

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Andrew's Church of England Infant School

Address	Upper Church Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7PW		
Date of inspection	12/07/2019	Status of school	Academy – The Good Shepherd Trust - inspected as Voluntary Controlled
Diocese	Guildford	URN	144330
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 Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship		Grade Good

School context

St Andrew's is an infant school with 64 pupils. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Nearly one fifth come from a range of other ethnic groups. Many of these pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged and those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) are below the national averages. Following a period of instability, the school joined the Good Shepherd Trust (March 2017). It works in a strategic partnership with a nearby Trust primary school with which it shares the same Christian vision and associated values.

The school's Christian vision

At the heart of our schools the children's well-being and safety is centred on a creative and aspirational curriculum, exposing children to the wonders of the natural world, with everyone motivated to succeed and fulfil their unique destiny. Our nurturing school community encourages children to find joy in life, their faith and learning finding moral strength and discovering a spiritual depth. This is achieved through our Christian Values of Fellowship, Justice, Resilience and Trust.

Key findings

- Membership of the Good Shepherd Trust and the increasingly effective relationship with its local Trust primary school means that St Andrew's has a stable and sustainable platform for continuing to serve its community. There is strong evidence of very positive developments.
- The Christian vision and associated values, developed and shared by both schools, build on what went before and their current context. They are underpinning St Andrew's development very well. The vision is seen in practice but its theological underpinning is less well understood and expressed than the biblical referencing of the values. Vision and values help shape developments as a Church school.
- St Andrew's is a purposeful learning community where pupils and staff flourish. Commendable pastoral care and targeted support reflects the school's Christian underpinning and are strengths of the school.
- Collective worship and RE have high priority and impact positively on pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Through a creative and aspirational curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities, pupils are successfully encouraged to understand that they can make a difference. Pupils are very well engaged locally and have a deepening understanding of right and wrong, justice and equality. The school has rightly identified that how it encourages pupils to address more global issues needs to be extended as part of its ongoing development.

Areas for development

- So that the vision expressly drives and supports ongoing development, ensure that the theological underpinning of the school's distinctively Christian vision is as well-known and celebrated as are its biblical-based values.
- Embed a more global dimension to pupils' understanding of and engagement with how they relate to the world around them.

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

St Andrew's has experienced a period of significant turbulence, including the threat of closure. Trust membership is having a constructive influence on its life and viability. The school shares senior leadership and governance with a nearby Trust voluntary controlled primary school. This provides strong strategic leadership and a stable and sustainable platform for development. St Andrew's is an official feeder school for its associated primary school from September 2019. There is now a waiting list for Reception pupils, reversing a steep decline in applications for places. This gives St Andrew's pupils a clear pathway for a Christian education age 4 to 11. Subject leaders hold the same responsibility across both schools. Regular staff meetings, training and planning together provide effective support for working within their church school context.

The vision, developed and shared by both schools, underpins the positive journey that St Andrew's is on. Its associated and well-chosen biblically based values reinforce its Christian character. The values are very well applied by pupils and adults. Building on what went before they have been embedded during this academic year. They impact, for example, on the high quality of mutually respectful relationships and on the excellent behaviour of pupils. Consistent behaviour management used by staff, exemplify the values and enables forgiveness and fresh starts to occur, in line with Christian teaching. The vision is seen in practice, but its theological basis and impact is not clearly understood and expressed by all stakeholders.

Senior leaders, the Trust and the local governing committee ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation which leads to well-focused development planning. It has included addressing the development and refreshment of the school's Christian underpinning since the time of the previous denominational inspection.

In keeping with its vision, the curriculum is creative and aspirational. It serves the varying needs of pupils well, relating learning to life in school and beyond. It is enriched through wide-ranging extra-curricular activities and special focus days. These include a Spirited Arts day where older members of the faith group from the other primary school successfully lead sessions. Pupils are well motivated 'to succeed and fulfil their unique destiny'. This means that their learning is well tailored to individual need and that pupils make good progress from their various starting points. Hence, attainment shows a three year upward trend and the gap between the more vulnerable pupils and their peers is small and closing. This is because of effective pastoral and academic support for all pupils and personalised and timely interventions for those with specific needs.

St Andrew's fruitfully utilises its position in town, its proximity to the church and to Space to Grow, a community garden. Outdoor learning through Forest School, held at the other school, successfully encourages pupils' appreciation of the local community and of the natural world. These experiences contribute to their spiritual and moral development.

The school has an emphasis on Fair Trade. Year 2 focus on endangered species exploring what they can do to improve the situation. Pupils readily apply St Andrew's Christian values in supporting their moral and social choices. This impacts on the charitable causes they support, including Christian Aid and the local food bank. Members of the eco-council litter pick locally and are proactive in encouraging recycling. Pupils have written to their Member of Parliament about pollution levels in the town. He is due to visit to discuss their concerns. Thus, pupils are developing their voice, within school and the local community, to be advocates for positive improvement. Difference and diversity are well celebrated, and pupils show positive appreciation that, 'we are all different but the same'. Their appreciation of justice and equality are developing well as evidenced by the school recently working towards the Global Neighbours' Bronze Award. The school has rightly recognised that this global dimension is not fully embedded.

Reflecting its vision well, pupils and their families are very well-known and nurtured. This is seen, for example, in the excellent pastoral support provided for pupils and their families, especially for those who are the most vulnerable. Those with SEND, some with complex needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are very well supported, within this caring community. There is an exemplary focus on mental health and wellbeing for pupils and adults associated with the school. This positively influences the sense of 'belonging to the school family'. Young carers are very well supported. St Andrew's pupils with specific needs can access play therapy and other such appropriate support using partner school facilities. Pupils feel safe and well looked after in this happy and caring school. Their personal development and welfare are strongly and successfully supported.

The worship programme is invitational and inclusive. It is well-focused on expressing the school's Christian underpinning and enables pupils to apply the values. It helps pupils consider issues of spiritual, religious and moral

concern. This is extended through the positive use of reflection books outside of worship. Pupils and staff engage well and enjoy worship, seeing it as important, 'because we are together', and, 'we are quiet and think about God'. Pupils respond to prayer, silence and reflection well, recognising that, 'prayer is talking to God'. Pupils offer spontaneous prayer following an act of worship. They have a strong appreciation of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One pupil reflecting, 'God is one and God is three together'. Biblical teaching and celebrating significant Christian festivals are well addressed. This leads to pupils knowing about the importance of Jesus for Christians. Links with the parish church and a local Baptist church positively enhance the worship experience of pupils along with their biblical knowledge.

The legal requirements for collective worship and RE are met as are the recommendations of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for RE. There are productive relationships between RE, collective worship and Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE) which enhance learning well.

RE is well-planned, drawing on the Locally Agreed Syllabus, through which pupils develop a good understanding of Christianity and Judaism. There are a wide range of appropriate activities and pupils make good progress. Assessment, following school practice, enables staff and pupils to know next steps in learning and so bring about improvement. Subject leadership provides effective support across the school.

Executive headteacher	Jayne Venables
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)