

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Forest and Sandridge Church of England Primary School			
Address	Cranesbill Road, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 7GN		
Date of inspection	17 October 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA The White Horse Federation
Diocese	Salisbury	URN	143500

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	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent

School context

Forest and Sandridge is a primary school with 412 pupils on roll and 49 in the pre-school. 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. The school became an academy in December 2016 and migrated to the White Horse Federation in August 2018.

The school's Christian vision

Nurture, Grow, Flourish

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord, ... ‘plans to give you hope and a future.’”
Jeremiah 29:11

Key findings

- The deeply Christian vision and associated values are securely embedded across all aspects of school life and are clearly articulated by all members of the school community.
- The vision to nurture, grow and flourish results in a strong sense of family, modelled by senior leaders. Vulnerable pupils are nurtured very well, with ongoing bespoke support.
- Collective worship is profoundly at the core of this school. Prayer and reflection areas are very well embedded and ever-evolving, nurturing the spiritual journeys of all.
- The seamless partnership between church and school ensures that pupils and adults see this as one entity.
- Religious education (RE) has been on an exciting journey in a short space of time, culminating in pupils having an ever-deepening understanding of their own beliefs and those of others.

Areas for development

- Deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of living world faiths to nurture and progress their spiritual development.
- Personalise pupils' awareness of the global dimension of Christianity, including their knowledge of St Andrew, to whom their parish church is dedicated.

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

Every child and adult is loved, nurtured and cared for, respected and valued as an individual. This enables all to grow and flourish. This is because the school's deeply Christian vision of God's promise of a plan and hope for the future is exceptionally well-embedded. It underpins all school policy and practice and is articulated readily and eagerly by all. Pupils and adults are happy to share the story of this school. God's continuing faithfulness to each generation is proudly displayed and acknowledged, especially following the school's doubling in size and move to its current site. Compassion, courage, humility and respect are hallmarks of the curriculum and undergird Forest and Sandridge's way of life. Even the newest members of staff cite the 'warmth that fills the school' which feels like home. They praise the welcoming and inclusive family it is a privilege to be part of, echoed by pupils and their parents. Exemplary relationships exist with the church, the diocese and the trust, with all working closely together and upholding core Christian values. Strong partnerships result in this school leading strategically on Christian distinctiveness across the trust, including collective worship and RE. Effective monitoring by governors is enabling all to flourish within a committed, supportive and uplifting Christian ethos.

A shared understanding of spiritual development is very much part of Forest and Sandridge's approach to learning and life. Pupils' spirituality class books express why this school benefits from having Christian values. Pupils share the importance of Bible stories as well as key festivals throughout the Christian year. Given that many pupils with complex needs require extra guidance, the time devoted to supporting any vulnerable pupils is significant. Pupils here are nurtured very well, with ongoing bespoke support. As the pupils themselves put it, dedicated staff and classrooms offer 'help with a little bit of extra nurture'. Pupils say that worship helps them to use their values every day, confirming that their special Bible verse from Jeremiah is 'everywhere'. Indeed, the school's vision is central to every decision which leaders take, for example when working closely with parents and outside agencies. This makes a difference for pupils so they flourish and achieve academically and in other ways too. Many flourish because of the exceptional outdoor learning activities which creatively support learning and achievement. For example, planting bulbs as part of Melksham in Bloom was a real embodiment of what it means to nurture, grow and flourish. All groups of pupils are successfully enabled to be hopeful, make good progress and to be the best version of themselves as God intended.

Spurred on by their values, pupils are passionate charity fundraisers and share hope beyond the school. For example, they are immensely excited by the difference they can make to children in the Philippines by providing them with shoes they have grown out of.

There is a real sense of calm and care here in this special place. Parents affirm this is because the school's vision infiltrates all areas of school life and spirituality goes side by side with Christianity. Pupils are valued and celebrated for 'being good at the little things'. Fresh starts, within a spirit of positivity and hope, offer support to any pupils. Parents are impressed by how incredibly knowledgeable, inclusive and open the school is, attributing this to the huge amount of respect in the school. This extends to celebrating difference and doing things differently, such as annual international days which have a focus on diverse cultures. Pupils say they feel safe when they see the sign of God's promise in the rainbow over the school. They know that God is with them in this inclusive and caring Christian community.

Meaningful collective worship is well-embedded and has a strong focus on the school's vision and values, prayer and reflection. This is because the leadership is Christ-centred and totally committed to the school's vision. The seamless partnership between church and school, through the work of the vicar and children and families coordinator, is very evident. This means pupils think of 'our church' and school as one. 'Messy Church', held in school, is one of the largest worshipping communities in Melksham. Key times of reflection in the church year are celebrated together. These include the stations of the cross in Lent and stations of the nativity in Advent, which are well established. Pupils who are members of the prayer council are proud of their involvement, writing prayers and leading worship as well as providing their viewpoints. Their evaluations pinpoint how to do things differently as a result of worship, for example, showing compassion and helping one another to be humble, or 'changing the way I handle my arguments'. Pupils explain the symbolism of Christian belief and tradition very well. This includes the Trinity, Ascension tide, when 'Jesus went up to heaven and left his spirit' as well as the Eucharist. Personalising pupils' awareness of the global dimension of Christianity is ongoing. This includes pupils'

knowledge of St Andrew, to whom their parish church is dedicated.

There is a great commitment to RE at Forest and Sandridge, which has resulted in recently achieving their Gold Religious Education Quality Mark (REQM) award. Much has been achieved in a short space of time on RE's exciting journey towards its judgement as being excellent. The well qualified RE subject leader ensures assessment structures are in place. Big questions are asked and answered. For example Year 5 pupils ask, 'Can you be a Christian and a scientist?' Pupils have a deep understanding of the importance of respecting the beliefs of others. They say, 'It's important as you might have a friend or partner and not want to do the wrong things around them.' Extending their knowledge of living world faiths, as a result of systematic planning, is ongoing. RE reflects, extends and affirms the school's vision and values, and there is a clear action plan in place, going forward.

The final word rests with a member of staff who affirms that, 'Deeply rooted in our school is the belief and understanding that everyone can flourish, no matter what their starting points are.'



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Accurate monitoring and evaluation of RE confirms the high quality of teaching and learning in RE, which is consistently very good and sometimes excellent. The RE subject leader shows exceptional knowledge of the context and progress in RE across the school. All groups of pupils flourish in RE, including those who are vulnerable. Pupils enjoy RE and make good progress in line with other core subjects, with some pupils achieving exceptionally well in their RE.

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Inspector's name and number	Lizzie McWhirter 244