

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Etchingham Church of England Primary School

Vision

Our vision for our Christian community at Etchingham Church of England Primary School is that our pupils feel valued for who they are, reach their full potential through high quality, inspirational learning experiences and are ready for life in an ever-changing world. We aim to treat everyone in our community with compassion, friendship and tolerance, and instil high aspirations for all, underpinned by the teaching that we 'love our neighbour as ourselves.' (Mark 12:31)

Etchingham Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Notable Strengths

- The Christian vision for Etchingham school is simple and accessible, drawn from Jesus' encouragement to love one's neighbour. It results in kindness and compassion, lived out from day to day in quiet yet meaningful ways.
- Deep and reflective thinking is evident across the curriculum, including within religious education (RE), and in daily collective worship. A shared approach to spiritual development through which adults and pupils can regularly think about God, themselves and others underpins this thinking.
- Best practice for inclusion is applied throughout the school because this serves pupils very well. This helps pupils to succeed because it enriches their learning, enabling them to reach their full potential.
- Strong and trusting relationships and form the bedrock for flourishing. Pupils are known and understood, which means that their uniqueness is celebrated, and their needs are met. Staff are supported both professionally and personally to flourish, by leaders and by each other.
- Leaders ensure that a very effective partnership with the other school in the Riverside Federation drives improvement and supports staff wellbeing. This is complemented by collaboration with the diocese and with the local school hub.

Development Points

- Extend the role of pupils with responsibilities within collective worship, so that they contribute directly to the spiritual flourishing of the whole community.
- Ensure that staff and pupils are secure in their knowledge and understanding of a wider range of non-religious worldviews. This is so that they have the confidence to explore the big questions in RE from many and varied perspectives.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision of the school is based on some of the most memorable words of Jesus and has impact from day to day on its small and closely-knit community. By emphasising the importance of the relationship with self and others, friendship, compassion and tolerance grow. Aspiration has been added as an additional aspect of the original vision. This means that there is an explicit ambition for each pupil and adult to give and do of their best. Leaders work tirelessly to embody what they expect of adults which empowers staff to grow and to flourish. Governors know the school well, confident that the vision is 'lived and breathed'. They act on surveys about staff wellbeing and are familiar faces in the school. There is a thriving partnership with the other school in the Riverside Federation through their shared vision. Pupils and adults benefit from collaborating, whenever possible, including through joint curriculum planning and shared school trips. Relationships with the diocese and with the local schools' hub also enrich the school especially through training and professional dialogue.

Vision and Curriculum

Enquiry and curiosity across the curriculum enable pupils to explore and prepare for their place in an ever-changing world, reflecting the vision. Curriculum plans seek to meet the needs of every pupil, thus making aspiration fundamental to it. There is a successful emphasis on closing any potential gaps caused by disadvantage so that there is equity of provision and opportunity. This is achieved by putting into practice the school leaders' principle that 'what is good for pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good for all'. Resources to support pupils, both practically and emotionally, are freely available, meaning that some needs are met through pupils' own choices. Leaders ensure that support for vulnerable pupils is well resourced, including through a designated SEND leader. The school's approach to spiritual development encourages pupils to look at self and others, and to consider how God might be working in the world. This grounds the curriculum in the Christian vision, with deeper thinking leading to looking outwards to the service of others.

Worship and Spirituality

There is a well-planned programme for collective worship which help pupils and adults to put their vision and values into action. They are also challenged to think about recent events from the news and to discuss their ideas with others. This enables them to engage with the wider world, both as a whole school and then in age-appropriate ways in class worship. Their deeper thinking shows through as they talk about the right behaviours and attitudes in relation to certain situations. A time for quiet reflection is shaped by the school's shared approach to spiritual development. There is a pause in which pupils and adults are invited to think about God, themselves and others in the light of their discussions. Well-used calm areas around the school also provide a practical means by which any pupil can quieten their spirits if they feel the need'. Pupils support collective worship in practical ways, such as setting up the space, and they also participate enthusiastically in discussions. However, pupil leadership roles in worship do not currently contribute to spiritual flourishing for themselves and their school community. Strong links with the local church mean that regular services and sessions supporting the RE curriculum form a natural part of the school's year.

Vision and School Culture

The biblical imperative to love self and neighbour results in a kind and compassionate school culture. These are words which adults and pupils, including those in Key Stage 1, use to describe their lived experience. They form the basis of strong relationships, built on trust and an understanding of the families and children whom this school serves. New pupils and new staff settle quickly, describing the warmth of the welcome they receive. According to parents and carers, the openness of adults and a focus on family wellbeing are offered whenever they are needed. This gives them confidence to state that their children 'have every opportunity to do well', including those who have additional needs. Staff wellbeing is supported very well by school leaders. Staff explain that this is because leaders 'understand both our joys and our challenges' and because they encourage



honest dialogue. Subject leaders are given sufficient time and support to fulfil their roles, including by sharing their expertise across the federation. New and potential leaders are grown and supported to be the best they can be. Pupils confidently explain how the adults around them can be trusted to help to sort out disagreements quickly. Both adults and pupils apply the vision and associated values in such situations by showing tolerance and acceptance towards each other.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils understand the importance of taking responsibility for developing their own talents and for helping others to do the same. With pride and admiration, staff and pupils talk about how the celebration worship time captures what is good in each person. Pupils also take practical roles within school life as they get older. They describe how they make suggestions for improvements, for example as school council members, and that they see action being taken. Friendship is strong between older and younger pupils. This is especially evident during social times, as play leaders encourage fun and co-operation. The vision is lived out as members of the school community take responsibility for modelling and recognising love, compassion and friendship in themselves and in others. Pupils are developing a sense of justice within and beyond their school through searching questions, which they are increasingly being asked. The challenge of looking at the wider world helps them to see that it is not yet a fair place. They are beginning to understand that they might be able to make a difference in their communities and in the world.

Religious Education

The RE curriculum has been designed to fit its school context and is well led. Pupils enjoy interacting with the world around them by learning about the beliefs and traditions which shape it. They enjoy the freedom which RE provides to share their thinking and to work collaboratively. They proudly present the learning in their floor books which show how they share ideas and opinions with each other. The RE curriculum builds pupils' understanding about people who are different from them. This means that they value the difference and diversity represented by a range of religious faiths. They have a developing understanding about Christianity and the major world religions studied as global faiths. They talk about 'respecting choices' about beliefs even when these are not the same as their own. However, their perspectives are limited by a lack of breadth in learning about non-religious worldviews. Leaders ensure that the subject is well resourced, including through training with the diocese. This is strengthened by an effective and mutually beneficial RE partnership with the other primary school in the federation.

Information

Address	Parsonage Croft, High Street, Etchingam, East Sussex TN19 7BY		
Date	7 October 2025	URN	114502
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	97
Diocese	Chichester		
Federation	Riverside Federation		
Headteacher	Cherane Marshall		
Chair of Governors	Beverley Waldis and Louise Reader (co-chairs)		
Inspector	Virginia Corbyn		