

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Fittleworth Church of England VC Village School	
Address	Fittleworth, Pulborough, RH20 1JB
School vision	
'Let your light shine.' Matthew 5:16. We aim to be an inclusive school at the heart of our parish. We are journeying together, in partnership, to support and empower each other to live our lives fully as happy, confident, knowledgeable and compassionate people. Our Christian values inspire us to serve one another and the wider community and value the world around us. We aspire to be better than we were yesterday and for every child to feel they have achieved. We value the contribution every person makes, as unique individuals, wonderfully made in the image of God.	
School strengths	
• The Christian vision is expressed throughout the work of the school. Leaders ensure it inspires provision so that pupils and adults flourish. • Positive relationships are at the heart of the school and wellbeing is prioritised. Embedded values, which are rooted in the Christian vision, create a nurturing and inclusive culture. Pupils flourish as a result of the care and compassion provided. Staff thrive in response to the professional and personal support they receive. • The vision results in a community where all are welcomed and have a voice. Pupils enjoy meaningful opportunities to be agents for change. They are empowered to value the world and improve the lives of others. • Collective worship is a special time of coming together that is highly valued by all in the school community. It is central to the spiritual life of the school.	
Areas for development	
• Enhance systems for monitoring and evaluating the Christian vision to ensure it drives the strategic direction of the school more explicitly. • Continue the journey to implement the RE curriculum. Ensure that there is consistency in approach so that all pupils receive high quality provision. • Build on current good practice to develop a shared language for spirituality so that spiritual opportunities can be explored in greater depth.	
Inspection findings	
The Christian vision of Fittleworth Village School is lived out daily. A warm welcome draws people in to a community where pupils and adults are valued as unique, wonderfully made in the image of God. It is very much a school at the heart of the village community. Pupils are encouraged to 'let their light shine' as they learn and grow to become confident and compassionate people.	

School leaders are deeply committed to serving their community. They ensure that the school's Christian vision is seen, felt and heard every day. Associated values including love, respect, service and responsibility are an expression of the vision. Pupils and adults live out these values through their supportive relationships. They demonstrate a strong sense of care for one another. Pupils explain the positive impact of the values on themselves. They explain that they aim to behave in a way that mirrors stories from the Bible, such as The good Samaritan.

Inspired by the vision, leaders prioritise inclusion and wellbeing of each individual. Staff embrace the school's approach of 'journeying together', enabling pupils to achieve. The skilled staff team nurture individuals to flourish. A clear system of review ensures that all pupils are known and supported to be their fullest selves. Systems of praise recognise pupils who shine out in the school. For example, the weekly 'golden hands' awards make a strong contribution to building pupils' self-esteem. Pupils learn to respect that others are different. Adults in all roles benefit from professional development. A partnership with local schools enables staff to enhance their skills in supporting pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND). Staff and families benefit from the strength of the team, including at times of personal challenge.

Guided by the Christian vision, school leaders prioritise the curriculum. They are determined to ensure that improvements are made so that every pupil achieves. Staff benefit from the training they receive through the Durrington Research School. As a result, teachers gain confidence to shape the curriculum so that it builds pupils' knowledge, skills and self-confidence. Leaders systematically review pupils' progress. Consequently, they adjust approaches and organisation to ensure that all pupils are able to achieve. A varied enrichment programme encourages pupils to live full lives. For example, experiences in Forest School give pupils freedom to explore and develop self-esteem within the natural environment. They learn about the world, nature and how to care for living things. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual flourishing. Across the curriculum, pupils follow a system of enquiry. This fosters a questioning approach to learning which further supports pupils' spiritual development. However, although this is articulated verbally by leaders, it is not coherently understood by all to be an intrinsic part of the curriculum.

As a result of working in partnership with senior leaders, the governing board is fully informed. Governors make regular visits to the school and know the school well. They base decisions on how best to serve the needs of the community. They are inspired by the Christian vision and aim 'to be better than we were yesterday' by ensuring a cycle of school improvement. Leaders, including governors, use a planned programme of monitoring to understand the work of the school. However, this does not focus clearly enough on evaluating the impact of the school's Christian vision.

Collective worship is engaging and is a valued time of coming together for the whole school community. It is rooted in the vision and is central to the spiritual growth of both pupils and adults. A sense of calm is created from the outset. Through encouraging a focus on a flickering candle, pupils and adults are inspired to 'let their light shine'. Bible stories are shared and time for reflection is encouraged. Everyone is invited to wonder how people feel and suggest how they can make a positive difference to the lives of others. Pupils of all ages respond to this invitation thoughtfully, showing empathy and compassion. They readily express how they are inspired to show love and respect in meaningful ways. Staff benefit from the time to pause, reflect and gather together as a school community. A strong partnership with the church enables pupils to develop an understanding of the church calendar. Opportunities for celebration in church at times such as Christmas and Easter are enjoyed by pupils, families and staff. Guidance from the diocese effectively supports leaders in the ongoing journey to enrich collective worship experiences.

As a result of the Christian vision, pupils are inspired to serve one another and the wider community.

Reasons to take action arise through the curriculum, from collective worship and through pupil forums where debate is encouraged. Pupils are made aware of issues of social justice. They have the confidence to speak out and explain what they consider to be fair and unfair. Pupils from the school council speak with conviction about how they have the responsibility to make changes in school. Their current focus to improve playtimes is enabling pupils of all ages to have equal access to space and equipment. Hearing about a local charity which provides help to the Middle East, pupils and adults responded by collecting items for aid boxes. By following the journey of their donations they understand the impact that they can have on the lives of others.

RE has a high profile in the school and is well led. Diocesan advisors have provided timely and valuable support. Their guidance regarding the review of the curriculum has ensured it is effective. It provides pupils with engaging learning opportunities which are developing their understanding of a range of beliefs and cultures. Class teachers benefit from guidance with planning and teaching effective RE. This provides teachers with confidence to teach RE creatively. However, as the curriculum is at an early stage of implementation, monitoring information shows that there are inconsistencies in approach. This means that not all pupils receive high quality provision. Consequently, pupils are not always able to express their understanding with confidence.

The inspection findings indicate that Fittleworth Church of England Village School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	4 March 2024	URN	125984
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	124
Diocese	Chichester		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Debbie Burnett		
Chair	Warwick Dean Taylor		
Inspector	Susan Costa	No.	902