

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Kenelm's Church of England (VC) School

Address	Wenrisc Drive, Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 0SP		
Date of inspection	14 October 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Diocese	Oxford	URN	123110

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

School context

St Kenelm's is a village 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 in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. There has been a recent increase in the number of pupils attending from service families. Following a period of interim leadership, the headteacher was appointed in January 2019, having previously taught at the school.

The school's Christian vision

Nurturing each and all. Guiding, Trusting, Inspiring and Celebrating.

Our vision is to celebrate and support all individuals on their life journey within a Christian ethos. We aim to provide a nurturing environment inspiring all to achieve their full potential and flourish through personal discovery within a caring, trusting community.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep – Matthew 18: 10 - 14

Key findings

- The Parable of the Lost Sheep firmly roots the school's vision in the teachings of Jesus. This golden thread runs through St Kenelm's enabling pupils and adults to flourish.
- Pupils and their families fully embrace the vision. However, key policies and documentation do not refer to the newly agreed statement, which is not driving school improvement.
- All pupils are well nurtured by inspiring staff who guide pupils in overcoming barriers to learning. The headteacher is dedicated to leading a team that guides, inspires and celebrates as an inclusive community.
- Strong partnerships exist with local parish clergy who effectively support religious education (RE) and collective worship. However, not all pupils are fully engaged in planning, leading or evaluating acts of worship.
- RE gives pupils a safe space to explore religious and philosophical convictions. An agreed definition of spirituality is not utilised by the school community.

Areas for development

- Review school policies so that the Christian vision and associated values are coherently reflected in the school's documentation and drive school improvement.
- Establish a clear and secure understanding of spiritual development so that the spiritual growth of all pupils and adults is enhanced.
- Develop the involvement of all pupils in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship so that they have a better understanding and experience of different forms and styles of worship.

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 Parable of the Lost Sheep is central to the success of St Kenelm's. Leaders articulate how the vision is firmly rooted in Jesus' teachings. A supportive and effective partnership exists between school leaders and local clergy. This ensures that the newly revised vision and associated values are well established within the life of the school. Parents see the outreach of the vision in the support they receive from staff, 'to help us help our children at home. We are nurtured and guided, as well as the children.' The centrality of the Christian vision enables pupils to, 'learn about faith and be inspired to make their own choices about who they want to be'. Support for all pupils is a key strength. Pupils explain how they feel nurtured by the vision, as teachers, 'really do show it. They teach us not to give up and to care about each other'. Whilst the community see the impact of the vision across the school, policies and key documents do not consistently reflect St Kenelm's vision.

Leaders have established a vision that ensures each pupil makes good progress and academic outcomes are very strong. Leaders rightly link this to the nurture and inspiration pupils receive from the school. Governors have ensured that the areas to develop from the previous inspection have been addressed. The creation of a SIAMS committee, within the governing body, ensures that leaders are monitoring the school as a Church school. Recent support from the Diocese of Oxford has helped to formulate action plans and the review of the school's vision. Pupils and parents explain how staff live out the vision. Pupils joining the school at different stages are welcomed and inducted into the school with great care. Staff nurture new arrivals and introduce buddies for pupils and families. A recent increase in pupils from service families has enabled the vision to be tangible. This is evident in the practical outworking of the vision and impact this has on pupils and families. Parents report, 'the exceptional care we receive from close partnerships', and how settled new pupils are, which enables them to flourish.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep is applied skilfully throughout the curriculum. Experiences to develop personal spirituality are woven through the school. However, a clear definition of spirituality does not exist. Subsequently, the potential impact of activities and experiences are sometimes missed for pupils and adults.

The vision inspires pupils to make bold choices. For example, pupils are proud to support charities and relate this work to the inclusive nature of the vision. As courageous advocates for change, pupils learn about climate change and what they can do to address it. The school council has agreed to ban crackers from the school's Christmas lunch to highlight the exploitation of the natural world. Pupils relish leadership experiences. For instance, playground leaders actively encourage younger pupils in games at break times. Pupils learn about Christianity as a global faith through first-hand experiences, such as a parent talking to pupils about how Easter is celebrated by Orthodox Christians.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. The Lost Sheep is at the forefront of pupil's minds in making choices about behaviour. Pupils understand what forgiveness means and link this back to the inclusive vision. However, the newly agreed vision is not coherently reflected in behaviour policies. Incidents of prejudicial behaviour are very rare. Attendance is high because pupils love coming to school. The mental health and wellbeing of pupils and adults are well catered for. Staff speak of the great sense of teamwork that is driven by the vision. Staff feel valued and their hard work is celebrated by the school alongside that of pupils.

At its heart, St Kenelm's creates an environment of dignity and respect for all. Pupils from all backgrounds flourish because the Christian values are used as a toolkit to deliver the vision for each member of the school community. Pupils celebrate diversity and difference effectively. Leaders ensure that visitors to lessons and worship offer different experiences to pupils to help them appreciate diversity within their community and beyond. The curriculum for relationships and sex education ensures that pupils can cherish themselves as uniquely and wonderfully made.

Collective worship engages everyone, is invitational and enables pupils and adults to reflect on key themes. Clergy support planning for worship and as a result the vision and its biblical roots are skilfully explored. Whilst older pupils actively plan class assemblies, there are limited opportunities for all pupils to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship. Governors monitor worship through observations and improvements have been made with the support of the clergy. For example, the development of a worship table, which reinforces the Anglican traditions of worship.

Pupils and adults speak about the importance of prayer within the life of the school. Newly refreshed reflection spaces in classrooms offer pupils places for calm thought and stillness. Music plays a central part in worship. Pupils singing is beautiful and enhances worship. Whilst worship gives pupils and adults experiences of spiritual development, this is not fully understood by the school, as there is no definition of what spirituality means. The teachings of Jesus are central to worship. Pupils are developing an understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through the effective planning of worship, enhanced by local clergy.

The RE curriculum is well planned and taught in weekly blocks, which ensures that the big questions asked in lessons are explored in detail. As a result, pupils articulate how their vision supports learning. Staff make deliberate reference to the Lost Sheep within RE lessons to reinforce comparisons and inspire pupils. Pupils apply the skills learnt in RE to other subjects. Debating skills, and being able to disagree respectfully, are utilised across the curriculum. Clergy input consolidates RE teaching. For example, supporting learning about the Eucharist. Assessment is beginning to help staff and pupils understand the progress made over time. The headteacher is the RE leader and as such the subject has a high profile. Training has been in the form of visiting other Church schools to see best practice and ideas have been shared with teachers.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep is the golden thread that runs throughout St Kenelm's as a nurturing, inspiring and trusted guide for the whole community.

Headteacher	Catherine Souch
Inspector's name and number	Toby Long 896