

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Stonham Aspal Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	The Street, Stonham Aspal, IP14 6AF
School vision	
<p>As a school community our aspiration is to develop confident learners with good Christian values, who are well equipped to enter the next phase of their educational journey. ‘Believe and Achieve’ is embedded within the school’s practice and is integral to ensuring positive outcomes for our pupils.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Everything is possible for the one who believes.’ Mark 9:23</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders know their community well and consequently have developed a Christian vision that is relevant and meets their specific needs. It is lived out through well embedded values so that pupils and adults thrive. • The breadth of the full curriculum, including extracurricular activities that are offered, presents pupils with the opportunity to discover their strengths. • This school is greatly enriched by its strong partnerships with the local church and community. These especially enhance collective worship, providing a meaningful context for prayer and developing a greater understanding of Bible stories. • People are treated well in this safe, caring environment which enables staff and pupils to learn, work and flourish together. • Religious education (RE) is well led, ensuring a comprehensive approach to planning and assessment. This ensures that pupils are challenged effectively in their learning and it supports their progress. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the understanding of spirituality, so it is an intrinsic part of the curriculum and further develops the spiritual growth of pupils and adults. • Develop pupils’ ability to identify and explore global injustice. This is so they understand that they can make a positive difference as agents of change. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>The Christian vision creates a culture where ‘Believe and Achieve’ is the reality at Stonham Aspal Primary School. Leaders know their school well and recognise that their biblical foundation extends from its roots in the gospel of Mark. It is also driven by the school’s core values that Jesus taught.</p>	

These core Christian values, chosen by the school, are kindness, patience, courage, wisdom, peace and respect. They are well understood by the staff and pupils. The Bible verse 'Everything is possible for one who believes', encourages pupils to also believe in themselves and to persevere. School leaders review policies and plan actions, ensuring that the vision underpins their decisions. They report back to the full governing body after regular and frequent school monitoring. This enables leaders to reflect upon and evaluate practice which leads to further improvement as a Church school. Most recently, this has included purchasing new collective worship resources. The diocese supports the school leaders in their development. They have provided training on many aspects, such as RE, collective worship and statutory inspections.

The school's curriculum is shaped by the school's vision, with the intention that it will deliver an education that is broad and outward looking. This gives a breadth of learning experiences and opportunities within and beyond the classroom. It inspires pupils, by ensuring that 'Believe and Achieve' is woven through their learning and provides opportunities for pupils of all abilities to succeed. Learning is effectively designed to meet the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff know their pupils well and how best to support each individual. For example, some of those pupils with SEND prepare for new concepts through pre-teaching sessions. This enables them to be ready to access class lessons. Pupils thrive by reinforcing their learning collaboratively within class. Vulnerable pupils with anxiety are well-supported with highly trained staff. Parents rightly recognise the difference this makes to their children in being able to successfully integrate into day-to-day school life.

Spirituality is a significant feature of worship. Leaders have established an understanding of it. Staff and pupils explored prayer for a week in November which identified the value of peaceful reflection. Collective worship and RE deliberately encourage pupils to explore spirituality. However, the school's approach to spirituality is under-developed. Planned opportunities for spiritual development are not included in the full curriculum.

Collective worship is a joyful time for the school to come together. It is when they gain further understanding of the school's Christian vision, values and to learn from other teachings of Jesus. It is enriched by local church communities. The school celebrates key festivals in the local church, which further enhances the provision of collective worship. Pupils enjoy the music that plays as they walk in and out of worship and recognise this as an opportunity for quiet reflection. They are inspired to lead worship. Consequently, many pupils are part of the worship team which plans and delivers worship every fortnight. Pupils benefit from this as they are actively involved, which also builds their confidence. Worship is structured and includes elements of Anglican tradition. Staff find collective worship is a peaceful time, which prepares them well for the rest of the school day. Prayer is invitational and reflective. It often includes prayers written by pupils. It occasionally includes opportunities for their own spontaneous prayers. Once a week, staff and pupils celebrate those who have embodied the school's Christian values. This is a joyful moment when the school sees their vision as a lived reality.

Relationships are caring. The core Christian value of respect is so effectively embedded that it ensures pupils support one another with a deep sense of kindness. Staff speak of the school's ethos as being like that of a family, where everyone is included. There are very effective strategies in place to support pupils if their behaviour falls below the expected standard. Staff ensure that pupils have the vocabulary to explain how they are feeling. They are well-trained to provide what best suits the emotional needs of a child. This nurturing approach supports pupils to develop resilience and self-belief, so that they can strive for success. Staff unconsciously model how to care for one another through the strong bond that exists between them. Pupils also learn to disagree well and accept differing opinions to their own, through debates and discussions in class. Recently the school has embarked upon a programme that enables pupils to learn about diversity. This is leading to pupils

recognising, accepting and celebrating difference.

This school fosters a culture that promotes a sense of responsibility in its pupils. The curriculum gives pupils knowledge and understanding of justice and caring for our natural world. It also teaches pupils about key historical and inspirational people who have advocated for social change. This has contributed to pupils writing to the school's catering company to raise concerns about sustainability. It has led to a meaningful change, for example, reduced use of non-recyclable pots. The school council provides a platform for pupils to discuss fundraising and support for charities that are the focus in the media. Leaders recognise the need to further enable pupils to apply their understanding and knowledge. This is so that they can become independent agents for change.

Pupils rightly acknowledge that RE is an important subject. It encourages them to explore deeper questions about beliefs and how religions are diversely lived. School leaders value the subject and ensure it is well-resourced. A sequenced, balanced programme provides a good knowledge of a wide range of faiths and worldviews. In addition, RE days focus upon significant festivals within the Christian calendar. This adds further insight into the religion. Staff receive effective training from the very skilled subject leader, so they confidently engage and enthuse their classes. Pupils' curiosity is further developed through the use of big questions. Consequently, pupils understand the subject's importance in a multicultural world. Assessment systems are used that inform next steps for pupils. As a result of quality teaching and assessment, pupils across the school make good progress in RE.

The inspection findings indicate that Stonham Aspal Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	7 March 2024	URN	124772
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	190
Diocese	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Ben Hemmings		
Chair	Helena Tiernay		
Inspector	Christina Galletly	No.	975