

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Longwick Church of England Combined School				
Address	Walnut Tree Lane, Princes Risborough, HP27 9SJ			
Date of inspection	28 November 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as Voluntary Controlled Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust	
Diocese	Oxford	URN	I46048	

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 Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Longwick is a primary school with 173 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages but the proportion of pupils with more complex needs is above the national average. Since the previous SIAMS inspection, there has been a change to the senior leadership team and the school has converted to an academy within Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust.

The school's Christian vision

'Our vision is rooted in a commitment to excellence. We aim to serve our community by providing a high quality education and live out Christian values through the experience we offer. We strive to prepare everyone for challenges and changes by enabling them to build strong foundations. Our vision is underpinned by the parable of 'The Wise and The Foolish Builders' Matthew 7, verses 24-27

Key findings

- Strong leadership at all levels embeds the vision so that pupils flourish, build resilience for life and live out their Christian values.
- The mutually beneficial partnership between the local parish and the school enriches the lives of all within the community. The wellbeing of all is given the highest priority.
- Governors support leaders well, ensuring the vision drives their strategic planning and inspires a love of learning. Monitoring is robust to maintain the strong foundations.
- Pupils and adults are invited to take part in effectively planned collective worship but there are limited opportunities for deeper spiritual responses.
- Religious education (RE) is creatively planned, making a positive contribution to the vision of the school and pupils understanding of world faiths. Currently, there are limited opportunities to share this expertise with other Church schools.

Areas for development

- Broaden planning within worship and the curriculum to enable pupils to make deeper spiritual responses and experience the wonder of God's creation.
- Extend the vision for excellence by leading innovative and imaginative RE projects for the Trust so that the school vision transforms school communities at a strategic level.

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 dedicated leadership of the headteacher enables all to flourish and feel supported. The Christian vision which is rooted in Saint Matthew's Gospel story of the wise builder, is promoted throughout the school. All are nurtured by the image of a rock acting as a firm foundation. 'Inspiring a love of learning through Christian values' is certainly endorsed and cherished by all within the school community. Pupils past and present describe the vision creating resilience within them so that they feel able to overcome life's challenges. A committed staff team are highly valued for their care of the most vulnerable or those in need of emotional support. Parents appreciate the warmth of the staff and their acts of compassion, which in turn are demonstrated by the pupils towards each other.

Leaders at all levels establish an ambitious plan embedded in the vision of a rock. This is promoted as the foundation for learning. The dynamic relationship between the clergy and the school enhances the vision within the community, serving adults and pupils alike. Splash Club successfully strengthens this partnership so that pupils develop a biblical literacy within a framework of creative activities. Pupils value opportunities to learn about the Bible, sharing well known favourite stories. The shared values of the multi-academy trust uphold the vision, enabling all leaders to challenge themselves and strive for excellence. All staff cherish opportunities to grow in addition to their strong commitment to serve others. Effective partnerships with the Diocese broaden approaches to learning. The project to develop teaching assistants demonstrates the creativity of the staff team.

Pupils achieve well and leaders are quick to take action to address aspects of the curriculum which require strengthening. The school is committed to supporting pupils with complex needs enabling them to make progress. There are creative learning activities which challenge thinking and prompt pupils to consider their responsibility to the wider world. The response of pupils to the Indonesian earthquake highlights their sense of compassion and benevolence towards others. Forest school activities enrich pupils so that they enthusiastically celebrate the gifts God bestows and maintain a sense of wellbeing. Such activities support vulnerable learners, demonstrating the school's dedication to mental health. Leaders have further plans to develop outside areas in order to strengthen spiritual experiences. Supported by the Christian vision and values, the curriculum encourages pupils to respect and learn about other cultures, faiths and traditions. The school has responded to the previous inspection requirement to help pupils understand Christianity as a global community. Pupils express Christianity as being 'everywhere because it is a belief.' They describe Christian communities locally along with those abroad, mentioning the Christ the Redeemer Statue in Brazil. Pupils speak fondly of the Bedford Walk, which includes visiting a gurdwara, a church and a mosque. Such experiences extend their knowledge of the range of beliefs and cultures, promoting respect and understanding.

The school cherishes all links within the immediate community whilst extending pupils' understanding of service towards the less fortunate. Pupils speak enthusiastically of visiting St Mary's Church and working with adults who lead prayer space activities. This offers opportunities to be creative and provoke deep thinking about life's big questions. Parents value the links established by the school which is confirmed through surveys and comments. One parent describes the school as a 'family' whilst ninety eight percent agree their child is safe. Individuals are valued and nurtured as a result of the personal and social curriculum. This is driven by the vision to enable all pupils to withstand life's challenges and treat each other with fairness and dignity. Behaviour and attendance of pupils is good, demonstrating their love of learning and friendships.

Pupils contribute to the planning of collective worship which reinforces the vision and extends pupil's knowledge of the Bible. Through worship, pupils explore how their own behaviours reflect the teachings of Jesus. Worship is led by a variety of staff members which enables the pupils to appreciate that Christians pray in a variety of ways. The inclusive nature of each gathering enables those of all faiths and none to participate. Worship is invitational, providing all with an opportunity to appreciate the importance of coming together. Pupils express enjoyment of clergy led worship on a Friday, finding these stimulating and thought provoking. Parents welcome the opportunity to join such whole school gatherings. Worship refers to the festivals within the Anglican year and allows pupils to develop a sense of theology. Pupils readily explain known symbols such as the dove which demonstrates some understanding of the Holy Trinity.

The subject leader for RE is determined that pupils should develop a detailed knowledge of major world faiths. Diocesan network meetings enable her to share good practice and extend her own knowledge of effective learning. Classroom activities are creative, enabling pupils to learn about key religious beliefs and practice. The role play stable in Early Years allows pupils to deepen their understanding of the nativity, whilst Year 6 broaden their thinking with the question 'Does the world require a saviour?' The responses of the pupils demonstrate that they can apply their knowledge of the birth of Jesus, linking this to the challenges of modern life e.g. homeless. RE enriches the wider curriculum so that pupils develop appreciation and respect for cultural differences. Show Racism the Red Card Charity reinforce positive messages which the children then apply through their interactions. Teachers are confident when using the Understanding Christianity resources which results in pupils developing an awareness of Christian beliefs. However, there are some missed opportunities to ensure pupils develop a deeper understanding of some traditions of worship. The school has made efforts to establish effective systems for assessment since the previous inspection which has seen standards rising in line with other subjects. The vision drives continual improvement within RE which the school hopes to share across the Trust.

Longwick has an ambitious and nurturing vision which embraces all members of the community. It is committed to a journey of continual improvement, which enables all staff and pupils to flourish and feel loved.

Headteacher	David Liddle
Inspector's name and number	Helen Crolla 918