

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Cowley St Laurence Church of England Primary School			
Address	Worcester Rd, Uxbridge UB8 3TH		
Date of inspection	31 October 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as voluntary aided
Diocese	London	URN	139306

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
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Requires Improvement

School context

Cowley St Laurence is a primary school with 420 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. Approximately 10% of families from the school regularly attend a church. There has been a significant number of changes in the leadership team since the last inspection, the most recent being the appointment of a new Head of school in the past 15 months.

The school's Christian vision

At the heart of our vision are our core values of hope, love, trust, forgiveness and faith. We want everyone to feel welcome, safe and included in our school and aim that all pupils, families, staff and the wider community will flourish together as part of God's world. 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' Jeremiah 29:11

Key findings

- Leaders identify key strengths and areas for development through accurate school improvement planning. Following several changes in leadership the current head of school has brought about key improvements, driven by a renewed vision and clear set of values.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have developed and articulated a clear Christian vision for the school resulting in a strong impact on pupils' positive attitudes to each other, to life and to their learning.
- Strong, nurturing relationships, based on the values expressed in the vision, support all members of the school community. These sustain pupils and adults, supporting their mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- The close links with several local churches greatly enhance collective worship and the overall Christian character of the school. It provides opportunities for the school community to worship in a variety of ways, facilitating spiritual growth and upholding the Christian vision and its associated values.
- The school vision ensures Religious Education (RE) has a higher priority within the curriculum. It is well planned and encourages pupils to reflect on their own learning, although not all pupils are making good progress.

Areas for development

- Ensure there is the correct balance of challenge and support in RE lessons so that all pupils achieve well.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in RE through a regular and sustained programme of ongoing professional development for all staff.
- Enable pupils to have a greater voice and a deeper engagement with worship through increased opportunities to lead and evaluate aspects of collective 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

Leaders explain how the school's vision informs both the choice of, and relationships with, a range of local and global educational partners, the recent work with Kamwezi School in Uganda being an example. Leaders ensure the distinctively Christian nature of the vision is maintained, remains discernible and is effectively applied within the multi-academy trust (MAT). Governors, represented by three members of clergy, articulate how the biblical verse from Jeremiah roots the school's vision, placing 'hope' at the centre of the community. Pupils and parents share how the school's Christian vision and associated values help them to make positive choices about how they live. Pupils challenge injustice and inequality by engaging in social action projects such as a Christmas shoe box appeal. They have established a 'Green team', ensuring the school is conscious of decisions that impact on the environment.

Worship reflects the Christian vision and associated values, showing respect for and giving dignity to all, wherever they may be on their spiritual journey. The values of 'hope, love, trust, forgiveness and faith' are clearly displayed and referred to during collective worship; the impact can be seen in pupil's behaviour and relationships with one another. Worship contributes positively to the pupils spiritual and mental wellbeing. Pupils talk about how the teachings on values such as 'hope' helps them in their work and that 'forgiveness' assists them in their day to day friendships. Worship is led by a variety of clergy and staff, enabling pupils to experience a range of Anglican practices and traditions. Every act of worship is distinctly Christian in character, seeks to deepen theological understanding and provide pupils and staff with time to reflect on how it will impact on their daily lives. Members of clergy from local churches meet alongside senior leaders to plan worship. They have developed an excellent three-year worship plan which is regularly reviewed and updated. The high level of commitment and engagement from all involved has led to worship that impacts positively on the daily life of the school, and represents an outworking of the school vision. Worship allows pupils the opportunity to develop an age-appropriate understanding of complex Christian beliefs such as that of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Whilst some opportunities have been provided for pupils to lead and evaluate collective worship, this is not yet systematic or fully developed. Regular opportunities for prayer are provided, with prayers displayed on classroom walls and prayer boxes used for children to express their own spiritual thoughts.

An engaging school curriculum has been developed, ensuring pupils experience exciting and relevant learning opportunities that enable them to flourish. Several examples of challenging ethical questions being used to drive the curriculum are in evidence. For example, pupils were asked to consider if the people responsible for war crimes during World War 2 should be forgiven. Pupils value learning and enjoy questioning, listening and responding creatively across a range of subjects, leading to increased opportunities for their spiritual development. Pupils at this school make broadly average progress. The school recognises this and has set targets to ensure that all pupils, including vulnerable groups, flourish.

Pupils and adults feel confident to express their views and say they are listened to and are given opportunities to participate in school decisions. Governors and staff identify correctly that there is a strong culture of support in the school which has been enhanced in recent years, enabling adults and pupils to flourish as an outworking of the school vision, 'plans to give you hope and a future'. There are effective procedures in place to ensure that pupils are protected from all types of bullying and that any incidents that do occur are dealt with effectively and are appropriately recorded. Policies, along with equalities objectives are well maintained and as a result impact positively on the wellbeing of staff and pupils. This can be seen in the provision of a counselling service offered to staff and prominently displayed throughout the school. Staff feel well supported by senior leaders who live out the values of the school by showing compassion and support during times of illness or bereavement. There has been a shift in ethos as a result of the vision and its outworking by the head of school. Investment in staff training has had a positive impact on staff feeling confident and valued in their roles. Well planned induction and mentoring provides an effective support network to staff at all levels. Pupils are well supported through the 'Switch' programme which helps prepare them for secondary school.

Leaders and governors ensure that there is now an ongoing process in place that evaluates the effectiveness of the school as a church school. This process ensures that both policy and practice continue to reflect the vision for the school, demonstrating that school leaders have taken effective action since the last inspection.

Governors, working alongside senior leaders, correctly identify where teaching and learning in RE requires further improvement. Actions swiftly taken by the newly appointed head of school and RE leader have made a positive impact on the development of RE. These recent improvements are evident in the planning, organisation and status of RE. As a result of diocesan training, the RE leader has a clear action plan in place which is starting to significantly impact the quality of teaching and learning. Newly established effective assessment systems are informing planning, and as a result, assessment is being used to help pupils develop a deeper understanding of biblical texts and the context within which they were written. Pupils are provided with big questions within Christianity and other world faiths. They are beginning to make comparisons between religions, considering similarities and differences. However, a sustained programme of staff development is required so that teachers can extend their subject knowledge, further improve their practice and provide effective support to enable all pupils to flourish.



The effectiveness of RE requires improvement

Some pupils find RE lessons enjoyable and are able to relate their learning back to the vision. However, teaching does not always provide appropriate challenge or support. Teaching and learning in RE is therefore not yet consistently good. Pupils, including disadvantaged and those with special needs and/or disabilities, do not yet demonstrate the sustained levels of progress required in order to be considered good.

Executive Headteacher	Christopher Cole
Head of School	David Davies
Inspector's name and number	Allan McLean (NS 823)