

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ottershaw Christ Church C of E Infant School			
Address	Fletcher Close, Ottershaw, Surrey, KT16 0JT		
Date of inspection	10 December 2019	Status of school	Primary academy inspected as VC The Good Shepherd Trust
Diocese	Guildford	URN	146420

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 Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent

School context

Ottershaw Christ Church is an Infant and Nursery school with 194 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. 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 below national averages. Since the previous inspection, the school has become part of the Good Shepherd Multi Academy Schools' Trust (March 2019).

The school's Christian vision

We are excited by Jesus' invitation to 'live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) and wish to create a loving community where, by serving God, excellence is pursued and individual achievement is celebrated, so that all children are inspired and empowered to flourish as successful adults.

Key findings

- The school has a robustly developed Christian vision, firmly underpinned by a biblical narrative and clearly understood values. This gives the school a strong sense of purpose and drives everything it does although the most recent, condensed, articulation of the vision has not as yet been shared explicitly with the wider community.
- Leaders live out the vision, they are highly reflective practitioners who consistently model the behaviour and attitudes they wish to foster.
- Pupils show extreme care and compassion for others and have a strongly developed sense of injustice which drives them to action.
- Collective worship is a strength of the school. Pupils are intimately involved in the planning, leading and evaluation cycle, especially in class worship, which deepens pupils' spirituality. Prayer and reflection are integral to school life.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about Religious Education (RE). It gives them the opportunity to ask big questions and reflect on issues. However, knowledge of other faiths is less well developed.

Areas for development

- Further develop the whole school community's knowledge and understanding of the school's distinctive Christian vision so that the most recent articulation is fully embedded in the wider community.
- Further develop the RE curriculum to ensure that all pupils gain a thorough knowledge of other faiths, as well as Christianity, to prepare them for life in multicultural Britain.

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

It is immediately clear when you enter Ottershaw Infant school that leaders live out their distinctive Christian vision in a most authentic way. Their excitement about Jesus' invitation to 'live life in all its fullness' is tangible and the loving community which has been created is truly exceptional. Excellence is pursued in all areas of school life and leaders are constantly reflecting on how things can be made even better. The annual cycle of review with parents, pupils, staff and governors is so embedded that it ensures the whole life of the school is constantly refreshed, adjustments made, and new initiatives started. New staff quickly feel part of the community and talk about how well they are supported by leaders, stating emphatically that leaders consistently model the values of the school.

Although the most recent articulation of the vision is not as yet shared by the whole community, all believe passionately that each child is unique and of immense value. This inspires them to work together as a team to ensure that all reach their full potential. They share their vision to live life in all its fullness with the Good Shepherd Trust which they joined recently, and leaders are involved in supporting other trust schools. Extremely strong links and training undertaken with the local diocese ensure that staff and governors have a deep understanding of what it is to be a church school. Partnership with the local church is central to every part of school life. The local vicar is a key member of the extremely effective governing body and is instrumental in embedding the Christian narrative which underpins the vision. She and her church staff team are greatly involved in the life of the school, leading and supporting the planning of worship, running the Noah's Ark club and providing key support for leaders. Godly Play and Messy Church services at the church provide strong links with the school. Pupils know that they are part of the local church but also have a wider understanding, especially when providing art work for Guildford Cathedral over the Christmas period.

A shared understanding of spirituality is deeply embedded in the school and teachers ensure that spiritual aspects are included in all their planning. Timetables have been adjusted to provide special daily 'In Time' sessions for all classes after lunch and even the youngest pupils make excellent use of these. Each class develops their own prayer space, creating prompts such as 'prayer gems'. Pupils clearly take ownership of this, one child confidently describing their 'thoughtful place' and its importance to everyone. This calm start to the afternoon session for the whole school is truly inspirational.

Leaders, true to their vision of pursuing excellence, quickly identify any weaknesses in provision and take swift action to address them. Innovative mastery approaches, alongside ensuring that learning is focused on developing the whole child, result in successful outcomes for all. High expectations are integral to the vision of the school.

The values which underpin the vision are deeply embedded in the community, pupils eloquently explain what the individual values mean and receive awards for living them out. Both pupils and parents appreciate this immensely and give many examples of how this influences their lives at school and at home. There are powerful examples of how staff have gone 'the extra mile' in times of difficulty. Parents state forcefully 'this school is special, they look after our children in a holistic way, it's not just about the learning'.

Pupils are articulate advocates of change, passionately challenging injustice and inequality. Leaders invite charities to speak in assemblies about such issues. After one of these visits pupils felt so strongly about the issue that they wrote letters of concern to deliver personally to an international soft drinks company, one child explaining forcefully: 'we're telling them to stop using plastics'.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils, staff, governors and parents are united in their belief that 'this is the Ottershaw way', an example of how the school's vision and values are the glue holding everything together and how it epitomises how people treat each other. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the positive behaviour system in their classes which encourages this. An extremely strong focus on mental health and well-being is illustrated by the 'Healthy Mind Platter' which ensures that exercise, opportunities to express concerns and time for quiet reflection are just as important for well-being as eating a healthy diet.

Everyone in the community is treated with great dignity and respect. A leader speaks passionately about children being treated with the same respect as adults and how this is explicitly evident in everyone's language. Pupils who have joined the school from other schools express how much happier they are at Ottershaw. There is a strong sense that everyone is greatly valued. Leaders make bold ethical decisions, in line with the vision, to ensure that vulnerable pupils are embraced by the community, taking compassionate decisions to include all, whatever the cost.

Collective worship is a particular strength of the school. Everyone in the community really appreciates collective worship when all gather together, staff stating that they greatly value these times. Pupils are intimately involved in the planning, leading and evaluation cycle, especially in class worship, which deepens pupils' spirituality. Powerful examples are given of how all pupils are consulted through their school council representatives about the content of worship and how this is used to plan the next term.

RE is taught extremely well and pupils gain an age appropriate understanding of Christianity through frequent Godly Play sessions. All staff are expert at delivering these sessions and pupils are exceptionally well engaged throughout, exploring themes in a thoughtful way and explaining their thinking with calm confidence. The Diocesan Godly Play Resource base at Christ Church is used extensively by the school. Staff talk enthusiastically about participating in sessions for adults. These have enabled them to be completely immersed in bible stories and provided deep insights into their own spirituality and the way they deliver these sessions for children. The RE leader is a trainer for Godly Play and frequently supports other schools. However, pupils' understanding of other religions is less well developed.

No-one is left behind at Ottershaw Infants, all take part in exceptional expressions of Christian worship with calm confidence and real presence. The youngest children express their faith in simple but profound terms, proud to be part of a genuinely loving community where all flourish and are learning to live life in all its fullness.

Headteacher	Jo Hastings
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