

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Urchfont Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School</b>			
<b>Address</b>	Cuckoo Corner, Urchfont, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 4RA		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	6 February 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	VC primary
<b>Diocese</b>	Salisbury	<b>URN</b>	8653186

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

### School context

Urchfont is a primary school with 107 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and very few pupils speak 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 above national averages. Since the last inspection the school's governing body has undergone restructure and the school has achieved an Ofsted grading of Good.

### The school's Christian vision

"I can do all this through Him who gives me strength." – Philippians 4:13

Through our vision at Urchfont Church of England Primary School, we strive for excellence in all that we do, working together as a happy community where children develop a life-long love of learning. Each child is valued and encouraged and our talented and dedicated staff, in partnership with parents, offer a welcoming, safe, nurturing and inspiring environment to all.

### Key findings

- The school's depth of understanding and valuing of inclusivity, diversity and difference is a strength. Leaders have determination to nurture the individual needs of pupils and adults in a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- Leaders' care and appreciation of the community which the school serves, particularly in relation to working collaboratively when considering changes to its vision and values.
- The varied diet of worship experienced by pupils and the impact that this has on their understanding of diversity and difference in terms of how people can be inspired by worship in a variety of ways.

### Areas for development

- To ensure that the effectiveness of the new Christian vision is robustly identified, monitored and evaluated so that it directly informs school improvement priorities.
- To deepen pupils' understanding of Christian values as being values for life, by offering opportunities for them to serve the common good and to live out the school's vision and values at home or in the wider community.
- To establish robust assessment criteria for achievement in religious education (RE) which raises expectations, enabling every child to be the best that they can be.

## **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**

A warmth of welcome and a safe, nurturing environment are at the heart of Urchfont as a Church of England school. The positive and compassionate relationships, modelled by staff and governors, inspire pupils to help and care for each other. The wording of the school's new vision is explained by pupils in terms of knowing God's strength in supporting them in their work and behaviour at school. Alongside pupils recognise that the school 'is an open school for everyone, not just for Christians'. Staff, governors, pupils, the rector and parents have contributed to the vision and associated Christian values to ensure that they are appropriate to the school community and will have sustainability. Governors have collaborated with senior leaders to implement the new Christian vision in a timely way to the wider community. This is aided by the rector who promotes the school's Christian ethos in church. Pupils have produced visual representation of the new vision in paintings and their ideas have been given to an artist to produce final artwork for the school.

The school promotes happiness and a 'can do' attitude to challenges. Pupils are encouraged to have courage to speak out and take risks in their work and play. Parents say Urchfont is 'a school that allows enquiring minds'. This approach is reflected in the school's core values of perseverance, courage, hope and wisdom. Pupils use this vocabulary when speaking about their behaviour in school. The values are referenced by staff in lessons and are discussed in worship.

Leaders and governors are proud of the school's success when working with children with additional needs and the school's commitment to care for families. The school uses pupil premium funding to pay for a Parent Support Advisor who views her work as an extension of the vision. The vision is being demonstratively lived out by this member of staff who offers emotional support, as well as practical help, both inside school and in pupils' homes. This is allowing families to flourish in sometimes challenging circumstances. At the time of inspection the school's new vision had been in place less than two terms but pupils were already able to link their core values of courage and hope to the growth mindset approach the school has to learning.

Pupils at Urchfont broadly perform well in national assessments and tests, receiving a recent congratulatory letter from the Education Secretary for good results in Reading at Key Stage Two. Due in part to the sometimes small cohorts of children, results occasionally dip below national percentage averages. The school is part of a collaboration with four other church schools where some joint working has led to improvement in standards. Vulnerable pupils are identified quickly at Urchfont and make good progress alongside their peers. There is strong support from teaching assistants and some creative approaches to the curriculum that ensure pupils who are less confident in writing are not held back from achieving in lessons such as RE.

Raising aspirations amongst pupils is a key focus at the school. In line with the vision, pupils are encouraged to do their best to make the world a better place and are praised for effort as well as achievement. Parents appreciate this and say that, at parents' evenings, staff celebrate how pupils are flourishing socially and emotionally, and not purely academically. Pupils say that lessons 'make us laugh' but recognise that they are encouraged to work hard and do their best 'so we have all the information we need when we are grown up'.

The vision is most clearly demonstrated in the positive relationships at the school. Pupils behave well and older children support and look after the younger pupils. Pupils say that they learn 'to be a community' when they are in school so that they know how to do this when they are older. They appreciate the school's friendship bench and a 'Chatter That Matters' session where they can talk about personal issues with staff in a safe space. Pupils say that these 'chats' offer them relief 'because they allow you to express your feelings rather than thinking about things in class.' Pupils are passionate about raising money for others and hold cake sales and sponsored events. There are opportunities for pupils to initiate this fundraising and pupils say that it makes them think about what they have in life compared to others. This work is both local, such as supporting Devizes food bank, and global; the school supports two children in Sudan. Pupils listen to each other respectfully and are resolute in their appreciation that people have different views and have a right to express them. This is promoted by the rector who encourages pupils to ask him anything of which they are unsure. Incidents of poor behaviour or disrespect are very rare.

RE is well planned and resourced. Lessons are used as a platform for pupils to formulate their own points of view on faith, as well as broader questions of daily life. Pupils learn about a range of religions as well as Christianity and say that they have learnt the importance of respect and understanding. Staff encourage pupils to think about big

questions and the core values that they could use to support their answers, for example, an RE lesson asked pupils to consider what was meant by the word 'commitment'. Pupils were able to discuss commitment in terms of the school's core value of perseverance.

Pupils experience a variety of worship styles and enjoy Open the Book sessions and worships led by the rector. They are encouraged to develop their individual spirituality in times of reflection and can offer prayer throughout the day. Pupils are encouraged to write personal prayers which can then be hung on a wooden tree in the centre of the school. Prayers written on themes being explored in worship are placed in a basket next to the worship table in the school hall. Pupils enjoy services in church and opportunities to engage in and evaluate worship.

Headteacher	Carol Talbot
Inspector's name and number	Susan Bowen 916