

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Framlingham Sir Robert Hitcham's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

<b>Address</b>	College Road, Framlingham, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 9EP		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	25/01/2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Diocese</b>	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	<b>URN</b>	124775
<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
	<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

#### School context

Framlingham Sir Robert Hitcham's Primary School has 306 pupils on roll plus 26 nursery places. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils considered to be disadvantaged is just below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below the national averages. Around half the pupils come from Christian family backgrounds and the majority gain entrance on general admission criteria. Nearly a third of teaching staff are new since the time of the previous denominational inspection.

#### The school's Christian vision

Learning, caring, inspiring in the light of Jesus (John 8:12), is at the heart of what we believe. As a church school in the centre of the local community this Christian vision enables us to empower children and adults to reach their highest spiritual, educational and personal potential, underpinned by commitment to Christian values.

#### Key findings

- Leaders articulate the school's Christian and inclusive nature very well. Its Christian underpinning is clearly seen through its focus on associated values which are well linked to Christian teaching and practice. However, the vision lying behind these values is not as consistently or confidently expressed.
- The quality of relationships across the school community is very strong and clearly conveys its Christian underpinning, positively expressing, for example, love, acceptance and responsibility. Pupils and staff are valued and very well supported within this Christian school community. Pupils' attitude to learning and behaviour are commendable.
- Pastoral support is well targeted and is a positive expression of the school's Christian vision.
- Partnerships, particularly with parents, the parish church and the local community, are deeply embedded into its ways of working and contribute effectively to supporting pupils in flourishing, both academically and personally.
- The worship programme and religious education (RE) are given high priority and effectively support pupils' personal and academic development and the school's Christian service to its pupils.

#### Areas for development

- Take time to embed existing initiatives focused on weaving the Christian vision, rooted in biblical teaching, into school life. Build on this so that the vision is consistently celebrated and recognised as a driving force for school development.
- Refine assessment practice in RE so that it fully reflects effective practice within the school and gives pupils a clear understanding of their achievements and how to improve.

## **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 long-standing and inclusive Christian service to its community is summarised as, 'learning, caring, inspiring in the light of Jesus'. It is lived out through the associated values which permeate its life, sustaining pupils' academic and personal development, including their character development, very well. Academically pupils make at least good, and often better, progress. This leads to attainment being consistently above local and national averages. Personal development is very strong and effectively supported. This means that pupils relate associated values, such as hope and commitment, to their daily lives well. Consequently, the school's values impact extremely positively on attitudes to learning and behaviour, both of which are clear strengths. Pupils and staff are confident in talking about how, 'learning, caring, inspiring', are key to school life; some are less able to link these to, 'the light of Jesus'. Thus, the theological and biblical underpinning of the school's vision is not consistently clear.

The headteacher, her senior leadership team, governors and staff model a caring and inclusive Christian ethos exceptionally well. Regular pupil focus meetings are effective in identifying needs and focusing developments to celebrate and encourage achievement of all kinds. Pupils, including all those with additional needs, are very well supported. Strong and effective pastoral care for all enhances outcomes. Senior leaders and governors ensure that staff and pupils are valued, and their wellbeing, including their mental health, supported. This care clearly expresses the school's Christian underpinning. Staff are well supported for working in a Church school, through assistance in school and appropriate links with the diocese. Pupils are very well known by senior leaders and teachers. This sets the backdrop for regular monitoring and self-evaluation, leading to accurate action plans for continued improvement. The school has made very good progress in addressing issues from the previous denominational inspection. Consequently, strengths have been sustained and areas to improve addressed. For example, RE is now well monitored and its profile across the school heightened.

