

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Stoke Goldington C.E. First School			
Address	High Street, Stoke Goldington, Newport Pagnell, MK16 8NP		
Date of inspection	21 November 2019	Status of school	Voluntary controlled infant school
Diocese	Oxford	URN	110408
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	Excellent
Additional Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent

School context

Stoke Goldington is a first school with 31 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. None 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 also below national averages. The school is one of five small village first schools in the Village Schools Federation which was formed in January 2018. The headteacher of one of the schools in the federation was appointed the Executive Headteacher. The Chair of Governors is new to post.

The school's Christian vision

The five schools in the federation share the same vision, and a commitment to ensuring that everyone in the community flourishes by working together, supporting one another and being 'the best that they can be'.
 'We are one, we are strongest working together in unity. Teamwork is key to living life in harmony so we can do God's will'. 1 Corinthians 12:14
 'Whatever we do, we work at it with all our heart, as if working for the Lord'. Colossians 3:23

Key findings

- The vision for everyone to flourish is very clearly articulated by all stakeholders including the pupils who repeat the vision regularly in lessons. Adults understand the theological context of the vision. They and pupils articulate the biblical roots of the values which underpin the school's ethos.
- The wellbeing of every pupil and adult is leaders' first priority, be that to support and nurture them or to encourage their aspirations. Staff and parents give examples of the concern everyone shows one another and the tremendous difference this has made to them in difficult times.
- Worship is excellent, developing adults' and pupils' spirituality and their understanding of the Christian faith although pupils do not understand the significance of the sacrament of Eucharist.
- Religious education (RE) is inspirational and enriching, allowing pupils to ask profound questions and to share their differing views.
- Governors monitor the impact of the vision rigorously. They and senior leaders have forged a highly effective federation which benefits and enriches all the schools within it.

Areas for development

- Develop pupils' age appropriate understanding of the significance of the sacrament of Eucharist, accessing specialist support.

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 and governors have established a common vision in this highly effective federation which supports each school to ensure that all pupils and adults flourish. They have preserved the individuality of each school whilst uniting them in their shared aims and plans. This strong partnership enables best practice to be shared and for the schools to 'be strongest working together in unity'. The vision determines the school's policies and decisions so that all pupils make good, and often outstanding, progress. The deployment and professional development of staff helps them nurture every pupil as an individual. Staff say 'it's the vision which makes this school special'. The way the school cherishes pupils and families often transforms lives, helping everyone to be the 'best that they can be'. The school is innovative in the way it works with the parish and local community, continually reflecting on its practice and identifying ways to develop further. Pupils have rich opportunities to become confident young citizens who 'dream big and aim high'. The school works closely with the Diocese for training and external validation. Governors have an extremely robust programme for monitoring and evaluating, and every visit, whatever its focus, includes evaluating the impact of the vision. They and senior leaders have met the recommendations of the last inspection report so that pupils are now far more involved in planning and leading worship. Pupils are also more aware of Christianity as a world faith because of the input of staff, parents and local clergy.

The curriculum is planned to engage and inspire pupils, allowing them to learn about what interests them most. It is tailored well to their specific needs so that more vulnerable pupils can flourish and grow in confidence. The curriculum provides many opportunities for their exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as their academic achievement. Pupils particularly enjoy 'thinking Thursdays' when they can raise and discuss spiritual and ethical questions such as 'what does God mean to me?' or 'what does God look like?'. They also consider fundamental British values which inspires them to strive to make the world a better place. They become courageous advocates, for example, campaigning for a safer road outside their school. They choose and support many charitable causes because they want to help those who are less fortunate in their locality and further afield. An example of the extent to which pupils care for one another is their request to raise money for a charity which supports children with a health condition like one of their classmates. They are very involved in the life of their community, learning about the village and local businesses such as the Christmas tree farm. They make good use of the church for services at special times and as a learning resource. Parishioners regard the school as the hub of the village. Pupils support communities in Sierra Leone and Bethlehem so that they understand Christianity as world faith. The school environment reflects the school's Christian character extremely well, with displays of learning in RE and worship, the vision and values.

Pupils behave exceptionally well, learning to manage their own behaviour and making the right choices. They often resolve their disagreements and their attendance is extremely high, reflecting their enjoyment of school. They see themselves as special, formed in God's image and entitled to different opinions. This has cultivated an atmosphere of complete acceptance and respect. Pupils show tremendous compassion for one another and say 'we are all a family in this school, we all care about everyone'. Pupils understand the values which underpin the school's strong Christian ethos and can explain Bible stories which illustrate them. For example, they know that the disciples needed to trust Jesus to calm the storm and they explain the Good Samaritan's service to the wounded man on the road to Jericho. They know what it means to live out the values and often share them with their parents. The school is a harmonious place with excellent rapport between staff, pupils and parents. Everyone feels completely respected and valued. Parents feel that staff are very approachable and value highly effective communication. Families are extremely well supported when their children join the school and when they move on to the next one because leaders know these can be unsettling times. Governors and leaders are especially mindful of the mental health of pupils and adults and one governor has specific responsibility for this so that support is readily available when needed.

Worship is excellent and highly valued by adults and pupils. Pupils plan, deliver and evaluate worship, often contributing prayers. Worship is led by various staff and develops pupils' understanding of the vision and values through stories, music and drama. Parents know the impact worship has on their children through discussions at home. Staff receive thorough induction, ongoing training and resources so that they deliver worship which is

engaging and relevant. Pupils' feedback helps them know that worship is meaningful. Artefacts are used effectively to make worship memorable and inspiring. Pupils talk about familiar items which are particularly powerful reminders such as a plait of three ribbons which represent God, themselves and their friends. Small interlocking bricks which remind them that God builds us up to cope with challenges. A broken toy reminds them that they need to look after God' Creation. Each act of worship begins with pupils repeating the vision and includes Christian prayers and Bible readings. There are opportunities for pupils to share ideas with partners and to reflect on what the key messages mean to them. They learn about the main events in the life of Christ, the liturgical calendar and about rites of passage such as baptism. They can explain God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit although few are aware of the sacrament of Eucharist.

RE is very well planned to develop pupils' understanding of Christianity and they begin to learn about other world faiths. Lesson are highly motivating and include times when pupils share and discuss opposing views in a safe atmosphere. Practical activities make learning memorable. For example, pupils made models of Jesus and his disciples on the Sea of Galilee. Teachers enhance learning further by making links between RE and other subjects. For example, trust was explored in the tale of the Gingerbread Man.

Every child and adult flourishes at Stoke Goldington school because its work is entirely driven by the vision for everyone to be the 'best they can be' and to work 'as a team as if working for the Lord'.

Executive Head	Marie-Claire Parsons
Inspector's name and number	Gill Walley 644