

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Elveden Church of England Academy	
Address	London Road, Elveden, Thetford, IP24 3TN
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	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Excellent

School's vision
<p>your Light Shine'. We celebrate the uniqueness of every child and encourage them to shine before others, in turn giving glory to the heavenly father and preparing them for life's journey. 'Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven'. Matthew 5 :16 Values: Hope, Trust, Respect, Forgiveness</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision is theologically underpinned and understood by all. Led by dedicated senior leaders, staff drive the vision forward so that it reinforces every aspect of school life, enabling all to shine. • Compassionate staff ensure pupils thrive and are enabled to become courageous advocates for positive change. The school is an exceptionally inclusive and caring community where everyone is accepted. This has a transformational impact on pupil experience. • The spiritual life of pupils and staff is given a high priority. Pupils are provided with opportunities through the curriculum to develop their own worldviews and are confident to do so. The spirituality of the school permeates conversations, interactions and learning. • Pupils encounter Bible stories, including the teachings of Jesus, during inclusive and invitational collective worship. They reflect on its relevance to their own lives. As a result, pupil knowledge of Christianity is extensive. However, opportunities to worship through silence, stillness, reflection, prayer and music are not fully developed. • RE (religious education) is excellent. High-quality provision and teaching are supportive and encourage pupils to develop knowledge and skills and ask big questions.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen the school's spiritual life in collective worship, by providing wider opportunities to experience different modes of worship. These include silence, stillness, reflection, prayer and music.

Inspection findings

Elveden Church of England Primary Academy is an excellent Church school. The Christian vision to 'Let your light shine' encourages hope and aspiration and excellence for all. It is thoroughly embedded and has a positive impact on pupils and adults. It is theologically rooted, understood and clearly articulated. The vision influences all aspects of school life, shaping decisions and actions. Through the outworking of the vision, everyone is loved and cared for with dignity and respect. All pupils matter and there is a rich culture of acceptance. The school's Christian values of hope, trust, respect and forgiveness inform day-to-day interactions. Parents speak highly of the school. They appreciate that staff are approachable and will work with them to provide the best outcomes for their children.

Governors know the school well through rigorous monitoring, regular visits, questionnaires and listening to pupil voice. This insight informs their decision-making which affects positive change. They make bold financial decisions to enable all to shine. Senior leaders demonstrate resilience and grace in their determination to make the school the best that it can be for their pupils. They exhibit consistently high levels of expertise and have established a culture that is supportive and compassionate. The professional needs and interests of staff are thoughtfully considered and prioritised when training is planned. Careful consideration is given to staff well-being and workload. As a result, staff feel appreciated. The impact of the school's vision and ethos is also evident in the support offered to other schools through the sharing of good practice.

There is a clear philosophy for inclusion. SEND pupils benefit from a high level of intervention. Care for each individual is paramount and their achievements are known and regularly celebrated. Parents commend the compassionate pastoral care they receive and the deeply loving culture where all are welcomed. Families feel encouraged and empowered. Events are regularly planned to provide information and support to parents. The school celebrates difference and diversity throughout the curriculum, providing opportunities to extend pupil understanding of different cultures and ways of living.

Pupils talk with confidence about their spirituality and how they are encouraged to develop their own beliefs and worldviews. Spiritual growth is promoted through a reflective strategy using images of windows, mirrors and doors. The outdoor spiritual classroom is an important and well-utilised space. Forest school activities are valued as a means to develop practical skills alongside meditation and the chance for reflection and prayer. WOW moments are built into the curriculum, creating curiosity and wonder. Spaces for reflection, prayer and quiet time are also available in classrooms. These are important to pupils who value the opportunity to think or pray about the events of the day.

The school proactively seeks to work in partnership with, and serve, the local community. It engages with charitable organisations locally, nationally and overseas. Pupils demonstrate the Christian values of compassion and generosity through fundraising events. Opportunities to act as courageous advocates for change are provided through practical activities such as donating to and working at a clothing bank. As a result, pupils express an understanding of how their actions improve the lives of others. They are sensitive to the needs of their friends, supporting them in times of challenge.

The establishment of the OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) play area has proved transformational. The breadth of outdoor activities available through OPAL enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). This positively impacts learning and behaviour, enabling pupils to shine. Using the OPAL area, pupils engage in physical activity, access creative spaces and enjoy role play. The 'play charter' written by the pupils for the pupils is understood and put into practice when playground disagreements arise. Staff talk of the benefits of the charter which has increased pupils' empathy, forgiveness and reconciliation towards each other.

The school has a close working partnership with the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. This ensures that the professional knowledge of staff and their understanding of Church school education is current. Diocesan training enables staff to develop and adapt RE provision to specifically meet the needs of their pupils. As a result, pupils' engagement and enjoyment in learning is increased. Links with the local church are strong. There is a sense of unity between the school and church, and the clergy know the school well. They can attest to the impact that this partnership has on the wider community. For example, some parents now attend church regularly as a result of their contact through school.

There is a clear vision for the RE curriculum. The 'Emmanuel Project' resource enables pupils to develop their awareness and appreciation of world religions and worldviews. Their knowledge and understanding is impressive. They understand the importance of learning about world religions and are aware of similarities between them. RE is taught through an enquiry approach which enables all pupils to access learning. Pupils engage, explore, express and evaluate topics of study. They are confident to share their ideas when discussing Big Questions. The emphasis on discussion creates a safe space where they can explore their own faith and the faith and beliefs of others. Pupils confidently articulate their ideas and are quick to apply them to their own lives. Class teachers receive termly professional development to support their teaching which strengthens provision and improves their confidence in delivering high quality teaching. RE literacy week celebrates the worldviews of others through literature and reinforces the school's approach to celebrating diversity.

Collective worship is excellent. It is inclusive and invitational. It provides a daily opportunity for pupils and adults to join together in a joyful celebration where they encounter the teachings of Jesus and listen to Bible stories. Pupils are able to discuss their meaning confidently and with accuracy as a result. Those of all faiths and none are comfortable attending worship. They recognise they are able to 'take away' something which is relevant to their daily life. Collective worship explores Christianity as a global faith and its relevance in today's world. As such pupils recognise that Christians worship in different ways. The opportunity to engage with other spiritual aspects of worship both planned and unplanned is more limited. Giving time for pupils to reflect deeply, and use different modes of worship, such as silence, stillness and music is less well-developed.

	The effectiveness of RE is	Excellent
	<p>Teaching in RE is highly engaging. Monitoring by school leaders including governors confirms that it is never less than good. Feedback and marking ensures that pupils know how to improve their work. As a result, they make at least age-appropriate progress. Assessment is in place so that progress is tracked and gaps in knowledge and understanding are addressed.</p>	

Information			
School	Elveden Church of England Primary Academy	Inspection date	04/05/23
URN	139149	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	Pupils on roll	98
MAT/Federation	Not applicable		
Headteacher	Lorna Rourke		
Chair of Governors	Lynne Proudlock		
Inspector	Claire Gibson	No.	C.21/22