

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ogbourne St George Church of England Primary School			
Address	High Street, Ogbourne St George, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 1SU		
Date of inspection	13 November 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VC Excalibur Academies Trust
Diocese	Salisbury	URN	141913

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

Ogbourne St George is a primary school with 101 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 well below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below national averages. The school became an academy as part of the Excalibur Academies Trust in February 2015. The current headteacher took up post in January 2019.

The school's Christian vision

Every child is a candle waiting to be lit.

“I am the light of the world,” Jesus said. “Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness.” John 8:12

Key findings

- The distinctively Christian vision, which has been recently refined to ensure its solid foundation, is known and clearly articulated by all members of the school community. This vision is the driving force behind the innovative engagement with the local community, which is deeply valued by all.
- School leaders and staff lead by example in all aspects of school life. Pupils are inspired by them. This results in pupils spontaneously demonstrating Christian values through instigating their own social action projects locally and further afield.
- Strong and meaningful partnerships with the church, multi-academy trust (MAT) and diocese support and enhance the Christian character of the school. Skills and expertise within the school are shared across the trust.
- Collective worship is clearly articulated by leaders as the heartbeat of the school. Pupils talk about how worship spurs them into action. It motivates them to plan and lead their own acts of worship on issues important to them.
- Religious education (RE) is on a journey towards excellence. The skilled RE leader has a clear action plan in place to ensure practice is consistent across the school.

Areas for development

- Ensure that the vision becomes even more deeply embedded in shaping the strategic decisions, made by everyone associated with the school, so that its strength continually sustains the whole school community.
- Clarify the distinction between collective worship and RE to ensure the centrality of RE as a core subject within the school.
- Refine systems for assessment in RE to ensure that it informs planning and gives an accurate account of standards in the subject.

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 distinctively Christian vision is unequivocally central to everything at Ogbourne St George School. This is driven by the headteacher whose passion and dedication to 'everything starting with love' is recognised and appreciated by all members of the school community. Pupils talk with confidence about Jesus, Light of the world, linking their vision to scripture; one said, 'John 8:12 is everywhere in our school.' There is a strong sense of inclusion. All are warmly welcomed and school leaders and staff ensure that provision matches the need and context of each individual, whatever their ability or circumstances. The level of love and care for pupils and adults alike is almost tangible. This is confidently attributed to the vision and shared understanding of 'each child being a candle waiting to be lit' and adults being the sparks to ignite them. This 'light' is not restricted to the immediate school community. The innovative work in the locality encourages pupils to share their 'light' more widely. Local residents are grateful and accept direct offers of help, invitations to special school events and kind gestures such as baking cakes for those in need. The partnership with the local preschool is described as 'practical and real'. This includes year-long transition programmes for pupils as well as school engagement in preschool staff meetings and events. Pupils decided, with the headteacher, to raise funds for a defibrillator accessible at all times for all members of the local community. All of this practical outreach results in the school being viewed as a central and special part of the village of Ogbourne St George. Pupils are inspired into action as a result of adults leading the way in this transformational work. Many pupils have initiated their own fundraising campaigns in aid of causes close to their hearts. These efforts are celebrated and nurtured by adults in school. The partnership with the church is seamless and pupils view the vicar very much as a key part of their school. Time spent in church for worship is highly valued by pupils, staff and parents alike. The school enjoys extremely positive relationships with the diocese and trust as well as with the church and local community. All work closely together to ensure the continued high profile of the school's Christian distinctiveness. Governors play a pivotal role in maintaining the centrality of the vision and associated values in strategic decision making. They articulate with conviction how the vision naturally shapes and steers the direction of the school as a whole, maintaining a clear focus on the 'God given potential' of each individual.

Relationships within the school are a key strength. Adults and pupils are grateful for the high level of care and support they receive on a daily basis. Pupils support one another and attribute this to their values. The well-established buddy system is highly regarded by all members of the school community. The oldest pupils can be seen proactively showing love and care for their young 'buddies' and these relationships often do not end at school. Parents cite times when the 'buddies are around to help' outside of school. High quality emotional support is provided by the pastoral care leader who knows families very well.

Pupils attain well academically. Regular meetings ensure that bespoke support is provided for all pupils, including those vulnerable to underachievement, ensuring maximised progress for all. Meetings centre around individual pupils and what is required to 'light their candle'. Pupils in receipt of intervention enthusiastically and spontaneously express the different ways they are 'burning their brightest' following support provided.

There is a clear and carefully thought out definition of spirituality within the school, which is becoming increasingly embedded. Pupils talk of frequent opportunities to be still, reflect and of how they feel safe to explore feelings and big questions across the curriculum. They are challenged by each other's contributions to discussions. Pupils have high aspirations for themselves and each other. These are nurtured by adults who are tirelessly encouraging them to 'burn at their brightest'.

Collective worship is clearly articulated by school leaders as the 'heartbeat' of this school. Pupils describe times of worship as the 'best part of the day'. Older pupils talk about valuing times of stillness and reflection to be able to 'think about whatever we need to'. Worship is wholly invitational and pupils of different faiths and none benefit from these meaningful times. Class worship is considered a significant time of reflection and a time to explore Christian concepts and big questions in a more intimate setting. These times are highly valued and prioritised by school staff. Members of the community are welcomed to lead acts of worship. Pupils enthuse about Bible stories which they learn during worship and how these relate to their own lives. For example, one pupil linked the school's value of integrity to the story of the Good Samaritan; doing the right thing regardless of differing beliefs. Pupils have an impressive understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God and the importance of the Eucharist to Christians. They are offered frequent opportunities to engage in prayer and many use prayer spontaneously to help them in their own lives. Collective worship is thoroughly evaluated by all members of the school community, including pupils and the vicar. This work brings about significant and ongoing improvements. Pupils are intrinsically involved in all acts of worship. Many frequently request to plan and lead worship themselves about issues important to them.

RE is given an increasingly high profile within the school and pupils enjoy lessons. Pupils have a good understanding and appreciation of beliefs and practices of several world faiths, including Christianity. This knowledge is enhanced through regular whole school festival days. There is a degree of uncertainty about the distinction between RE and collective worship and some pupils see these as one entity. Detailed assessment systems are in place to measure pupils' attainment and progress in RE. Currently, assessment is not consistent in accurately informing future planning because paperwork is overly cumbersome. The leader of RE is experienced and dedicated. She has a clear understanding of next steps required to bring about further improvement in the subject. There is a clear action plan in place of how to progress.

The vision and values of this special school do not end when people leave. As one staff member confirms, 'our vision and values give us a framework, not just for school but for life'.

Headteacher	Richard Smith
Inspector's name and number	Anna Willcox 915