

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Andrew's CofE VC Primary School, Stanstead Abbots	
Address	Mill Race, Stanstead Abbots, SG12 8BZ
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent

School's vision
<p>"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." Matthew 4: 19</p> <p>Learn to love: Love and respect for ourselves, others and God</p> <p>Love to Learn: Learning without limits</p> <p>In God's love each one will shine: His love provides firm foundations for growth.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deeply Christian vision is the golden thread that weaves through every aspect of school life. Everyone is enabled to develop within the life-changing, transformational, and loving culture that permeates the school. • Dedicated leaders and staff watch over pupils and one another with love. A culture of nurture and nourishment welcomes and embraces all. The entire school community is united by a 'love to learn without limits', which ensures pupils 'shine' academically and socially. However, the school's revised understanding of spirituality is not fully embedded. • Exemplary behaviour is grown from the inclusive Christian vision, coupled with deep-rooted values. Together, adults and pupils overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles to learning. This ensures pupils flourish as they grow within the firm foundations of the all-encompassing vision. • Innovative collective worship binds the school community. Pupils thrive in planning, leading, and evaluating acts of worship which are the heartbeat of the school. Mutually beneficial partnerships between the school and parish greatly enrich the worship life of St Andrew's. • Religious education (RE) is given a high priority and is a significant strength of St Andrew's. An exciting and challenging curriculum enables all pupils to 'love to learn' about Christianity, major world religions and worldviews exceptionally well.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully embed the school's definition of spirituality. This is to ensure that further planned and spontaneous opportunities are harnessed for pupils and adults to grow spiritually.

Inspection findings

The headteacher embodies the vision and acts as an inspirational role model to the school community. She leads this excellent Church school with a desire to empower others to be the best they can be. Over time leaders have crafted a vision that is deeply influential in the lives of the school community. The impact is felt beyond the school gates. A love of learning built on the foundations of the Christian faith permeates every aspect of the school. Day by day, action by action, leaders weave the vision into the lifeblood of the school. Strong partnerships exist between St Andrew's and the diocese. As a result, leaders have up-to-date knowledge about developments in Church school education. A positive track record of developing school leaders exists. Governors utilise robust monitoring systems. Subsequently, they know the school exceptionally well.

A wisely and sensitively selected curriculum is embedded. It builds on the foundation of the vision. The school is highly aspirational for its pupils and this permeates all its actions. The curriculum inculcates a love of learning. Provision for those pupils deemed to be vulnerable is transformational. Staff are empowered to apply a wide range of training to support vulnerable pupils. Pupils with additional learning needs are fully embraced at St Andrew's. They settle quickly and often make rapid progress because of the high-quality provision they receive. A culture of innovative practices is grown from the vision. Staff can take considered risks to try new initiatives. High levels of expertise result in pupils routinely surpassing expectations. Pupils are drawn to reflect on the meaning and mystery of life through spontaneous and planned experiences. A wealth of opportunities are offered to develop the spiritual growth of pupils and adults. However, the school's definition of spirituality is not fully shared and occasionally opportunities for spiritual growth are missed.

The vision drives the character and moral development of every pupil remarkably well. Highly-effective rules for behaviour are consistently applied. As a result, pupils' behaviour is exceptional. This ensures that pupils have countless experiences to develop their character and moral compass. Leaders create a culture in which pupils thrive and grow. The school community engages in regular charitable works for the benefit of the communities locally, nationally, and internationally. Lasting partnerships with a school in the Gambia are meaningful to pupils. They learn about deprivation and how they can support people with the actions they choose. The causes of disadvantages are sensitively explored. Pupils are advocates for change in social action projects to address the exploitation of the natural world. They understand that their learning and actions are giving others hope.

Strong relationships at St Andrew's have a remarkably powerful impact on the lives of the pupils and adults. Watching over one another in love is the norm. Driven by the vision, this sense of care fosters strong relationships. It leads staff to support the various needs of the pupils exceptionally well. Leaders build a peaceful environment that instills the school's Christian value of resilience across the school community. Consequently, the possibilities of wholeness and happiness are made real for everyone. When times are difficult the community comes together to nourish and support one another. Good mental health and wellbeing are central to this success. Attendance is above national averages because pupils love coming to school. Policies associated with behaviour effectively grow from the vision and are woven with compassion, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Pupils flourish socially as a result.

An all-encompassing acceptance of members of the school community ensures that everyone is enabled to grow. All are treated with dignity and respect. This transcends tolerance and people are fully accepted for who they are in the loving culture at St Andrew's. Personal, social, health, and economic (PSHE) education effectively supports this. Pupils

are enabled to form healthy relationships grown on mutual respect.

Fully inclusive worship ensures that people are invited to experience God's love if they choose to. This is respectfully inclusive of all backgrounds. Innovative collective worship binds everyone and imparts a deep understanding of the vision and associated values among the whole community. Pupils confidently lead, plan, and evaluate acts of worship. Subsequently, they regularly develop the provision. Diocesan training affirms leaders to encourage pupils in their leadership roles, such as the 'Faith Factory'. Pupils gain enormously as a result of belonging to this worship group. They demonstrate the school's vision to peers in thought-provoking and deeply engaging acts of worship. It strengthens people in times of joy and solace within the life of the school. These act as powerful and life-lasting role models to many pupils and adults. The teachings of Jesus are woven through school life and inspire pupils' behaviour choices and ways of communicating with one another. Pupils articulate the trinitarian nature of God with careful consideration. Reflection and prayer are invitational and welcoming. Consequently, people engage and benefit from times of prayer. Exceptionally strong partnerships exist between the school and parish church. Clergy and volunteers enrich collective worship through powerful and long-lasting links between the congregation and school. For example, shells from the shore of Galilee were brought back from the beaches that Saint Andrew and Jesus walked and fished upon. Such meaningful connections are the hallmark of mutually beneficial partnerships.

RE has a prominent place within the curriculum because of the vision. The headteacher, as RE subject leader, engages fully with diocesan training. Teachers comprehensively weave the vision throughout the ambitious RE curriculum. Lessons are exciting and thought-provoking. This gives clarity of vision and supports pupils' exploration of theology, philosophy, and the human social sciences. Theological concepts are effectively unpicked and explored. As a result, pupils' conversations about world views, faith, and beliefs, are very well articulated. Pupils have developed age-appropriate skills of inquiry, critical analysis, and interpretation which they confidently apply within RE lessons. Pupils learn in detail about the global aspect of Christianity and other major world faiths. Teachers ensure that pupils are challenged to think and apply prior learning in lessons. The Understanding Christianity resource enhances this approach. Diverse faith communities are celebrated effectively throughout RE lessons. Educational visits stimulate pupils' interests. One pupil accurately explained this, 'We value learning about Hinduism and Judaism. It helps us to better understand the culture and religions of others'.

Information			
School	St Andrew's CofE VC Primary School, Stanstead Abbots	Inspection date	24 January 2023
URN	117407	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	St Albans	Pupils on roll	220
Headteacher	Helen Gillingham		
Chair of Governors	Anne Pulford		
Inspector	Toby Long	No.	896