

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Adisham Church of England Primary School			
Address	The Street, Adisham, Canterbury CT3 3JW		
Date of inspection	27 November 2109	Status of school	Academy inspected as VC in The Stour Academy Trust
Diocese	Canterbury	URN	141308

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

Adisham is a primary school with 112 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The school joined The Stour Academy Trust in 2014, having been identified as being vulnerable. Following a period of uncertainty about school leadership, the current headteacher took up her post in September 2019. She had previously served as the assistant headteacher.

The school's Christian vision

We are driven by our deep-rooted Christian commitment to the children's well-being and education. We want to develop a safe and exciting environment where all God's children flourish through opportunities and collaboration in a nurturing environment to become lifelong learners. Our vision is based on the parable of the mustard seed. Our associated values are respect, truth, compassion and friendship.

Key findings

- Schools leaders have implemented a biblically rooted vision which is beginning to drive many aspects of school life. However, this is not yet explicitly driving policy and practice in ways which are understood by stakeholders, including pupils.
- The school addresses pupils' individual needs well within a nurturing environment. Therefore, academic flourishing is beginning to show improvement for current pupils. The school's values positively impact on mental health, relationships and character development for pupils, families and staff.
- Collective worship is inclusive and invitational, but pupils are not able to clearly articulate how they can apply the messages they hear. Pupil leadership opportunities are currently offered to a limited number of pupils.
- Pupils enjoy and are challenged by religious education (RE) but they are not able to explain why it is important to learn about a wide range of world faiths.

Areas for development

- Ensure that all stakeholders, including pupils and staff, can articulate how the vision's teaching from the parable of the mustard seed helps all to flourish.
- Improve the academic progress of all pupils in line with the vision's commitment to lifelong learning.
- Develop collective worship in ways which enable pupils to demonstrate its impact on their daily lives.
- Extend the scope and nature of leadership opportunities in collective worship in order to give greater ownership of this aspect of school life to a wider range of pupils.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the nature and purpose of RE so that they develop an informed attitude towards those from a range of major world faiths.

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

School leaders, well supported by the Stour Academy Trust, have developed an appropriate and biblically rooted Christian vision. This complements the well embedded Christian values which previously underpinned the school's day to day life. The vision has directed the strategic development of this small rural school well since the recent appointment of the current headteacher. The majority of stakeholders are not yet able to articulate the ways in which this vision impacts on daily living. However, they are clear that the associated values support positive behaviour and attitudes across the school. Parents, in particular, value the fact the school 'practises what it preaches' and encourages their children to 'treat all human beings the same'. Support from the diocese has served the school well by providing advice and training on improving as a church school. Governance structures have been developed by the Trust which are beginning to hold the school to account effectively as a church school. The headteacher is enrolled on the Church of England Professional Qualification for Headship in order to deepen her understanding of enabling flourishing in her school. Staff members are well supported in their professional and personal development. Their gifts are recognised and developed for their own flourishing and for that of their pupils.

Pupils speak about enjoying their learning in school, and their comments reflect the vision's aim that the environment is exciting. Expectations across the curriculum are consistent and aspirational. Curriculum development is fit for its context, especially in terms of ensuring that difference and diversity are reflected for the pupils, who do not experience this directly within the school community. Pupils' individual needs are quickly identified. Effective external support is sought swiftly. Internal support is put in place immediately to ensure that those with particular needs develop their social and personal skills to help with their learning. This means that the academic progress of current pupils is improving, with in-school data showing that this is now close to national averages for all groups of pupils. Opportunities for spiritual development in the form of age appropriate prayer and reflection areas are extensive, creative and well used. This means that pupils have a good understanding of prayers which say please, sorry and thank you. They are also able to express their worries in these spaces.

The school's values, which are embedded and well known to all stakeholders, underpin behaviour and attitudes in positive ways. Pupils talk about how the values help them to co-operate with others, including at times when they make mistakes, both in their learning and in their dealings with others. The support of younger pupils by the older ones is embedded in the everyday life of the school, demonstrating the collaboration and nurture of the vision. There is also support for a range of good causes and charities, with pupils articulating different ways of helping others, including through prayers for the world. The school is starting to extend its global links through Christian Aid's Global Neighbours scheme. Pupils understand how to show compassion to others, both within and beyond the school.

Relationships at all levels are characterised by respect and friendship. For parents and for staff, there is an open door policy offered by school leaders. This means that they are confident that their worries and their views are taken into account. The views of pupils are taken into consideration and acted upon across all areas of school life. This approach has been much improved by the current headteacher, supported by the Trust, in order that mutual trust is re-established and that concerns are acted upon quickly where appropriate. One parent spoke of being 'fantastically supported' in a pastorally sensitive situation. Pupils understand the importance of forgiveness in their day to day interactions, meaning that any difficulties in relationships are dealt with quickly and effectively. They also know how to stay safe and access the school's clear and supportive safeguarding systems when they need help or advice. This is one of the many ways in which the school upholds the dignity and respect of all members of the school community.

Collective worship is carefully planned and contributes to the wellbeing of pupils as described in the vision statement. There is time and space for sung worship, prayer and reflection, encouraging active participation by all. It is focussed on the person and teaching of Jesus and is usually related in practical ways to the values of the school. The prayer life of the school is rich, both within and beyond worship. It is a time which is enjoyed by

pupils and in which they are included and invited to take an active part. However, they cannot explain clearly how what they hear and experience in worship can be applied to their everyday lives. A pupil leadership team is taking an increased role in planning and delivering worship by greeting the school, contributing to prayers and sometimes preparing drama. This means that worship is being increasingly shaped by these pupils. Although this has meaningfully engaged some older pupils, others in this age group are not currently involved in any way. The local vicar leads worship on a regular basis, including for the major Christian festivals. This involvement, as well as his supportive interaction with staff and families, has resulted in a deep and rich relationship with the local church. Parental engagement with the worshipping life of the school has increased and improved in recent times.

The introduction of a syllabus based on Understanding Christianity resources means that pupils are being enabled to flourish because the quality of teaching and learning has improved. This syllabus reflects the expectations of the Church of England Statement for Entitlement for RE. The subject is well led by an aspirational subject leader. Training and support from the diocese and the Trust have contributed well to this improvement. Expectations are consistent and have been raised. These include the exploration of big questions which deepen pupils' understanding of Christian beliefs and teachings and their ability to explain how Christianity is a living and diverse faith. Lessons seen on the day of inspection, together with other sources of evidence, demonstrate that teachers' knowledge is secure and that strategies are creative. They encourage pupils to express their views openly and with respect for each other. Although pupils' understanding of the Christian faith is good, they are not able to articulate why RE is an important subject. They cannot express how it affects their lives now and will do in the future, especially in relation to a range of world faiths. Assessment is being developed to complement the significant improvements already made in this subject.

Headteacher	Samantha Cummins
Inspector's name and number	Virginia Corbyn 86

