

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

George Fenthams Endowed School

Address	Fenthams Road, Hampton in Arden, Solihull. B92 0AY.		
Date of inspection	13 November 2019	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary
Diocese	Birmingham	URN	104094

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 Judgements	The impact of collective worship The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good
		Grade	Excellent

School context

George Fenthams Endowed School is a primary school with 229 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including some children from Traveller families, attending the school. 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 headteacher has been in post since 2006.

The school's Christian vision

Our vision is to provide a happy, positive and safe environment where children and adults have the confidence to "Believe, Achieve and Succeed". We offer an engaging, enriched curriculum which promotes a thirst for knowledge, treats everyone as individuals and inspires all learners to flourish. We work together as an inclusive school family where we promote the essential Christian teaching to: "Love the Lord your God and love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:36-40).

Key findings

- This is a fully inclusive church school where the Christian vision impacts on the creation of positive relationships at all levels. All members of the school community feel welcome and enabled to flourish.
- Governors are highly committed to the development of the school's Christian vision. They rigorously monitor and evaluate the vision, holding school leaders to account in a supportive way.
- The school's Christian vision is deeply embedded. Consequently pupils are enabled to achieve highly academically whilst developing holistically to be the best person they can be.
- Religious Education (RE) is exceptionally well managed and led. Teaching and learning are judged to be good and often very good with pupils achieving age-related expectations in line with other subjects.
- Collective worship is at the heart of school life and enables the children and adults to explore the practical outworking of the Christian values. However, pupils do not always articulate the direct impact of biblical teaching.

Areas for development

- Develop pupils' questioning skills to ensure that they are increasingly secure in generating and discussing their own big questions.
- Enable a broader range of pupils to take responsibility for leading additional aspects of collective worship in school thus deepening engagement with and understanding of biblical texts.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to articulate ways in which they challenge injustice and inequality and effect change through social action projects, thus creating a legacy of courageous advocacy, reaching beyond the school.

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

The Christian vision of George Fenthams Endowed School is firmly rooted in the Biblical teaching to 'love God and love your neighbour as yourself'. This vision impacts every aspect of school life, enabling pupils and adults alike to flourish, and creating a fully inclusive environment where all are truly welcome. This distinctive and inclusive Christian vision seeks to live out the Christian principles of the school's founder, George Fenthams. All members of the school community express a sense of security because of the deep trust which is rooted in and flows from this vision.

The deeply embedded Christian vision ensures that relationships throughout the school are excellent and are guided by the Christian values of creativity, compassion, perseverance, friendship and respect. They are rooted in the Christian narrative and governors regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of these values on the life of the school. An extremely inclusive approach to all aspects of school life ensures that all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. One Year 3 boy comments that 'Everyone is equal. No one is mean to another's skin colour'. Parents state that there is acceptance and diversity throughout the school community. Pupils look after one another with older pupils routinely befriending younger pupils, helping them to adjust quickly to school life. Pupils undertake a range of leadership roles, demonstrating and living out the Christian vision and values of the school. When they recognise injustice and need, either through their learning in school or through their experiences outside school, pupils take the lead in suggesting fundraising activities for charity. They readily make links between biblical teaching to 'help your neighbour' and their actions in, for example, collecting stationery to send to their link school in Malawi.

Through the weaving together of the Building Learning Power approach, the Jigsaw programme and the school's Christian values to create an engaging and enriched curriculum, all children are inspired to flourish academically and enabled to develop holistically. Pupils are exceptionally well known to staff so that vulnerable groups of children are identified at an early stage of need. Appropriate interventions are then put in place, including emotional and social strategies as well as academic support. Formal tracking systems also ensure that pupils are supported to achieve their full potential. Closing the attainment gap is motivated by the belief that all pupils are God's children. High achievers are challenged and constantly enabled to achieve greater depth in their learning. Teachers' probing questions in lessons allows pupils to deepen their learning. Such high aspirations for all ensure that pupils are challenged to go beyond previous levels of achievement. Overall, pupils consistently achieve standards significantly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Close partnerships with other schools, both locally and regionally (including across dioceses), impact positively on standards and in alleviating staff workload. Links with the local church are very strong. The local incumbent is a highly valued member of the school community who contributes positively to the life and wellbeing of the school at many different levels. A wide range of sporting and extra-curricular activities enables pupils to embed the values of perseverance and resilience in different contexts. Learning to love God and love oneself generates high levels of self-esteem and creates a culture of care where the mental health and wellbeing of all members of the school community is prioritised. Displays throughout the school demonstrate that pupils express themselves in different ways knowing they are valued as individuals. Situations of loss and bereavement have been approached in a caring and sensitive manner and staff refer to the fantastic support received from their 'school family'.

Activities supporting spiritual development are woven into the school day. Pupils regularly use classroom reflection areas and times of prayer as places of calm which allow them to 'feel like you're talking to someone' when they are 'sad outside' (Year 2 pupil). Pupils actively reflect on and explore the spiritual and ethical dimensions of all subjects. Love of God and the created world is reflected in highly creative responses to literary texts. One pupil responded that it 'makes you soar inside'. Pupils speak of a peaceful atmosphere in classrooms which helps with their learning. The vicar comments on the joy of seeing what God is doing in the school as pupils and adults seek to live out the Christian vision and values.

Governors are highly committed to articulating and ensuring the practical application of the school's Christian vision. They effectively evaluate and develop it via rigorous monitoring systems. They hold school leaders to account in a supportive way and ensure that the wellbeing of all staff is given a high priority. There is regular

engagement with the diocese and the school has a successful record of developing future church school leaders. All staff and governors receive excellent induction which ensures that the Christian vision is fully understood and lived out through the daily life of the school.

Religious Education and collective worship are central to life at George Fenthams. Both allow pupils and adults to engage in meaningful and practical exploration of the school's Christian values. They are well managed and led effectively. Collective worship is regularly led by the Year 5/6 Worship Group and many pupils participate in leading services at church. Worship group leaders are seen as important role models, so their input has a positive impact on those participating in the collective worship, as well as themselves. Collective worship is inclusive and invitational such that parents comment on their children 'growing in Christian faith'. Here they explore ways of loving God and loving each other so that 'everyone is treated how they want to be treated' (Year 5 pupil). However, pupils do not always readily explain the impact of biblical teaching on their everyday lives. A variety of regular visitors, including from the local church, leading collective worship ensures that pupils experience a range of different Christian faith perspectives. Developing links with a school in Malawi are extending pupils' understanding of Christianity as a world faith.

The RE curriculum supports the school's Christian vision by challenging pupils to develop understanding of and respect for different faiths. Pupils also become aware of the variety of Christian denominations. The expertise of pupils, parents and staff of different faiths is often utilized in RE lessons to enhance the pupils' learning experience. The pupils talk of gaining a better understanding through engaging in this way. Through tackling big questions within a safe space in RE, pupils learn to respect each other's views and challenge each other courteously, moving beyond tolerance to genuine understanding and respect. The exploration of questions is central to the balanced RE curriculum with pupils becoming increasingly confident to articulate their own questions. They do not yet have regular occasions to generate and discuss their own philosophical questions.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

RE is exceptionally well managed and led by the deputy headteacher who has significantly raised the profile of the subject and ensured its centrality within the curriculum of the school. Pupils are inspired and challenged by their learning to express a deep understanding of and respect for different faiths. Teaching and learning are judged to be 'good' and often 'very good'. Pupils achieve age related expectations in line with other subjects and frequently go beyond those expectations in RE. Thus, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and the most able, are enabled to flourish academically in RE.

Headteacher	Julie Gaughan
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