

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Eynesbury Church of England Primary School			
Address	Montagu Street, Eynesbury, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 2TD		
Date of inspection	21 January 2020	Status of school	Voluntary controlled primary
Diocese	Ely	URN	110820

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	Requires Improvement
Additional Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Eynesbury is a primary school with 204 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 above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages and children with education health and care plans (EHCPs) is significantly higher than national averages. The head teacher has been in post since January 2020 and all teaching staff are part time. The local church has not had a vicar for four years.

The school's Christian vision

Developing confident learners within a Christian ethos.

Like a tree firmly planted by streams of living water, we grow in knowledge, love, faith and wisdom. (Psalm 1:3)
Love to learn – learn to love.

Key findings

- The school is in a period of transition due to the appointment of a new head teacher in January 2020, whose passion and drive has refreshed the vision. However, the vision is not yet embedded enough to enable everyone connected to the school to centre their work and decisions around it.
- Governors are limited in their ability to articulate the Christian foundation of the school's vision and work. Their evaluation is not formally planned and they are not always aware of the statutory requirements essential for effective monitoring.
- Relationships are firmly established around the core Christian value of respect, demonstrated by the loving relationships everyone has and how pupils who have special educational needs are included and valued.
- Courageous advocacy is understood by leaders. Their encouragement enables pupils to have confidence in acting on social change, leading by example and being proud of their achievements in God's wider world.
- Collective worship is a strength of the school. Changes have been made to include all pupils in a creative way. Prayer plays an important role in worship and pupils value this. Religious education (RE) supports collective worship and is deepening pupils' understanding of the teachings of Jesus.

Areas for development

- Leaders to share the refreshed vision with the wider school community, embedding this into the life of the school so all decisions and evaluations are rooted in the Christian foundations the school is built upon.
- Ensure that all governors can articulate the Christian vision. Equip them to facilitate the rapid improvement of the school by formalising monitoring and evaluation.
- Enable pupils to plan and lead collective worship regularly. Formalise how pupil voice is included in the planned monitoring of the impact of worship by leaders and governors.
- In RE curriculum planning, ensure the depth of enquiry of all world faiths and views matches that of the Christianity taught, so that there is consistency of quality across the whole RE curriculum.

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

Eynesbury's vision is underpinned by the Christian value of respect. The vision has recently been refreshed after the new head teacher took up post in January 2020. Her passion and dedication to transform the school and build on a long established Christian ethos shines through. However, this period of change has brought less clarity to the school's vision and as a result not everyone is able to articulate it, or its theological context, clearly. This means there is a disconnection between what school leaders and governors say about the purpose and drive of the school as a church school. Governors in particular struggle in centring the Christian vision to their work, monitoring and decisions. Not all governors are well informed about the school's academic performance, nor the statutory duties underpinning effective evaluation, and this has resulted in ad-hoc monitoring at times. Staff and pupils are clear about Eynesbury's vision. They encounter it through biblical teaching and Christian values and can speak of it in this context. This is evident in the well planned and delivered collective worship and also in how the school has reacted to the needs of the pupils by developing an RE curriculum that meets every pupil's needs. Parents also recognise the Christian values that are held in the school; they find the vision, values and ethos provide a moral guide to their children's lives. They see how the school actively forgives and models positivity, well-being and good mental health. One parent said 'Eynesbury is a family, it is nurturing, it gives values for life and it develops confident learners in a Christian ethos'.

The curriculum is engaging and challenging. It looks outwards and considers carefully how to prepare children for life. Pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are provided with bespoke support because teachers know them well. Current outcomes at Key Stage 2 are not as good as national benchmarks and progress is particularly low. This has been a pattern for three years and is being swiftly addressed by the new head teacher and assessment lead. As a result, every child is looked at as an individual and support is carefully crafted for them to flourish in all they do. High quality nursery provision and early years teaching provide a firm foundation for children to grow both academically and spiritually. In nursery children learn about some of the symbols of different faiths, some of the festivals of different faiths and Bible stories – this provides a solid foundation in RE that is built on through the school. The RE lead is experienced and has a good grasp of the curriculum, which meets the Church of England's statement of entitlement for RE. She is confident to adapt the curriculum to make it relevant to the faiths represented in each year group in school whilst maintaining the right balance with Christianity. Currently the RE curriculum does not have quite the same depth in other world faiths as in Christianity, partly due to the school using Understanding Christianity resources and acting on training undertaken. A good range of visits and visitors bring RE and the wider curriculum alive; recently older children undertook a visit to the Bedford Faith Tour, where they visited a gurdwara, mosque and church. Pupils really enjoy RE. One said, 'RE is interesting, it makes us think hard and it lets us know about other people'. Recently the school has started to work with other local schools to develop moderation and sharing of good practice.

Collective worship is a strength of the school and the new worship lead has ensured both development points from the last inspection have been met. As a result worship is inclusive, engaging and creative. It includes a wide range of leaders, including pupils, and it is well planned to ensure pupils are able to understand the Christian traditions, festivals and biblical teachings. Prayer forms a central feature to all worship. Prayer pebbles are brought in from each class, children read prayers they have written, and they return to class with these pebbles to be used in dedicated spaces. Sometimes these spaces are seen negatively by pupils who link them to time out due to poor behaviour but most recognise they can use these spaces to ask God for help, guidance or to say thank you. Daily worship brings the whole school community together; they frequently sing the school song composed by the children and everyone values this special time. One child said, 'Collective worship teaches us how Jesus looked after the world we live in.' Monitoring of worship is not yet formalised and children do not have a regular role in this. Governors work hard ensuring that worship is of high quality and distinctively Christian but have no formal plan in place to monitor if it is consistent and regular. The impact of worship is evident in the warm relationships everyone has in the school and it impacts on how they choose to lead their daily lives; one pupil said, 'It gives us confidence and helps us make good choices.' A strong link with the local church has been maintained despite there being no vicar for over two years. Regular visits there for worship ensure Anglican traditions are experienced by the school community in festivals such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter as well as a regular Eucharist.

Leaders are conscious that pupils need to understand the wider world of God's creation. They have begun to build links with a school in South Sudan and take steps to develop pupils' interests in taking social action for change. The pupils support many local projects, such as being a collection point for the food bank and encouraging one pupil's regular fundraising for children's cancer and leukaemia group. This brings empathy and generosity into the hearts of the school community. One member of staff described the work as 'having a beautiful relationship with God's world'. This work does not yet include challenging injustice and the rights of others or the protection of God's creation, which are prioritised for the future.

Headteacher	Alana Brown
Inspector's name and number	Christopher J Allen 847