Collective worship is central to each day and links the school's Christian values and biblical teaching. The leadership of worship is generally limited to adults, with assistance from pupils.
- Outcomes in religious education (RE) are not known as there is no assessment. In addition there is no consistent definition of spirituality and spiritual development.
- Pupils and staff treat each other with dignity and respect and have some awareness of cultural diversity around the world. However pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to explore Christianity as a worldwide religion or to be advocates for the needs of others.

Areas for development

- Refine and embed the school's Christian vision so that it drives school improvements. Ensure that it is fully understood and articulated by all members of the school community.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship so that they are involved in shaping worship.
- Secure a clear understanding of spirituality and spiritual development, which is shared by all leaders and staff, so that it enriches curriculum planning and provides a framework for monitoring impact.
- Ensure that the RE curriculum is focused on the school vision. Provide opportunities for all pupils to explore Christianity as a worldwide faith and to consider how faith impacts on social responsibility. Include the impact of this in a robust RE assessment process.

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 strong Christian ethos, centred on the Christian values of compassion, wisdom, hope and trust provides a nurturing, inclusive and caring family environment which meets the needs of all pupils. The local authority identified inclusion in the Early Years to be amongst the best in East Sussex. The Christian values, effectively modelled by adults, influence all areas of school life. They are lived out daily by pupils and staff, who readily identify how they underpin the dignity, respect and quality of all relationships. Evidence is clear that the school embraces the spirit of the 'Valuing All God's Children' document. Each Christian value is biblically linked. Pupils share with confidence the Bible stories they associate with each value; this includes the story of the good Samaritan. They make secure connections between the school's Christian values and the choices they make in daily life. Currently, the recent underpinning of the vision with the quote from John 10:10, 'life in all its fullness,' is not apparent in documentation nor where the vision is displayed. The vision has not been formally shared with parents. In addition to the Christian values, the vision also contains the school's core values of aspire, believe, cooperate and achieve. This complex structure causes confusion, especially as additional Christian values are shared in collective worship. Consequently, the vast majority of the school community cannot explain the vision and its biblical links.

Systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the school as a Church school are generally accurate but do not include the views of parents in relation to Christian distinctiveness. There is clear evidence of the impact of actions to address the areas for improvement from the last SIAMS inspection, including introducing Christian values. However, as improving pupil outcomes has been the central focus, the requirements of the current SIAMS schedule have only recently been addressed. This has resulted in some key areas not being actioned and others, including the revised vision, are not embedded. The vision is not, therefore, informing developments, policies and practice. However, next steps have been identified to enable the SIAMS schedule to be met in full. These include introducing RE assessment and a number of core policies focused on Christian distinctiveness. Diocesan training has been completed by the headteacher and the vicar. Training requirements to equip the future governing board have been identified.

Leaders are passionate about enabling all pupils to achieve their full potential and have been relentless in their drive to raise academic standards. As a result, all pupils are flourishing academically. Data from national assessments in 2018 shows pupil outcomes broadly in line or higher than age related expectations, with all pupils making good individual progress. All staff have high aspirations for every pupil to be the best that they can be. Their passion and commitment are referenced in the revised school vision, which seeks to enable 'everyone to succeed in developing their unique God-given talents and potential' and 'to live life in all its fullness.' They also support the school motto, 'Aim high and succeed. Aspire, believe, cooperate, achieve: learning without limits.' Personal and academic achievements as well as the school values are recognised during weekly celebration collective worships. The behaviour and attendance of the vast majority of pupils is good, and where it is not it is monitored regularly and strategies relating to individual needs are put in place. A strength of the school is its provision for the wellbeing and mental health of pupils and staff, and this is universally seen as strengthening the school community as a family. The school has chosen to invest in a number of school pets and chickens, to provide opportunities for pupils to learn responsibility through the care of animals. This aids their appreciation of all God creates and gives them an age appropriate understanding of different stages in life.

Pupils have opportunities for personal development. They join in a number of local and national charity events, led by adults. Occasionally pupils have initiated and led fund raising activities to support the needs of others, which has given them some understanding of social and moral responsibility and of how to be advocates for change. Learning about social activists in collective worship, such as Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela, has enhanced their understanding. Leaders have no shared definition of spirituality and spiritual development. Therefore, whilst there is evidence of some provision in RE, the broader curriculum and collective worship, there is no framework for monitoring impact.

Parents value the approachability of the headteacher and school team and the school's 'open door' policy. Families say that the school is a welcoming and nurturing environment where their children are happy and enjoy their learning. A securely child-centred approach means that pupil voice is integral to the life of the school. In

addition, older pupils gain an understanding of social responsibility by taking on leadership roles such as house captains or playground pals. Pupils are also role models for the children from the neighbouring nursery who join the school for lunch.

Inclusive and invitational collective worship is of central importance to the school day. Pupils and adults value it as a time for reflection and to pray if they wish to. Worship is led by the headteacher, all teachers and the vicar. Each class leads worship once a term and parents value attending these and the school services to celebrate the main Christian festivals at St Mary's church in Ticehurst. The current vicar visits the school weekly and has introduced Open the Book worship. This has broadened the approaches to worship and is extremely popular with pupils and staff. It has strengthened their knowledge of Bible stories and led to a stronger sense of community between the parish churches and the school. As a result of this and regular invitations to church services and events more families are participating in church activities. Each term a Christian value informs the planning of collective worship. Worship includes a range of aspects of Anglican worship including lighting the candles with reference to the Trinity. However, pupils do not know about the Eucharist and its significance to Christians. Bible readings and prayer are well established, and pupils are secure in their understanding and use of prayer. Pupils, staff and IEB members formally monitor collective worship. Previous pupil feedback has led to increased pupil participation in worship. However, there are insufficient opportunities for them to take on greater leadership and planning roles.

The school uses the East Sussex agreed syllabus for RE to develop pupils' knowledge of Christianity and a number of major world faiths. New resources have resulted in improved teaching and learning and as a result RE is enjoyed more by pupils and staff. Pupils benefit from opportunities to develop age appropriate skills of enquiry, critical analysis and interpretation. Assessment systems are not in place to provide information about progress and attainment.

The school meets statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.

Headteacher	Fiona Sayers
Inspector's name and number	Gillian Bradnam 935