

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Draycott and Rodney Stoke Church of England VA First and Pre School			
Address	School Lane, Draycott, Cheddar, Somerset. BS27 3SD		
Date of inspection	30 April 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided First
Diocese	Bath and Wells	URN	123832

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

Draycott and Rodney Stoke CofE VA First and Pre School has 74 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school is a member of the Mendip Edge Federation and the headship is shared with Shipham Church of England First School, also in the Federation. One governing body oversees the four Federation schools.

The school's Christian vision

Together Everyone Achieves More

To create a safe and secure environment where each child can grow academically, socially, spiritually and emotionally.

Key findings

- The Christian vision and core values, underpinned by selected Bible stories, inform the daily life and workings of the school.
- This is an inclusive school personalising its response to the needs of all pupils in order that each should reach their full potential as God intended.
- There are strong partnerships between the school and its two parish churches, working together for their mutual benefit.
- Collective worship is varied, but lacks a range of visiting deliverers to fully challenge pupils' thinking and to show different Anglican traditions.
- Pupil progress in Religious Education (RE) is good though the teaching does not provide sufficient opportunities to challenge deeper thinking and encourage enquiry.

Areas for development

- Develop more opportunities for pupils to engage in social action in order that they are encouraged to be courageous advocates for the changes that they would like to make to their world.
- Further develop RE across the school to include more discussion and debate around big questions in order to deepen pupils' thinking and extend their enquiry skills.
- Ensure that the federation's full governing board monitors the success of the school as a church school in order to support the work of the headteacher and the Christian ethos committee.
- Make the biblical underpinning of the school's Christian vision more obvious in its wording to encourage clarity.

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 school's vision which is underpinned by Bible stories related to its chosen core Christian values, is shared by all members of its community. For example, the story of Noah's Ark is used to illustrate the benefit of team work and endurance. The school community is familiar with these. The school's vision to work as a family team supporting good mental health and wellbeing, is driven by leaders, and is important to all members of the community. A pupil wrote that being part of a team makes you happy. Staff are a mutually supportive group who feel cared about and listened to. Governors are supportive of the Christian distinctiveness of the school within this mixed federation. However, currently they do not always monitor the effectiveness of the church school distinctiveness strongly enough. Planning ensures that the school's Christian vision runs through both curriculum and daily school life, including collective worship and religious education. Looking at hope in the Easter story, the Bible passage, 'I have plans to give you hope and a future' Jeremiah 29:11, was used in collective worship; and in RE, pupils were introduced to associated stories from other religions such as the Hindu story of the god and the wicked witch.

In accordance with their Christian vision, this is a truly inclusive school where all pupils are welcomed, their individual needs addressed, and talents and achievements celebrated. Academic results across the school are generally at or above national averages and there is no learning gap between disadvantaged learners and their peers. Leaders have made the bold curriculum decision to over-staff in order that they can deliver a full and personalised programme of interventions and also reduce teaching group sizes, to support pupil academic progress and social and emotional needs. Central to this success is the broad and balanced topic-based curriculum that has been designed for example, to include a range of trips for all pupils, forest school and outdoor learning. Many of these ideas came directly from pupils who now benefit from the work of their school council which has directly influenced the content of the curriculum.

There is a culture of aspiring to be the best that you can be, as God intended. Inspirational speakers such as a Paralympian athlete and local farmers have inspired pupils to consider what they might be able to do in the future. Through this and collective worship themes, pupils are increasingly aware of the world around them. Visits from and to the local residential home to share Christmas celebrations, participation in the village fete and support of national charities is going some way to enabling pupils to influence their world. Pupils wish to do more in response to what they are learning about life outside the village.

Leaders have developed a range of partnerships for this small school. From their trust, the school has support in academic provision and is able to access financial support for vulnerable families. The school is well-supported by the diocese and year four pupils attend the annual pilgrimage service at Wells Cathedral. The school enjoys very strong relationships with its two parish churches to their mutual benefit. Collective worship is held weekly in one and major Christian festivals celebrated in the other. Children enjoy visiting church and attendance of families is high at special Sunday services which the pupils help to lead. In preparation for Easter, pupils were introduced to the last supper where they learned about its link to communion through their dramatic re-enactment of the meal in a church service.

Collective worship is invitational and enjoyed by pupils who are enthusiastic to be involved. The welcome is signed and worship introduced with a simple liturgy using a lit candle to represent Jesus as the light of the world, reflecting how all are included. However, this is the only Anglican liturgy regularly used. Collective worship is delivered by a range of staff and clergy. It is also planned, delivered and evaluated by classes. There are opportunities for prayer and reflection during worship and the school has its own prayer which the pupils know and understand. Further opportunities to pray together in class, arise for example before lunch and at the end of each day pupils reflect on the day's events and consider what is to come the next day creating reassurance and calming anxieties. Each classroom has a reflection area where pupils take themselves to enjoy a quiet time, think and pray. They compose their own prayers which are displayed and used in school. One child wrote, 'Dear God, help us to respect and be kind and polite to people.' Parents say that their children talk about what they learn in worship and some continue to pray at home. There are a number of other opportunities where pupils can develop spiritually, including the writing of poems under the playground trees.

Celebration worship is held every week and a range of achievements are celebrated including academic progress, effort, kind deeds and using kind words. This breadth of acknowledgement is much appreciated by parents who also enjoy excellent communication with teachers through the online Do-Jo rewards system. Parents say they feel valued and included.

RE is delivered by non-specialist teachers who have received training and school leadership regularly monitors and records the quality of teaching and learning to enable rapid intervention if and where necessary. Teachers ensure that the RE curriculum is accessible to all pupils and that work is appropriately differentiated. However, teaching does not currently inspire pupils to engage in independent enquiry or thinking. Pupils from year one onwards, would benefit from greater opportunities to debate big questions in order to broaden their thinking, enable them to see bigger pictures and to ask questions themselves.

Behaviour in school is good. Underpinned by the Christian belief that every member of the community should be valued and respected for who and what they are, the behaviour system is based upon making the right choices and giving fresh starts. Pupils respect each other's differences and care about each other. They say that they follow the example of the Good Samaritan in the playground when someone is hurt. All members of the community say that this is a happy school.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The importance of RE to the school is reflected in the good achievement of pupils in the subject. A rigorous system of assessment has been developed in RE, and pupil learning, as shown in progress and attainment data, is comparable to their achievements in other foundation subjects.

Headteacher	Mike Jory
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