

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Giles Church of England VA Infant School, Ashtead	
Address	Dene Road, Ashtead, KT21 1EA

School vision
Loving God and Loving our Neighbour (Matthew 22:37-39)
School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision is deeply affirmed by this joyful school community. The responsibility pupils and adults have for one another, through the vision in loving their neighbour, is genuinely lived out. • Collective worship is a highly valued time of reflection, celebration and spiritual development for the community. • Members of the school community are valued and loved. Relationships are supportive, enriching and harmonious. • Pupils are passionate about the areas of justice that are important to them. In particular, work around recycling and protecting the environment show a dedication to the vision. • Religious education (RE) is inspiring. The curriculum, with its wide range of learning activities, is engaging and allows pupils of all abilities to progress well.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coherent and enriched understanding of the theologically rooted Christian vision so that it strengthens the work of the school. • Strengthen strategic partnerships. This is to ensure that the school's collaboration with community groups can enhance the ways pupils and adults flourish. • Embed a shared language and understanding of spirituality throughout the school. This will provide more opportunities for pupils and adults to flourish spiritually.
Inspection findings
<p>The Christian vision of 'Loving God and Loving Our Neighbour' is sincerely embraced by the school community. The school's values of love, courage, compassion, thankfulness, forgiveness, friendship, and respect are central to daily life. They foster a nurturing environment where pupils and adults can flourish in their personal development. Recognising that flourishing is unique for each individual, leaders prioritise a culture of high expectations. They encourage personal growth and academic excellence. As a result, pupils are given an exceptionally strong start in their education. Leaders, including governors, are committed to ensuring this vision allows the flourishing of each member of the school community. They understand the challenges and opportunities of the diverse context of pupils and serve them intentionally and with integrity. Adults at the school take the time to truly know each pupil and parent, creating a strong sense of community and support. Parents are supported and are active partners in their children's learning. Members of the school community feel included, valued and welcomed. Through their Christian vision and values, the school provides a</p>

foundation for personal and academic development. This creates a positive and enriching educational experience.

The school's curriculum is a strong reflection of its Christian vision, fostering an environment where pupils thrive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive exceptional support. The school collaborates with external agencies to ensure the best possible care for vulnerable pupils. The school's unique 'celebratory profiles' for SEND pupils offer tailored academic and social targets to promote holistic development and academic success. Spiritual growth is nurtured through various prayer spaces and opportunities, supported by thoughtful questioning that encourages deeper understanding. Pupils enjoy bespoke spirituality sessions which involve movement, music and art. This helps them to think more deeply and creates a sense of awe and wonder which pupils appreciate and enjoy. Whilst conversations about spirituality are facilitated, there is room to further integrate spiritual language across the curriculum and in worship settings. Extra-curricular activities are provided for and enjoyed by pupils, including those who are more vulnerable. Choir, dance, and educational visits to landmarks, like Hampton Court, enrich pupils' learning experiences. The wider curriculum deepens pupils' appreciation for community, history, and the world around them.

Collective worship is a powerful celebration of the school's Christian vision. Through worship, pupils have an opportunity to think about big questions and grow in their knowledge of biblical stories. Times of prayer and reflection are prioritised and engaged with by pupils and adults alike. Pupils actively engage in reflections about justice and learn how to stand up for what they believe in during worship. The school's values of love, courage, compassion, thankfulness, forgiveness, friendship and respect are explored during worship. Consequently, pupils confidently develop these qualities. Worship is varied and includes pupils and adults from all beliefs, faiths and backgrounds. Reflections, prayers, songs and reward celebrations encourage deep thinking and active participation. The inclusive and inspiring culture of prayer and reflection that has been developed by the school has great impact. Pupils use prayers they have learnt at the school to pray for family members and friends outside of the school. Adults also value collective worship opportunities as moments of unity and seize the opportunity to explore spiritual and moral themes with pupils. The 'Open the Book' initiative, involving a representative from the local church visiting the school, is an effective vehicle in worship. It involves the dramatic storytelling of biblical stories with props and strong characterisation and is loved by both pupils and adults. It adds vibrancy and creates impact in worship. The partnership with the local church facilitates some meaningful activities and learning experiences for the school. However, the way in which the school plans for deeper, long term collaboration with the church is limited.

The school is a true community. The vision fosters transformational relationships between pupils and adults. Everyone is treated with care and respect. Parents are also not just welcomed, but actively partnered with in their children's learning journey. The school celebrates diversity, ensuring all students feel valued and included. Emphasising the importance of loving one's neighbour, pupils demonstrate understanding through their actions, promoting kindness and acceptance. A wellbeing club further showcases the school's commitment to mental and emotional wellness. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They feel safe and accepted, allowing them to thrive and reach their full potential within this tightly cohesive community.

As a result of the school's Christian vision, pupils understanding of justice and responsibility shines through their actions. These young children are not just learners but active agents of change. Children actively want to extend 'love' to God, to their neighbour and to the natural world they live in. Pupils are active and are supported to be independent in this area. They passionately support charities like Great Ormond Street Hospital, voting for them independently. Their compassion extends beyond their immediate circle. They understand the importance of supporting the local

community and the wider world. Inspired to 'change the world', pupils speak confidently about creating a kind and inclusive culture where unkindness has no place. Their dedication to justice was showcased in an exceptional environmental campaign sparked by one pupil's desire to reduce pollution. Pupils shared they wanted to emulate the advocacy of Rosa Parks. This campaign united the school and wider community in recycling efforts, demonstrating their understanding of responsibility and impact. Despite their young age, pupils show a remarkable awareness of global issues and a strong desire to help those in need. This courageous culture is truly inspiring.

The school provides a vibrant and enriching religious education curriculum that truly engages its pupils. At the heart of this success is the deep enthusiasm that pupils possess for RE. They do not just participate, they own it. Pupils' knowledge of world faiths is strong, with a good focus and appreciation of religious practices and beliefs. The quality of teaching and learning is very strong, with learning meticulously recorded in both collective faith books and individual exercise books. This practice reflects the school's commitment to nurturing strong religious and spiritual reflection among its pupils. The school's curriculum celebrates the diversity of world faiths. With robust assessment practices, teachers maintain high expectations, treating RE as a respected academic subject. As a result, pupils develop strong skills of inquiry and evaluation, achieving a deep level of subject knowledge. Progress in RE is impressive, with all students, including those with additional needs, developing significantly. Furthermore, teachers' focus on religious vocabulary equips pupils with the tools to articulate their ideas effectively. Visits to religious places of worship, such as the synagogue and the church, allow for experiential learning that bring RE lessons to life. Through skilled and targeted questioning and a culture of respectful sharing, pupils confidently express their opinions and beliefs. Pupils truly flourish in RE.

The inspection findings indicate that St Giles' Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	23 May 2024	URN	125190
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	59
Diocese	Guildford		
MAT/Federation			
Executive Headteacher	Mercy Atkins		
Chair	Dominic Pioli		
Inspector	Andrew Wignall	No.	2118