

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School			
Address	15-19 North Street Barking IG11 8AS		
Date of inspection	23 January 2020	Status of school	Academy inspected as voluntary aided Genesis Education Trust
Diocese	Chelmsford	URN	144035
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	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent
School context			
<p>St Margaret's is a primary school with 385 pupils on roll. The largest groups of pupils are of Black African and Black Caribbean heritages. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportions of pupils considered to be disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are below national averages. The school experienced a period of considerable turbulence in 2018. The headteacher and majority of teaching staff are new to post since then.</p>			
The school's Christian vision			
<p>Training children to be confident, independent learners with enquiring minds, a life-long love of learning and an approach to life that reflects core biblical values and principles. Proverbs 22:6</p>			
Key findings			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's Christian vision and associated values are central to its life. They are reflected in the shared ambition of all staff to raise the aspirations of pupils, training them academically, pastorally and spiritually for the future, so that each one can truly flourish. The vision is embraced by all stakeholders and pupils readily relate both the vision and values to their biblical foundation. • Senior leaders exemplify the vision in action. It underpins their decision making and planning. In order to fulfil the vision, they have formed an effective staff team who have successfully raised pupil outcomes over the past two years. Partnerships with local schools are strong but those with the parish church are less well developed. • In accordance with its biblical values the school welcomes all children. Expertise has been developed in enabling pupils who experience barriers to their learning, including mental health, to succeed. • Prayer is central to school life. A spirituality day' resulted in further development of innovative spaces for pupils to engage in prayer. Many pupils engage in prayer regularly. • Collective worship is a time of both vibrant celebration and reverent reflection in which pupils are challenged to put their vision and values into action, in school and beyond. At present strategies to encourage pupils to continue to reflect on worship themes are not fully developed. • Pupils look forward to religious education (RE) lessons. Excellent curriculum plans and the creativity of teachers ensure that lessons not only capture the pupils' interest but also challenge them to reflect on their behaviour and attitudes, for example, in instigating social action projects. 			
Areas for development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen partnership working with the local church in order to broaden pupils' appreciation of Anglican traditions and contribute to the further development of collective worship and RE. • Extend the impact of collective worship further, creating opportunities for the themes explored within worship to overflow into school life and beyond. 			

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

The outworking of the Christian vision is clearly seen across school life. Leaders ensure that all aspects of the vision statement are deeply understood and relevant to stakeholders and that they understand its biblical and theological foundation. Consequently, pupils speak with absolute certainty of the vision's impact on their behaviour, relationships and attitudes, quoting Proverbs 22:6 in the process. Leaders consistently draw strength from the vision. It has guided them through significant challenges and the ensuing difficult decisions. Throughout this period, they have worked tirelessly and innovatively to create the very best opportunities for every pupil to flourish, fully aware of the hardships some families face.

A rich and broad curriculum has been created in partnership with other Trust schools. This is complemented by a range of class visits and visitors, giving pupils opportunities to learn through first-hand experiences. For example, pupils in one class interviewed a teacher from a Muslim background at the start of a RE unit on Islam. Classrooms and shared areas include a wealth of attractive and interesting displays covering all curriculum areas. As an example of exemplary practice, wherever appropriate, displays include Bible passages which provoke consideration of how the subject matter relates to Christian beliefs. In order to embed and enhance the vision, leaders relentlessly focus on securing high quality teaching throughout the school, thereby ensuring that pupils, including the most vulnerable, make at least good, and often accelerated progress from their various starting points. Consequently, attainment is now above national averages, with clear indications that this improving trajectory is set to continue. School leadership ensures continuing development. For example, governors and senior leaders have firm plans in place to implement the relationships and sex education curriculum to meet legal requirements from September 2020.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate there is a robust review cycle to secure ongoing improvement. Each priority is considered at local governing body meetings. However, governor monitoring visits are not sufficiently aligned to the plan. Nevertheless, governors know their school well and provide constructive challenge as well as support to senior leaders.

There is an exemplary approach to inclusion. Leaders recognise that they are serving an increasingly diverse community but retain their stated focus, that every pupil is adored and valued by a loving God. Pupils and parents recognise the importance of studying the major world religions within RE in order to develop understanding and respect for those of a different faith and none. Relationships throughout the school are strong and founded on the school's Christian values. Parents describe how staff exemplify the school's vision and values, 'they walk the walk'. Pupils are polite, respectful and confident when speaking to adults. Attitudes to learning in the classroom are excellent, strongly reflecting the high expectations and consistent strategies employed by all adults. Democratic processes are employed for pupils to elect their peers to a wide range of responsibilities. These enable them to develop leadership skills and contribute in a meaningful way to the school's future development.

The school supports a wide range of local, national and international charities, including a partner school in Zambia. The school has an annual 'community week', during which each year group identifies and takes part in a social action project. Pupils describe how this helps them to learn that they can be 'agents of change' in their local area. They see this and their charitable giving as putting their Christian values in action. Leaders have identified strengthening links with the parish church as a priority. Although there is currently no vicar in situ the headteacher has seized the opportunity to host the placement of a curate with a focus on contributing to the evaluation, planning and leadership of worship. The school makes full use of visits by the diocesan link adviser and staff take advantage of training and leadership events provided by the diocese. Initially St Margaret's was the recipient of much appreciated support from the other schools in the MAT. It is now a significant provider of expertise, particularly sharing its excellent approaches in RE. Members of staff, including the headteacher, are also providing advice and training for other schools within the local area and beyond.

Collective worship is integral to the life of the school. Pupils look forward to starting their school day together and there is a sense of expectation and energy from the moment they enter the hall. Biblical teaching and a focus on the person of Jesus are central and opportunities are taken by both those leading worship and by the pupils to relate the theme to the school's vision and values. Singing includes contemporary worship songs which pupils and staff engage with enthusiastically. The pupil worship council contribute regularly to evaluation and planning. Members lead worship weekly. Strategies to prompt pupils to continue to reflect on key worship themes in classroom or at home are limited.

Prayer and reflection are strengths, contributing to a highly developed shared understanding of spirituality. Pupils pray naturally and spontaneously, in worship, in class and in the many attractive areas around the school set aside

for that purpose. These were further developed following a 'spirituality day' in the Autumn. Stimuli are provided which encourages pupils to praise God, say sorry to him or to pray for the world and people in need. In the prayer room one pupil was overheard reading a psalm to her friend. They then proceeded to respond in prayer together. Pupils are so enthusiastic to enter the playground prayer cabin that numbers have to be limited.

The subject leader provides strong practical support for staff in delivering RE. This has been particularly effective in the coaching of teachers new to the school. Expertise at St Margaret's has been drawn on to shape the shared the RE curriculum within the MAT. Consequently, it not only meets statutory requirements, but also contains innovative strategies for teachers to draw on. The wide range of approaches ensures high levels of pupil enjoyment, interest and engagement. Pupils share their ideas with openness and respect for one another's views. Parents report that their children often ask them challenging questions following RE lessons. Systems of assessment are well-established and enable teachers to plan effectively to meet pupils' needs. Marking in pupils' workbooks endorses success and frequently includes a further challenge which encourages a deeper response from pupils.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Monitoring records and pupil workbooks indicate that all teaching and learning is at least good. RE teaching effectively develops pupils' critical thinking and reflection. Pupils work well both collaboratively and individually. They make good and often accelerated progress. Attainment is at least in line with the high outcomes achieved by pupils in other subjects. Consequently, pupils flourish academically in RE, including those with additional needs.

Headteacher	David Huntingford
Inspector's name and number	Graham Lancaster (713)