

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ridgeway Farm Church of England Academy			
Address	The Buffer, Purton, Wiltshire SN15 4GT		
Date of inspection	21 March 2019	Status of school	Primary Academy
Diocese	Bristol	URN	142321

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

School context

Ridgeway Farm is a primary school with 185 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils 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 below national averages. The school opened as an academy in September 2016, part of the Diocese of Bristol Multi-Academy Trust (DBAT). The school shares the headteacher with Lydiard Millicent, a local Church school. Pupil numbers are rising steadily as the school continues to grow.

The school's Christian vision

"Believe, Learn, Grow"

Our vision is for all children to believe in themselves and develop a love of lifelong learning as we grow together as part of God's family. Through the parable of the Mustard Seed, (Matthew 13:31-32) children understand they may feel small but through believing and learning, we grow into mighty trees.

Key findings

- The distinctive Christian vision has been fundamental to the school's development, creatively woven into teaching and learning and making a significant difference to pupils' behaviour.
- Leaders are dedicated and enthusiastic in establishing this new school, creating a strong cohesive team who share the vision, building a warm inclusive community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- A culture of aspiration is developing, positively challenging pupils' self-belief so they aim high and flourish. However, opportunities for spiritual development are not securely in place.
- The pupils' collective worship team are raising the profile and impact of worship, so it inspires their peers to take action.

Areas for development

- Enable pupils to explore in greater depth disadvantage and exploitation, globally as well as locally, and become advocates for change.
- Create an agreed understanding of spirituality with progressive experiences identified in planning enabling pupils to respond in creative ways.
- Extend the use of 'big' questions across all subject areas so pupils understand how key Christian concepts can contribute to their thinking and daily lives.

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 have developed this new school around the vision. They recognised some pupils had low feelings of self-worth and limited aspirations. Reflecting on their small beginnings they chose the parable of the mustard seed which grows to a mighty tree. Leaders talk about the vision being rooted in biblical principles enabling everyone to grow. Each part of the vision is underpinned by a biblical reference. Pupils confidently articulate their understanding of the vision using their logo. They explain the hands belong to God and staff who support them. The corn reminds pupils that the school was once part of a field and that growing is important. They understand that Christian values enable everyone to grow and become the people God intended. The vision has informed rich partnerships which strengthen growth, informing policy and practice. DBAT evaluations lead to well-focused training, raising the quality of teaching and learning. Collaboration with other schools enables staff with expertise in special educational needs to share good practice. Subject leaders work together on research projects growing in confidence to become future leaders. The close relationship with Lydiard Millicent allows joint planning and training. The church offers valuable support for worship and governance. Staff are empowered to take an active role in the development plan through specific teams focusing on areas for improvement. Christian distinctiveness continues to be a high priority. New initiatives such as introducing Understanding Christianity resources are deepening pupils' understanding of Christian concepts. Governors add to evaluations through learning walks which have specific focuses, such as the quality of work in religious education (RE).

Staff weave the language of the vision into daily learning experiences. They talk about believing in yourself, being special to God and having high aspirations. Pupils confidently use these ideas when selecting the difficulty of questions to tackle, taking greater ownership. They make strong links with the vision and learning behaviours called gems. Pupils give numerous examples where these encourage collaboration, creativity and promote high aspirations. A broad enquiry based curriculum is established. This is driven by the dedication and enthusiasm of leaders, their commitment to the vision and pupils fulfilling their potential. Standards at the school are rising. Pupils' achievements at the end of Key Stage 1 are at least in line with local expectations. In Key Stage 2 more pupils are reaching the expected standard. Vulnerable pupils are effectively supported with skilled staff meeting a diverse range of needs. Support is often highly personalised allowing them to make similar progress to their peers. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect and develop spiritually. Time in worship and in specifically designed class spaces encourages this. However, there is no agreed understanding of spirituality nor are aspects explored across all subject areas.

The biblical underpinning of the vision promotes the understanding that everyone is special and growing in this caring community. Pupils know they grow not just in knowledge but in the way they use Christian values. Pupils who claim to have no religious beliefs articulate the contribution values make to their community. Staff model these relationships in their daily interactions with pupils and parents. Pupils show a well-developed understanding of forgiveness and its importance in making a fresh start. They make strong links to biblical ideas explaining how God forgave people for killing Jesus. Pupils show respect for difference, recognising everyone as being special to God. Pupils from different faiths or countries are encouraged to talk about their cultures and festivals, deepening peers' understanding of difference and diversity. A staff group are exploring well-being which is shaping support for pupils' mental health. Strategies which help pupils to be calm are making an increasing impact. Whilst global communities and disadvantage are explored, experiences are not planned progressively or of sufficient depth to extend pupils' understanding. Pupils are increasingly taking independent responsibility to be advocates for change. There are good examples where pupils have initiated support for the local foodbank. Pupils also raise funds to provide clean water for African communities.

The pupils' worship team play a significant role creating opportunities which contribute to everyone's spiritual development. Members of the team lead worship weekly. Worship is invitational and allows pupils and staff of faith or no faith to engage with integrity. Planning is detailed and enhances pupils' understanding of the relevance of the vision to daily life. Key questions are linked to biblical ideas which extend pupils' understanding of Jesus' teaching, which pupils talk about in depth. Pupils understand that prayer is a way of sharing ideas with God. Some feel prayers help them to be still or they say they help them to think through problems. Class reflection spaces provide opportunities for stillness outside of worship which pupils value. Pupils have an age appropriate understanding of the trinitarian nature of God. The vicar leads worship and celebrates the main Christian festivals in church. This has led to pupils having a good understanding of festivals, explaining their importance for Christians. Evaluations by

leaders and governors have led to worship reflection diaries being introduced. This enables pupils to consider how they might respond.

The RE subject leader has introduced 'big' questions to challenge pupils' thinking. Increasingly pupils' answers show a depth of understanding of religious literacy and key Christian concepts. Lessons provide safe spaces for pupils to verbalise ideas knowing these will be valued. Staff use these discussions to effectively develop pupils' skills of disagreeing well. They enjoy the variety of ways they can respond, such as making videos or through role play. Part of the feedback to pupils includes questions which require them to think at a deeper level, which reflects the vision. However, 'big' questions are not developed through all subject areas so their impact is reduced. Major world faiths are explored, allowing pupils to make thoughtful comparisons with their own beliefs. Pupils generally feel that RE raises questions which make them think. Assessment systems are securely in place, supported by moderation with partners. Pupils are encouraged to make self-assessments, taking greater ownership of their learning. The subject leader introduces new ideas, raising staff knowledge of other faiths and beliefs. The RE curriculum meets the Church of England Statement of Entitlement and statutory obligations.

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