

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Rushwick Church of England VC Primary School			
Address	Upper Wick Lane, Rushwick, Worcester, WR2 5SU		
Date of inspection	04 July 2019	Status of school	VC primary
Diocese	Worcester	URN	116847
Overall Judgement		Grade	Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?			
Additional Judgement		Grade	Good
The impact of collective worship		Grade	Good

School context

Rushwick is a primary school with 158 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity, with no pupils speaking 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 just below national averages. Since the last denominational inspection, there has been significant building expansion work, allowing the school to currently operate in six classes, moving to one form entry in September 2019. The headteacher was in post at the time of the last inspection.

The school's Christian vision

'Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.' Luke 6:31

Rushwick is a learning community, underpinned by Christian values. We recognise everyone as a unique child of God and are committed to helping them each achieve academic, personal and social success, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or ability. Our vision is to provide an outstanding education which equips each child with the necessary skills to meet changes and challenges throughout their life.

Key findings

- Rushwick is highly inclusive and all staff support children relentlessly to reach their full potential. The committed team work harmoniously and ambitiously to drive school improvement.
- A varied programme for collective worship is enjoyed by the children, giving them time to reflect and make connections to the challenge and changes in their own lives.
- Pupils develop positive relationships and behave well because of the school's Christian ethos and calm environment.
- The school is developing its vision and values to be more explicitly Christian. This is at an early stage and so adults and pupils cannot yet articulate the connection between the Christian vision and wider academic and personal outcomes.
- Partnerships between the school, local community and families are highly valued and built on mutual respect.

Areas for development

- Refine the vision and values to ensure that they are theologically based. They should be understood by the whole school community and driving school improvement.
- Leaders at all levels (headteacher and governors) to ensure systematic and robust monitoring and evaluation in order to secure sustained improvement as a church school.
- Ensure that worship enables pupils to develop a deeper understanding of Anglican traditions and of Christianity as a worldwide faith.
- Embed a shared, school understanding of what is meant by spirituality, so that opportunities for spiritual development in the curriculum are fully recognised and taken.

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

Rushwick is a loving, caring and supportive community. All stakeholders have a deep commitment to inclusion and welcome all as 'God's children'.

The school's Christian vision focuses on caring for one another within a supportive environment, so that everyone can learn, gain knowledge and develop life skills. It has recently been revised in order to strengthen and root it expressly in biblical teaching, 'Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.' Luke 6:31. The vision now needs to be embraced by the whole school so that pupils, staff, parents and the wider community can explicitly know and rejoice in its Christian foundations. All within the school community value the inclusivity of the vision and being part of a caring school family. This has been particularly prevalent over the past twelve months whilst the school has been through a period of close scrutiny. The headteacher is very passionate in articulating that the school's vision has driven school improvement through this period and he is proud of his staff who have worked as a supportive, close knit, empathetic team. Through some challenging times everyone has been treated with dignity and respect. Leaders and governors recognise that there is not a structured and formal system in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's Christian vision and distinctiveness and work is being done to address this. There is currently no regular communication of the vision and values to parents.

Pupils enjoy all that the school offers. The broad curriculum is enhanced by numerous opportunities for leadership, curricular and extra-curricular activities. These opportunities reflect the values of responsibility and team work which matter enormously to pupils. They were proud to describe how team work had been a key feature of their recent sports day. Pupils are keen to take on responsible roles such as house captains, school council representatives and librarians. Staff actively promote the Christian vision in meeting pupils' needs. Vulnerable pupils, and those with special needs, are very well supported. Leaders ensure that financial and human resources are used effectively so that all pupils can flourish and achieve. Two members of staff are Thrive trained and there is a dedicated Thrive room which positively impacts on individual's emotional and social development. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and standards of attainment are generally in line with national expectations. At present, there isn't a common understanding of the concept of spirituality. This means that times when spirituality might be developed, tend to be 'in the moment' rather than planned for. Consequently, planning does not foster a progressive understanding of how spirituality can be built on as the children mature.

