

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

High Halden CofE Primary School	
Address	Church Hill, High Halden, Ashford, TN26 3JB
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	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
<p>Rooted in God, we grow together</p> <p>(Based on John 15 : 5)</p> <p>At High Halden we take pride in creating a nurturing environment where our community of learners are valued as individuals. Through God's love, rich experiences and a sense of belonging, all will make strong roots to grow, flourish and bear fruit.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deeply embedded Christian vision and the accompanying biblical narrative underpin the strategic development of the school, enabling all to grow together. • The vision and associated values have a profound impact on the wellbeing of the whole school community. A strong sense of belonging means all are eager to contribute but few take a lead in response to issues of injustice beyond the school. • Creative learning opportunities within the indoor and outdoor environment, nurture a love of learning. However, there is not a shared understanding and application of spirituality within the school. • Collective worship is engaging and relevant for all, strongly reflecting the school's vision and values. Monitoring and evaluation of worship is less well developed. • The use of big questions and some creative learning opportunities within religious education (RE) stimulate interest and engagement for all pupils. Opportunities for assessment, monitoring and use of planned time for pupils to reflect on their personal learning are at an early stage of development.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a shared understanding of spirituality so that the spiritual development of all is planned within the taught curriculum and wider aspects of the school. • Determine a systematic process for the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship. This will help ensure that all benefit from opportunities to engage and be involved in worship and reflection. • Broaden opportunities for all pupils to engage in social action and to actively challenge injustice so that they are inspired to make a difference to the world in which they live. • Embed the assessment and monitoring processes initiated within RE. Alongside this, increase the provision for pupils to reflect on their learning, so that all make progress.

Inspection findings

The school's vision and biblical narrative, centred on 'the vine and the branches' are woven into every aspect of the school's life and work. They form the foundation on which the school is growing, with roots firmly embedded in God's love and the teachings of Jesus. They also direct and influence all aspects of the school's strategic planning and the work of the governing body. The federation with another church school provides a strong partnership to strengthen school growth. This has borne fruit in developing staff and providing wider opportunities for pupils.

The shared and deep understanding of the Christian vision creates a strong sense of belonging. All are loved unconditionally within an environment where relationships and interactions are modelled on Christian values. As a result, parents feel welcomed and valued partners in the work of the school. Equally pupils are encouraged to grow into confident, secure young people who are made in the image of God. This creates a happy community where pupils are well behaved. Pupils actively care for each other, with older pupils kindly supporting younger ones and all ages playing harmoniously together at break times. Pupils are confident that, when needed, adults in school will support and help them. This fosters a safe and caring environment, providing firm roots for growth within learning. Within this community staff are happy in their work. They value each other, providing reciprocal support professionally and practically. This results in a team that is eager to nurture learning expertise and the best provision for all.

The outworking of the vision ensures that pupils embrace a range of leadership roles. As such they become active citizens in the creation of a strong community. Pupils feel valued as individuals, knowing that their voice is heard through the work of pupil governors. The head boy and head girl take a strong lead in initiating fundraising for charity. Pupils are aware of the importance of meeting the needs of those who are more vulnerable and participate with enthusiasm with charitable events suggested by adults. They are eager to help and enjoy being part of the local community, singing at nursing homes or packing food parcels for local people, for example. Although pupils have some understanding of social action and can challenge injustice, they are not all offered opportunities to respond, for example deciding charities to support.

In line with the Christian vision, the school's rural environment as well as a wide range of extra-curricular activities, provide opportunities for enriching the sense of community. These foster learning skills and character building where pupils feel safe to take risks and are growing in confidence. A highlight for older pupils is 'Challenger Troop' involving various physical challenges. The onsite forest school is accessed by all, enabling teamwork and strengthening sense of community. Pupils' understanding of spirituality is beginning to grow through the recent introduction of zones of regulation. Within these zones pupils recognise and learn how to manage their moods, emotions and feelings. Conscious stops are made in the day to appreciate the beauty and wonder of creation. For example, during work on the school's allotment or outdoor classroom. Although such times contribute to a growth in spirituality, there is an insufficient understanding of spirituality across the school. Thus, opportunities for planned spirituality across the curriculum are missed.

The vision and biblical basis are used in an exemplary way to form the basis of curriculum development. The image of the vine is used to illustrate the progression of knowledge and skills growing and extending within each subject. Pupils speak of their enthusiasm to be at school and how much they enjoy learning. Staff are happy to embrace new ideas in developing their teaching. This results in an engaging curriculum both within and beyond the classroom. Imaginative teaching strategies allow individual gifts and talents to flourish. At

the same time challenges within the classroom and beyond promote pupils' resilience and confidence. Rich learning experiences engage and inspire pupils, such as the recent Diwali day. These activities give pupils an increased sense of wellbeing. Driven by the example of Jesus in his demonstration of care and compassion for all, pupils who have special educational needs and / or disabilities are nurtured effectively in their learning.

Collective worship is a central part of the school day and an important way in which the vision is shared with the community. Through worship the pupils gain a deep understanding of the school's Christian values. The celebration worship, with its focus on the values is a highlight of the week for both staff and pupils. All sing enthusiastically and at times accompany this with exuberant actions. This draws the community together with enjoyment. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about 'Open the book' worship led by the local church. They particularly like the role play, opportunities to dress up and participate. Pupils grow in confidence as they support adults in leading worship. Pupils value the reflection spaces both within the school and within the outdoor area. They see them as a sanctuary of calm and an area for personal reflection. Some pray in these areas stating that they can speak to God, knowing that he hears them. In this way they find peace and inner strength. Few opportunities exist to monitor and evaluate collective worship. This means that leaders do not have comprehensive and meaningful feedback to inform future planning.

The diocese has worked closely with the RE lead to develop this subject and promote continuous improvement. The RE lead participates in local network meetings and disseminates new knowledge and information to other colleagues. In this way staff have a growing confidence in teaching RE and pupils are enthused by creative learning opportunities. Enquiry based learning allows pupils to explore big questions both collaboratively and individually. They are eager to ask questions and extend their understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. However, there are limited opportunities for pupil reflection on learning in depth, meaning progress in RE is limited for some pupils. Monitoring and assessment are at an early stage of development.

This is a school where the vision and the image of the vine and branches are pivotal to the daily life of the school. The whole school community is bonded around God's love for each individual and the ways they grow and flourish together.

Information			
School	High Halden CofE Primary School	Inspection date	11 January 2023
URN	118666	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Canterbury	Pupils on roll	101
Headteacher	Kelly Burlton		
Chair of Governors	Nikolas Le Marechal		
Inspector	Elizabeth Pettersen	No.	557