

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Sutton Church of England Infant School	
Address	Denise Close, Sutton, Norwich, NR12 9QP
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
<p>With friendship, trust and kindness we fly!</p> <p>Love your neighbour as yourself. Mark 12:31</p> <p>Our federation is a family, strengthened by our collaboration and relationships. By showing friendship, trust and kindness we flourish together and as individuals. The Swallowtail butterfly represents our unique location and the high aspirations we have for all pupils, allowing them to 'fly' and live 'life in all its fullness'.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the vision is seen and felt across the life of the school, particularly through the strong relationships between adults and pupils. The Bible story which underpins the vision is also well known but how it is linked to the vision itself are not clear to all. • Spiritual development is a strength. There is a shared understanding of its meaning and importance in enabling pupils and adults to flourish. • Collective worship is recognised as a special time of the day when staff and pupils gather together to reflect and pray. Pupils enthusiastically take part in a range of ways. However, opportunities for them to independently plan and lead worship are not developed. • The ambitious curriculum supports pupils to learn, explore their gifts and talents, and 'fly'. Leaders take bold financial decisions to ensure that resources meet the needs of pupils and the wider community to enable this to happen. • Religious education (RE) is creatively planned so that pupils learn about Christianity, a range of world faiths and other worldviews in different ways. They understand why this is important and respect the different views of others. However, a broader understanding of diversity is less well developed.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed an understanding of the Bible verses which underpin the vision. This is to ensure links between the Bible story and vision itself are made more explicit and accessible to all. • Develop leadership opportunities for pupils to independently plan, lead and evaluate collective worship. • Broaden the scope of pupils' experiences of difference so that they have a greater understanding of the diversity of the world they live in.

Inspection findings

Sutton VC Infants is a happy school which celebrates its small size and utilises this to promote its vision for all to 'fly.' There is a culture in place of seeking to improve and provide the best for the whole community. The three values of friendship, trust and kindness are at the heart of all the school's activities. Working as part of a federation of three schools which share the same vision and values, leaders and staff work between them for the benefit of all. Staff, pupils and their families know the values well and can say how they make a difference to their lives. Parents talk of the kindness shown to them, particularly in times of challenge. They value that their children feel safe and nurtured. In some cases, this is transformational. The story of the paralysed man, chosen by the school as its 'special Bible story', is also well known and significant to the community. Pupils know that it contains all three values and that they can look to it as an example of how to be. The associated Bible verse, 'to love your neighbour as yourself,' is less well known and its link in underpinning the vision is not clear to all.

The outworking of the vision is characterised by strong relationships based on trust and friendship. The school is well thought of by parents who choose to send their children there because of the inclusive and welcoming ethos, and the wider community. Staff work collaboratively. Like the Bible story, they trust in the friendship of their colleagues to support them in achieving their best for the pupils in their care. They appreciate that their wellbeing and workload is a priority and that adjustments can be made for them to flourish. Also that leaders know and work to their strengths, providing opportunities for them to develop professionally. This includes 'growing' church school leaders for the future through attendance on national qualifications. Staff work across the three federation schools so that resources, skills and expertise are shared. They welcome the benefits this brings, seeing themselves as part of a bigger family working together on the same vision. Governors are actively involved in the school. They work with leaders to ensure the vision impacts on all the school does and make bold decisions in line with it. For example, the school took on the running of the local preschool so that this important provision was not lost to the village.

The spiritual development of adults and pupils is a strength. There is a clear, shared understanding of what spirituality means which is age appropriate and accessible to all. Linked to the vision, pupils talk about how it helps them 'trust themselves and be stronger.' Leaders understand the importance of developing spirituality as part of the development of the whole child. They intentionally plan learning opportunities which support this. These are threaded across the curriculum and include working in the outdoor woodland forest school area where pupils experience 'awe and wonder' in nature. Links are made with each subject area and times for prayer and reflection are incorporated into lessons. Reflection areas in classes are well used for times of quietness during the busy day. These support pupils' mental health and wellbeing and help build a positive attitude to life.

Collective worship is a special time in the day when pupils and adults look forward to gathering together. This enhances their sense of community. All staff have the opportunity to lead worship over a term. The resource 'Simply Collective Worship' enables them to confidently deliver worship using a consistent framework. Pupils readily take part through bringing in candles and a Bible at the beginning and leading the welcoming prayers. They know God as three people through symbolically lighting the three candles. During worship, they are invited to reflect on, then share their ideas on the theme with each other. This contributes to their spiritual development as they learn to articulate their thoughts and develop their own worldviews. They sing enthusiastically and are encouraged to move spontaneously to the music. In this way they understand worship as a joyful experience.

Pupils are invited to come up to lead their own prayers. These reflect their thankfulness as well as their concerns, showing their understanding that God is 'interested in all they do.' Although pupils are actively engaged in collective worship, opportunities for them to independently plan and lead worship are not developed. Based on Anglican traditions, pupils know that the changing colours of the worship tablecloth denotes the changes in the church seasons. Regular worship led by local clergy and ministers from other denominations mean that pupils understand that Christians worship in different ways. Building links with the wider community, Friday Family Worship is treasured by families who attend to celebrate what their children and the school have achieved that week.

Ambitious for pupils to 'fly,' the curriculum is planned that so they can learn creatively. Pupils in early years benefit from joining the school at three years old and remaining in the same class until the end of their reception year. This means transitions are smooth and effective. Working collaboratively with the other schools in the federation maximises opportunities for enrichment opportunities such as trips and visits. These include Norwich Cathedral to strengthen pupils understanding of Christianity. Based on the vision, the behaviour policy is characterised by restoring relationships and forgiveness. Pupils trust that staff will help them on the rare occasions when things go wrong. As a result, the learning environment is calm and purposeful. Learning about significant people from a range of cultures helps pupils understand difference and diversity. However, this awareness is not fully embedded. Leaders are mindful of preparing pupils for life in a diverse society. To support this, they have introduced a curriculum resource to enrich pupils' understanding of diversity through literature. By raising money for charities, pupils appreciate how they can make a positive difference to the lives of others.

Pupils enjoy RE. They look forward to learning about Christianity and a range of world faiths because it is an important way to understand and respect the views of others. Opportunities to discuss big questions challenge their thinking and further supports the development of their own worldviews. Assessments enable staff and pupils to know how well they are doing. Peer marking increases their understanding of what they are learning. Monitoring by leaders ensures that there is consistency in practice and builds staff confidence and skills in teaching RE. Links with the Diocese of Norwich are strong and beneficial. They provide training to further support this.

Information			
School	Sutton Church of England Infant School	Inspection date	13 July 2023
URN	121058	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Norwich	Pupils on roll	60
Executive headteacher	Natalie Butcher		
Chair of Governors	Sheila Watts		
Inspector	Rachel Beeson	No.	952