Relationships at all levels of the school are strong and are underpinned by the vision and values. These arise from the caring and heartfelt leadership of the headteacher and are modelled by a close-knit, inclusive staff team. Both adults and pupils feel listened to. One pupil told me 'I feel safe because you have lots of friends here and the teachers help you if you're worried'. The staff are well supported professionally and personally, including in their emotional and mental health. The headteacher has a strong duty of care towards the staff. As a result, adults are treated with dignity, care and respect in a working environment where wellbeing is given a great priority. For example, the staffing structure was changed in order to allow leaders and middle leaders some non-teaching time and leaders invested in a new assessment system which is easier and less time consuming to use whilst still being effective. All staff have undertaken training on mental health.

Excellent behaviour is a strength of the school and fully reflects the vision's focus of caring for one another. As a result, pupils flourish personally and socially. Leaders and staff are rightly proud that vulnerable pupils, who have had difficult experiences at other schools, have moved to Rushwick and have settled. This is testament to the school's vision of inclusivity, along with the commitment of the staff team who know each and every pupil as an individual. Rushwick is a school that can turn challenging behaviour around.

Pupils have a growing sense of Christian compassion, supporting several different charities. They understand the need to act where there are inequalities in the world. Some charitable acts are child-initiated, such as biscuit making, silly sports and crazy hair day. They say that charity is not always about giving money because giving time can also help people. Pupils are aware of the need to protect the environment, describing ways they personally

can make a difference, such as reducing the use of plastic and recycling. This year the school council have come up with a way to recycle the milk cartons used in school and have encouraged pupils to bring in re-usable water bottles. One pupil commented that 'we are concerned with recycling because it's pollution and it's hurting the animals'.

Partnerships with the local community, including families, cluster schools and the church demonstrate the commitment to treating others as we all want to be treated. There are mutually beneficial partnerships with the local church community. The open the book team and Reverend Anne regularly lead and support worship in school, deepening pupils' knowledge of Jesus' teachings and the Christian calendar. Staff speak highly of partnerships with other local schools, saying that they support their mental health, because they can share good practice and ideas as well as talk and train together. The school have a positive relationship with the diocese and speak highly of both the training they have engaged in and the school improvement support received.

Worship forms a special part of the day. The school's vision with its associated values, along with Jesus' teachings, form the focus for worship themes. Most pupils can link a value to a Bible story and one pupil commented that 'Jesus teaches us to be role models'. There is a pupil panel who are invited to take part in the worship and contribute their thoughts. The focus carries on beyond worship allowing pupils to see the link between worship and everyday life. A varied programme for worship is enjoyed by the children, giving them time to reflect and make connections to the challenges and changes in their own lives. Pupils throughout the school recognise that the lighting of the candle symbolises Jesus being the light of the world. Pupils' understanding of the Eucharist and the Holy Trinity is less developed.

Leadership of religious education (RE) is strong. The RE lead undertakes diocesan training and supports staff by delivering in-house professional development. Pupils enjoy lessons from the 'Understanding Christianity' resource. Monitoring carried out by the RE lead shows that progression in the subject is clearer and there is an increasing use of religious vocabulary. One pupil articulated that salvation is 'when Jesus died on the cross so our sins could be forgiven'. Pupils do not currently have an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide living faith. Other major world faiths are studied, developing understanding and respect for diversity, difference and living well together. However, pupils have not had many opportunities to visit places of worship of different faiths. The RE lead recognises this and has made plans to address it. Effective assessment procedures are in place.

The practical impact of the vision can be seen in the school's relationship with families. Parents say that all pupils are included and the care for the children comes first. Staff explain that building strong relationships with families from the very beginning is crucial to supporting every child as a unique individual of God. Parents wholeheartedly support the nurturing environment the school provides, commenting that the staff are welcoming, accessible, kind and caring.

Rushwick is a community where a strong Christian culture ensures all are treated with dignity and respect. As a result, everyone feels valued in a safe and happy community.

Headteacher	Geoff Jeffrey
Inspector's name and number	Kerry Geddis 955