

# Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Speen Church of England Voluntary Aided School			
Address	Flowers Bottom Lane, Speen, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 0SX		
Date of inspection	10 December 2019	Status of school	Voluntary aided infant
Diocese	<b>Oxford</b>	URN	110468

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
	<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

## School context

Speen is an infant school with 18 pupils on roll. 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The school has an on-site pre-school with nine pupils on roll. The executive headteacher has been in post since September 2018.

## The school's Christian vision

### Seek, Believe, Achieve

May our roots go down deep into the soil of God's love and make us strong (Ephesians 3:17)  
Our vision is to be a happy, vibrant and caring school with deep roots in the Christian faith, so all grow and flourish (spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally).

## Key findings

- Leadership of the school is incisive and inspirational. Governors have supported the headteacher so that the school's Christian vision drives every aspect of the school's work. Improvement has been rapid and links with the local community have been renewed. These are now becoming a strength of the school.
- The executive headteacher and the staff of this small Church school know every pupil extremely well and have high expectations for all. They offer individual care and learning so that every child truly flourishes spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.
- Religious education (RE) is a strength of the school. It is imaginatively taught so that pupils have an excellent understanding of the main themes within Christianity and how these are reflected in teachings within Islam and Judaism.
- Pupils gladly meet in collective worship to celebrate their faith through song and prayer. It inspires them to action, particularly in the local community.
- The vibrant learning environment challenges pupils to make links between their learning, their behaviour and the school's Christian vision and values. These are not yet embedded enough to help pupils articulate their own spiritual journey.

## Areas for development

- Further develop meaningful partnerships so that Speen is increasingly seen as not only central to the life of the local community but also a beacon of excellent practice.
- Explore what courageous advocacy means within the context of an infant school so that pupils are empowered to challenge injustice and inequality within a broader perspective.
- Identify how pupils can access increasingly deeper experiences across the curriculum so that they can talk about their own spiritual journey.

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**

Speen school is a joyous place that lives out its vision in every way. Leaders are determined to turn the challenges of being such a small school into opportunities for growth. Teachers provide a highly personalised education where pupils flourish spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally. Everyone feels cherished at Speen. This is because leaders have taken the concept of 'family' and put it at the heart of its work. All stakeholders know and understand the biblical roots of the school's vision and how it is reflected in their emblem of a tree. It is prominent within the school so that even the youngest pupils articulate the deeper meaning of 'Seek, Believe, Achieve'. A reduction in the number of values over the last year has ensured that the core values play a major role in teaching and learning. Children speak of how the Christian values make a difference to the life of the school. 'People follow them and it makes school a much better place', explained a Year 2 child. This is because staff have explored how each of these values might look different as the pupils move through the school.

Governors know the school well and are determined that their actions, based on the school's Christian vision, will enable the school to thrive. Governors were determined that the school's Christian vision would be central to the recruitment of a new executive headteacher. Her appointment has ensured that the school's Christian vision is now at the heart of its work. Leaders have reviewed policies ensuring that each one is driven by the school vision. This is very evident in the behaviour policy which has forgiveness at its heart and is centred on the school's values. Consequently, behaviour throughout the school is very good. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the school as a Church school is robust. This is because governors personally seek the views of every child each year and listen carefully to staff and parents. They identify in every governing body meeting how the school's Christian vision is having an impact. They do not identify what the next steps might be. Attendance is carefully monitored and is in line with national expectations. Governors have ensured that the areas for development from the last inspection have been addressed. In this way, the school's vision strategically drives both policy and practice.

Leaders are passionate about the need to ensure that pupils have a diverse education, embodied in the equality policy. Pupils understand the need to treat others with dignity and respect. This is because curriculum topics, visits and visitors are carefully planned so that they reflect the diversity of the wider world. The school raises funds for a wealth of charities. These are too wide-ranging for the pupils to be able to see how they can make a difference beyond a sense of compassion. A renewed focus with their link school, Agape, in India is broadening pupils' horizons even further. Here they are beginning to understand how they might play their part in challenging injustice because pupils can make links with their own experiences.

All pupils achieve well at Speen and make good progress from their starting points. This is because they are truly nurtured as individuals by every member of staff. Any gaps in their understanding are quickly identified and addressed so that attainment is high for everyone. The school uses regular theme weeks to develop pupils' learning in greater depth. These are built around pupils' interests and needs so that they are excited about their learning. Themes are linked to wide-ranging visits out of school so that even though the school is small, it continually broadens pupils' experiences. The school has an effective spirituality policy which identifies many areas where pupils and adults might flourish spiritually. The school places high importance on this aspect of the curriculum. A termly spiritual trail for all pupils helps them to put their learning within the context of the school's vision and values. However, these experiences do not build on previous learning. This is because staff have not explored the concept of a spiritual journey for pupils as they move through the school.

Speen pupils make a big impact in their local community. They are regular visitors to local events and are renowned for their beautiful singing. The school has built a warm relationship with the local Baptist Church and all members of the community enjoy their frequent visits to the church café. Here they perform many of the hymns and Christian songs they have learnt in worship, touching the hearts of visitors and residents alike. Clergy from the local Anglican Church are regular visitors in school and have worked in close partnership with the executive headteacher. Worship is now very focused on enabling pupils to see the relevance of the Bible stories they are exploring to their daily lives. Pupil voice is important at Speen, particularly in worship. Every child participates in these times in a very meaningful way. The prayer basket is used effectively so that even the youngest pupils are confident to pray aloud, using the framework of 'thank you, sorry, please'. Evaluation and

monitoring by all pupils, staff and governors is continually bringing about improvement. The call to worship is based on the Trinity, enabling all pupils to have a good understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Worship is invitational and pupils with a range of faiths feel included. This is because pupils are always challenged to think how the story, linked with the school's values, can influence their behaviour.

RE is a strength of the school. The RE lead knows both the children and the curriculum extremely well. Her links with the local community have ensured excellent educational experiences for all pupils. Their understanding of the Bible is impressive in such young children. Traditions and stories from a range of faiths are woven together so that pupils are inquisitive and engaged. They are constantly challenged to think about how they can apply their learning to their own lives by thinking about the school's values. Robust assessment means that all pupils make very good progress from their starting points. Pupils enjoy the many imaginative activities that they take part in and this makes their learning memorable. This is supported by visitors from different faiths and visits to a range of places of worship, including differing Christian traditions.

Speen has made rapid progress in understanding how its vision can underpin the daily lives and actions of all members of the community. It takes pride in enabling them to flourish as people of God.



**The effectiveness of RE is Excellent**

Teaching in RE is exceptionally skilled. It enables all pupils to flourish academically in RE. This is because RE is given a high priority within the school. Monitoring of RE by the headteacher and governors has ensured that both time and resources are effectively used and lead to constant improvement. Where gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are identified, these are swiftly addressed so that all attain extremely well.

Executive Headteacher	Jacque Coles
Inspector's name and number	Karen Surrall 842