

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School			
Address	High Street, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9DR		
Date of inspection	16 March 2020	Status of school	Voluntary controlled infants
Diocese	Bath and Wells	URN	123759

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 Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

St John's Church of England voluntary controlled infant school is a first school with 140 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 above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages.

The school's Christian vision

'Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever.' (Daniel 12: v3)

Associated Christian values: love, perseverance, respect

A school where every child can shine.

Be kind Be safe Be Ready

Key findings

- The Biblically based vision reflects the school's provision and its care of the community it serves. It is relatively new and so is not yet known by all or embedded into all aspects of school life.
- Support for vulnerable pupils and those with special needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their families is a strength of the school.
- Collective worship is an important aspect of school life and reinforces the vision and values. Pupils are not yet routinely involved in planning, delivering and evaluating collective worship, however.
- The creatively planned curriculum enables all pupils including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, to achieve well and flourish.
- Pupils enjoy religious education (RE) but their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths is not yet fully developed.

Areas for development

- Promote the vision so that its significance is more widely understood by all and it becomes embedded into all aspects of school life.
- Develop pupil voice so that it includes greater involvement in collective worship.
- Build on current good practice in RE so that pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths is secure.

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 biblically based vision has been in place since September. It was chosen to reflect the school's aspiration for all within the diverse community it serves to shine. Families with other beliefs, faiths and none are happy for their children to come to the school because its' ethos of acceptance and the moral principles it stands for. Parents speak highly of the school. The vision is underpinned by three associated Christian values. These are well known to pupils who can provide examples of how they have demonstrated them, such as persevering with a difficult maths task. The three Bs mission statement (be kind, be safe be ready) reinforces the vision and values. Pupils use the three Bs consistently. One said, 'we must always be ready to learn'. Pupils and adults do not always make an explicit link between vision, values, the mission statement and the positive actions the school takes as a result. This means that aspects of the school's Church school distinctiveness are not recognised and celebrated. The Biblically based vision and associated values are not known by some members of the school. There are some displays around the school as prompts, but these are not always prominent or identified by pupils. As a result, opportunities to promote the vision and values to pupils, parents and the wider community are not exploited, or fully embedded into all aspects of school life.

Provision for vulnerable pupils is a strength of the school. Families appreciate the inclusive ethos. Parents, especially those of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), value the support provided to them.

Governors are active and visible in supporting the school. Working with school leaders, they take strategic and financial decisions to ensure that the vision is delivered. This includes the provision of resources, including training for staff and access to external agencies, which remove barriers to learning and help pupils to flourish. Mental health and well-being are a priority. Funding has been allocated for a range of support for emotional well-being. Issues such as pupil absence, which prevent pupils from shining as brightly as the school would wish, are managed sensitively but with determination. Governors are mindful of their responsibility to monitor the school's Christian distinctiveness. There is evidence of some monitoring of religious education (RE) and collective worship, including some recommendations, but this has yet to have a sustained impact on changing or improving practice.

Leaders, including governors, are committed in their desire for all pupils to succeed and realise their full potential. The curriculum is designed with this in mind. It is creative and child led so that pupils can learn in a way that interests and excites them. Linked to the values, it challenges pupils to be aspirational in what they can achieve and persevere to become successful learners, who love to learn. Pupils work collaboratively so they can respect the views and work of others. The many extra-curricular clubs provide pupils with additional opportunities to succeed and shine.

RE is included in the holistic approach to the curriculum. It is taught through art, music and drama so that pupils enjoy their learning. Many aspects involve discussion and pupils love this approach. Written work is recorded in a notebook alongside other subjects. Within the notebook, pupils are not always able to distinguish their science work from RE or history work, however, so that the distinctiveness of RE in a church school is not obvious to them. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths at an age appropriate level is not well developed. They know it is important to learn about the beliefs of others but are not clear why this is so. They can muddle Bible stories with those of other faiths.

Pupil ambassadors promote and model the school values and the three Bs. They take their responsibilities seriously including practising reconciliation by helping pupils resolve playground differences. One said, 'if there weren't any ambassadors, there would be no one to remind people to do the right thing'. The school council leads on raising money for charities. Pupils know it is important to do so because they 'want others to have better lives.'

Staff appreciate that they have access to external services which can help them in times of personal or professional challenge. This is underpinned by the school's ethos of mutual care and kindness for all. Staff adopt a policy of

'deliberate bothered-ness'. They notice changes in pupils emotional state or behaviour and take action to ameliorate it. Pupils are shown breathing and mindfulness techniques to enable them to become focussed learners, for example. Thus, they are enabled to shine again. Although this level of individualised care is effective and highly valued, the positive actions the school takes are not linked to its mission as a Church school.

Collective worship is important in bringing the school community together for a shared message. The themes reinforce the school's values and follow the Church's year. A liturgy is followed, with a candle lit. words of welcome used and pupils making an enthusiastic response. Prayer is included and is invitational. Pupils know that prayer is talking to God. Those who do not believe are comfortable to reflect whilst others pray. Pupils are not routinely involved in delivering collective worship, however. Ways to make the hall where worship takes place a more 'sacred space' are being explored.

Church and school communities live well together. Regular services held in the church mean that pupils see the buildings as safe and welcoming places. Clergy support the school by leading collective worship. The clergy chaplain sees their responsibility as 'cherishing staff so that they can better undertake their roles' in the school.

Reflection areas in classrooms are well used. Care has been taken to make them relevant and age appropriate. Pupils use them to think or pray about issues that are worrying them. Extensive use is made of the local environment. Regular visits to Glastonbury Abbey grounds not only provides physical activity but also an opportunity for pupils and staff to connect with spiritual aspects of their lives. Being out and about in God's world, they experience awe and wonder at the changing seasons, for example. Taking part in the 'Holy Thorn Cutting Ceremony' enables them to be part of a long standing, local tradition that holds deep spiritual meanings. Forest schools provides pupils with the opportunities to build their confidence and try out new skills in which they can shine.

Headteacher	Wendy Turner
Inspector's name and number	Rachel Beeson 952