

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Orford Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School			
Address	School Lane, Orford, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP2 2LU		
Date of inspection	27 November 2019	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	URN	124777

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	Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

Orford Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a primary school with 68 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is slightly below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. The headteacher has been substantive head since September 2016, having been interim headteacher for the previous two terms. To secure its future Orford pre-school became part of the school in September 2018.

The school's Christian vision

As a Christian school we endeavour and encourage everyone to believe that in joining together our individual skills, actions, thoughts and experiences, we can achieve our mission to sow faith, grow learning and inspire futures. **"Whoever is faithful in little is also faithful in much" Luke 16:10**

Key findings

- The headteacher, with the full support of governors, has established a clear Christian vision in this community and implements it within the context of a small school.
- This is an inclusive school whose vision shapes its creative and nurturing curriculum to meet the needs of every pupil and enable all to flourish.
- Decisions made by leaders serve the needs of this small rural community and therefore prompted the school to take on the running of the local pre-school and to offer flexi-schooling when the need arises. This has proved to be innovative work within the community as well as to other schools through the advice they are able to give.
- Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and engaging, enriched by visitors from local churches and charities. Pupils participate but do not take a full role in leading worship. Whilst some pupils are involved in evaluating worship, not all stakeholders evaluate its wider impact.
- Religious education (RE) is led by a passionate and skilled senior teacher and has been given a high priority in school. This has promoted good classroom practice including the effective use of scrapbooks to demonstrate individual progress and class learning.

Areas for development

- Develop collective worship so that it is the heartbeat of the school to enable the whole school community to understand the deeper nature of worship and how it influences their lives.
- Extend pupils' leadership in different contexts including collective worship and initiating social action projects.
- Establish the school as a centre of good practice by extending the school's influence and what it can offer beyond the local community.
- Continue to review policies ensuring the vision shapes the strategic and operational direction of the school.

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

Leaders at every level are united in their mission to sow faith, grow learning and inspire futures through being welcoming to all pupils. Their vision underpins the curriculum through recognising that every small thing they do, can collectively make a big difference. The biblical roots of the vision relate to the unique nature of the individual pupil within this rural community. The vision is well supported by the school values. Pupils understand the meaning of the school values and how their behaviours and attitudes are represented by them, as each is a focus over half a term. The headteacher's award recognises pupils who demonstrate the values and inspires other pupils 'to be the best they can be'. Leaders believe that pupils flourish when they are at the heart of everything in school. They make it their priority to learn about every pupil so that they are then best placed to meet their needs. The school vision shapes the improvement plan as well as the behaviour and collective worship policy but is not embedded within other policies. Leaders understand and value the integral role that the school has within this small rural community. With this in mind and led by their school vision, they chose to take on the village pre-school in September 2018, supported by governors' expertise, the local authority and the diocese. This partnership with the pre-school ensures that staff appointed are in tune with the school's vision and each pupil who joins the school from pre-school makes a seamless transition as staff are well placed to identify and take steps to eliminate barriers to learning. Staff and governors have worked with the diocese and so strengthened their understanding of Church school education. The governors' ethos committee regularly reviews the effectiveness of the Christian vision. Governors recognise that the Christian vision impacts upon decisions that all of their committees make by always reminding them that the unique individual pupil is at the centre of it.

The school has a broad and balanced curriculum, strongly guided at all times by its vision where pupils 'lead their learning'. The curriculum nurtures and provides the learning that each pupil requires to flourish, and adds to their spiritual development. Leaders develop each pupil's creativity through discovery and play in a supportive environment. Pupils feel safe and secure and are then able to build their personal resilience skills to cope with external pressures such as testing. Leaders understand that not all children are ready to attend full time education and support families in reconnecting children with mainstream education. Underpinned by the school vision and mission statement, the nurturing and creative curriculum is instrumental in making flexi-schooling a success, eventually leading to pupils increasing their time in school. A pupil explained 'if we all do little things well; we make school a happy and good place to be'. The school is respected locally for the way in which it meets the individual needs of each pupil through its creative and nurturing curriculum and has been able to offer advice and support to others informally.

Pupils have been involved in events to raise money for various charities and are clear in their wish to help others. They understand this is an important part of living out the school's vision and values and appreciate that if they each do a little for their causes, it will amount to much. They are not often empowered to champion their own causes or engage in social action projects that are driven by their own convictions. The vision reminds pupils that they are all unique individuals and leaders have been successful in encouraging a respect for difference. Pupils feel school is a place where people are respectful of different opinions or beliefs and often speak of 'not being judged'. They talked about the work they carried out during anti-bullying week but did not feel that this was an issue in their school. Pupils behave well and talk about how they try to show honesty and forgiveness, if a conflict arises. The well-being of all members of the school community is a priority for leaders. Staff find leaders approachable and feel listened to; they value the support they receive and being part of the school team.

Worship is inclusive, varied and contributes well to pupils' spiritual development being led regularly by staff but also occasionally by visitors. The programme for worship is well planned and underpinned by the school's vision and values. There is currently no incumbent in post, however, the relationship with the local church remains strong as a lay reader attends school each half term to lead worship and key festivals are still celebrated in church. There are also strong links with other organisations such as Just 42 that contribute to and lead worship, enabling pupils to see that Christians worship in different ways but that all are rooted in the teachings of Jesus. The school council works with the headteacher on evaluating worship. Pupils enjoy the variety of worship and speak of one of their favourite times in worship as being during prayers when there is 'a moment to be quiet and to reflect'. Pupils have a few opportunities to contribute to some elements of worship, for example writing prayers and acting, but they are not involved in leading. Pupils are invited to make a prayer their own but it is never forced. Leaders monitor how pupils develop their understanding of values and Bible stories. However, the process does

not involve all stakeholders which limits opportunities for everyone to share their reflections on the wider impact of worship on the community.

RE is a core subject and has a high profile in school. RE leadership is strong. The school follows the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus using the Emmanuel Project as the main resource. Since the last inspection, leaders have drawn upon training from the diocese to support staff and governors understand how the resources could be used to best effect. Planning ensures that the classes of mixed year groups do not miss units of work and that they are challenged or supported appropriately. Assessments are rigorous and lead pupils to respond to theologically challenging questions using deeper thinking skills. School leaders and governors monitor RE regularly and recognise that staff expertise has grown. Pupils are confident about their RE learning. Scrapbooks capture pupils' reflections and learning in RE and show that it involves pupils engaging with the big questions of life and associating them with beliefs and values. Pupils respect difference and feel safe to express their opinions. They praise the RE scrapbooks for showing their different viewpoints.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The teaching of RE which has been monitored regularly by governors, leaders and on occasion the diocese, is at least good and sometimes better. The progress made by each pupil is tracked effectively in the unit scrapbooks and demonstrates that, regardless of starting points, it is in line with or above age-related expectations.

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