

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Nicolas' Church of England VA Primary School, Portslade	
Address	Locks Hill, Portslade, BN41 2LA
School vision	
<p>What do we want a 30-year-old to be like partly because they came to St Nics? Learning to live...together</p> <p>Guided by Christian values: love, servant leadership, curiosity, respect, perseverance, courage. The Golden Rule: Treat others in the way you would like them to treat you.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Servant leadership underpins the living out of the vision at St Nicolas' School. Leaders set an example that is reflected and emulated by the school community. • Adults and pupils are cared for and valued as unique individuals who are embraced and celebrated. Consequently, this is a community where flourishing is commonplace. • Excellent relationships are commonplace and valued. Wellbeing is a high priority and there is an overwhelming sense of Christian love. Leaders and staff consistently 'go the extra mile' to ensure that individual needs are met. • The Christian vision encapsulates a striving for social justice and the desire to bring about meaningful change in the world. Pupils know that they can address inequality and unfairness. This contributes to the flourishing of others and the environment. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop curriculum planning and assessment in religious education (RE) so that it is well sequenced and challenging. Ensure that rigorous assessment systems inform teaching and learning opportunities. • Enhance the status and provision of collective worship, including opportunities for spiritual flourishing. • Develop a shared view of spiritual development that is woven throughout the curriculum and life of the school. This is to enhance pupils' ability to consider and articulate the wider dimension to their lives. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Rooted in love, respect and courage, St Nicolas' School is a place where pupils and adults are valued and nurtured. It is an exceptionally warm, welcoming and inclusive school with care for the individual child at its heart. The distinctive Christian vision and biblical narrative to love one another permeates daily life. The compulsion to serve and seek no personal reward, drives decision making and interactions. An emphasis on empowering adults and pupils to bring about meaningful change in the service of others is embraced. Leaders know the school well and accurately articulate the effect of the vision in the school and community. Their resolve to nurture pupils to develop into adults who positively impact the world is steadfast. Parents justly proclaim effusive praise for the</p>	

way in which adults prepare their children for the future.

A highly inclusive curriculum engenders flourishing. Learning is engaging and imaginative within and beyond the classroom. Pupils' exploration of creation in RE permeates the wider curriculum. It stimulates a curiosity about the natural world. This promotes responsibility for the environment and develops a growing sense of awe and wonder. However, the development of a shared and personal view of spirituality is not evident. Consequently, many opportunities for spiritual growth are missed. Provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is excellent. Parents are rightly unreserved in their praise for the support that their children receive to meet their individual needs. Difference and diversity are celebrated. The appointment of a pupil ambassador for autism in the school is having a positive impact. This is a community where the contribution of each unique individual is cherished.

Collective worship provides daily sustenance that bears fruit. It is invitational and highly inclusive. Adjustments, such as the use of ear defenders for those who struggle with loud singing, encourages participation. Worship reflects the Anglican tradition and celebrates Christian festivals throughout the year. It encourages adults and pupils to think deeply about a range of Bible stories and Christian beliefs and values. A significant emphasis on the exploration of the school's vision and values develops understanding and promotes action. Activities are used which challenge pupils to consider and address injustice. This includes those set within the biblical context of the book of James which emphasises the imperative for good deeds. They are rightly proud that this mirrors the work that they do, such as supporting local food banks. It serves to further motivate and strengthen their resolve to establish equity of provision. Singing, praying and brief periods for considering the daily focus for worship are valued. However, the lack of a clear strategy to develop individual spirituality and prioritise time for purposeful reflection limits effective growth.

The RE curriculum has been recently considered and revised. It meets the requirements regarding an appropriate balance between learning about Christianity and a range of other faiths and non-religious worldviews. It ensures that pupils have time to reflect on their learning and think philosophically about their own views. Planning is structured to allow pupils to revisit prior learning and to build on this as they progress throughout school. Despite this, teaching is not sufficiently rigorous or well-planned to ensure appropriate challenge and maximum progress. Core subject knowledge and associated vocabulary in RE has not been precisely defined. This limits pupils' ability to develop an age-appropriate understanding of a range of religions and worldviews. Likewise, monitoring and assessment systems do not always adequately inform future teaching and learning. Leaders prioritise opportunities for professional development, including support from diocesan advisers. Recent RE training is positively impacting the knowledge and skills of staff. Learning in RE expertly incorporates the school's vision and values. For example, when pupils learn about noteworthy individuals and the Christian compulsion to care for others. They eloquently articulate the comparison between the work of these Christian examples and their own obligation to demonstrate love.

Following the example of Jesus, leaders serve their community with humility and servanthood. They embody care, consideration and compassion. Staff are suitably appreciative of the impact that this has on their wellbeing. Parents speak confidently of the way in which staff support their children to flourish in numerous areas of life. Specific provision, before the start of the school day, for those who might otherwise struggle to attend, is illustrative of this. A focus on further developing wellbeing is a resounding success. One aspect of this is to encourage adults and children to 'take notice'. Prioritising time to be outside and look carefully at what is visible, promotes appreciation of their community and the world. It nourishes wellbeing and provides occasions for spiritual growth. Exemplary behaviour flows from a compulsion to incorporate the vision and values into all areas of life. Adults and pupils encapsulate the biblical 'Golden Rule' in how they treat one another and

articulate its biblical roots. Parents emphasise the impact of the vision beyond school. They know that it is intrinsic to their child’s wellbeing and personal development.

Pupil leadership roles are fundamental in bringing about meaningful change and challenging injustice. They work closely with school leaders to prioritise actions. Brave decisions, such as installing solar panels despite their significant cost, are prevalent. A desire to care for the world drives work to incorporate more plants and trees into the school grounds. Whilst learning about rainforests, pupils realise the impact that the demand for palm oil has on the environment. As a result, they embarked on a campaign to stop people purchasing it. Locally, helping to clean the beach and regular donations to the food bank are commonplace. In the spirit of servant leadership, pupils and adults emphasise that their work seeks no reward. They freely give of their time and resources with no expectation of thanks. Pupils confidently and articulately explain the fundamental role of the vision in advancing this work. It is their desire to live out the values of love, courage, perseverance and respect that provide the impetus.

The inspection findings indicate that St Nicolas' School Church of England VA Primary School, Portslade is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	27 June 2024	URN	114560
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	422
Diocese	Chichester		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Andy Richbell		
Chair	Katy Twyning		
Inspector	Jo Brookes	No.	2110