The curriculum is expressly informed by the school's Christian and inclusive mission and associated values. It is well tailored to meet the various needs of pupils. Cornerstones, which provides a creative approach to teaching and learning in different subject areas, has been adopted and adapted. It successfully encourages enjoyment and aspiration in learning. Thus, it contributes effectively to the school's Christian vision of learning and inspiring. High quality display supports learning and celebrates pupils' work very well. Leaders ensure that there is a breadth of extra-curricular clubs, including a weekly Christian club, so that pupils extend their learning and enjoyment. For example, the Christian club, Sing Praise, is developing a musical with a message. It is led by the vicar and other church members. Spiritual development opportunities provided are wide ranging and responded to very well by pupils. Open ended questioning, valuing responses from pupils, the creative arts and space for reflection, silence or prayer are a few of the ways in which spiritual development is successfully nurtured. There is a shared understanding of spiritual development within a Christian educational context. This is laid out in the school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development policy which successfully underpins approaches to these dimensions of personal development. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to consider, for example, issues of right and wrong, fairness, equality and justice, and their own potential in 'making things better'. Charitable giving is recognised as part of the school's Christian identity and pupils are closely engaged with decisions about where any funds might go. Thus, they know that they can be agents of change and improvement. This, along with some curriculum and worship opportunities, supports pupils' understanding of global issues appropriately. Through the school's links with the town council an appreciation of affecting change locally is nurtured.

Partnership with parents and the local church are strong and mutually beneficial. Parents support the school's Christian underpinning and its positive influence on their children. A mutually supportive partnership between the school and the parish church enriches worship for all and provides a practical example of the wider church as 'family'. There are exceptionally strong links with the local community, with over 120 volunteers involved in school life, and a positive relationship between the town and school councils in evidence. Staff are extremely supportive and caring towards one another and their pupils. They link this care closely with the school's Christian foundation and speak movingly of how it sustains them and others in times of illness or bereavement, as well as professionally.

Worship is very well planned and meets statutory requirements. It is highly valued as central to school life and supports well pupils' consideration of Jesus as the light of the world for Christians. In exploring what this means they reflect on how their life can be a light to others. Pupils and staff engage thoughtfully enjoying, 'the peace and friendship', and valuing the, 'opportunity to praise God'. Worship provides clear opportunities for spiritual and religious growth through, for example, prayer and reflection and by affording a safe space in which to 'speak to God, who listens and helps.' This is enhanced by well used reflection areas in classrooms. Not 'standing still', work is currently in progress to develop an outside reflection and prayer space to enrich the school's spiritual and

religious life further. Worship is open and inclusive with pupils and staff engaging positively with the experiences offered. It is enriched through regular visits to the parish church and through leaders from different Christian backgrounds and various charities taking part. It regularly raises issues of social justice and how to show dignity and respect through, for example, prayer and charitable giving. Living well together, within school, the community and the world, is regularly addressed, connecting biblical teaching to everyday life. Christian festivals are incorporated. These enhance pupils' understanding and appreciation of key Christian beliefs and practices. The worship programme uses a creative range of approaches to reflect on the significance of Jesus for Christians. Pupils and staff help to lead, plan and evaluate worship, especially through the school's worship team and the Friday celebration act of worship.

RE is very well led. Staff are very well supported to develop their own knowledge and understanding of the content covered as well as in exploring a wide range of appropriate strategies to support learning. Provision across the school meets statutory requirements and positively reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement. Teachers work effectively to create a respectful and inclusive learning environment which supports the school's vision, mission and associated values very well.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

Through well focused teaching and support pupils engage fittingly and in age appropriate ways with religious beliefs, teachings and practices. The curriculum is well balanced and engages pupils in developing knowledge, understanding and skills, drawing appropriately on Christianity and a range of world faiths. Key religious concepts and 'big questions' are used effectively and involve pupils in their learning well. The range of approaches enhances learning and leads to good attainment and very good progress in RE across the school for all pupils, including the more vulnerable. Assessment in RE comprises of some effective practice, including using RE class scrapbooks to evidence learning and provide reflection space for pupils. This is augmented well, for older pupils, with periodic extended RE writing assessments. However, this does not consistently enable pupils to know what they are doing well and the next steps they need to take to improve further.

Headteacher/Executive principal/Head of school	Helen Picton
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)