

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ide Hill Church of England Primary School	
Address	Ide Hill, Sevenoaks, TN14 6JT
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	Good
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
<p>'Do everything in Love' At Ide Hill Church of England Primary School we seek the 'abundant life' that Jesus promised for all. Pupils, staff and families flourish within the caring community of our beautiful village. All are nurtured through the learning and experiencing of respect, responsibility and love, 'and the greatest of these is love.'</p> <p>Our vision is based upon 1 Corinthians 16 :14. Our Key Values are: Respect, Love and Responsibility.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ide Hill is an aspirational and caring community built on the firm foundations of Christian love. Highly skilled leaders work effectively to bring the vision to fruition so that all ages gain an 'abundant life' of precious experiences. • Nurture is paramount. Care for vulnerable pupils is highly effective. It is echoed in genuine concern for the wellbeing of adults in the school community. • A culture of enquiry and reflection enables pupils to ponder life's 'big questions'. Pupils are developing their vocabulary with which to express their spiritual growth. • Collective worship enriches lives. It has a profound impact on the flourishing of pupils and adults. Themes inspire the school community to 'do everything in love'. Pupils experience a wide range of styles and traditions of Christian-based worship, including the Eucharist. • Religious education (RE) helps pupils to understand their place in their multi-faith and diverse world. There are inconsistencies in the coverage of the curriculum so that some pupils are not receiving their full subject entitlement.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders to ensure greater consistency in the coverage of the RE curriculum so learning is sustained as pupils move through school. • Extend the shared understanding and language of spirituality to enable pupils and adults to more confidently articulate their spiritual growth.



Inspection findings

Nestled in the heart of a beautiful rural locality, Ide Hill gives pupils and adults the freedom to be their best selves. All are respected as unique and precious. The Christian vision has evolved from the place of the school as the loving heart of its community. What is outstanding is how leaders work tenaciously with representatives from the church and community to ensure pupils blossom and thrive. Local supporters donate considerable funds to develop the school. This enabled the additional classrooms to be built.

Learning outcomes are high and reflect the individual pastoral investment in each child. Nurture characterises this school. Provision for positive mental health and wellbeing are highly effective. Expert staff guide pupils with additional learning and personal needs to access the curriculum and so they make progress. In aligning their actions with those of the 'Good Samaritan,' all members of the school family embrace difference. They strive to meet individual needs. Some pupils and families experience social and emotional difficulties. The school responds with great kindness and generosity of spirit, often going beyond what might be provided in other schools. For example, funding effective specialist therapy to support complex needs.

Leaders are inspired by Christian principles and encourage staff to be brave enough to show and to receive love. Governors are skilled and deeply committed to the success of the school. In supporting staff, they mirror the high expectations they have of their own role. Governors know the school extremely well. They visit regularly, observe keenly, and support staff to ensure that pupils thrive. Within this work, they are mindful of staff wellbeing and workload, particularly of their extremely dedicated headteacher. Innovative ways for pairs of governors to visit means they have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaker aspects of Ide Hill. Strategic decisions are firmly rooted in the vision. As a result, class sizes are small, and pupils are taught within a single year group. This is rare in a school of this size. The building has been extended to accommodate seven classes and enhanced to provide a creative learning environment, especially outdoors. This is possible because of prudent financial management and support from local organisations and businesses. As the school is oversubscribed, leaders plan that their policy on admissions is aligned with the Christian, yet inclusive, ethos.

Staff make lessons enjoyable and stimulating. The curriculum is shaped around encouraging a 'love' of learning. Within subjects on the timetable, pupils encounter moments of 'awe and wonder'. This prompts them to think deeply and contributes to their spiritual flourishing. In addition, their experiences in worship develop their confidence to express personal views. As one rightly said 'the 'wow' moments make the 'ows' lighter.' The school's policy on spirituality provides a guide to this aspect of human flourishing. The policy links spirituality to Christianity. It is less specific on how other faith traditions and worldviews contribute to spiritual development. Pupils and adults have, therefore, a limited vocabulary with which to express their spiritual growth. The curriculum also fires pupils' consciences on global issues. They have a keen desire to make a difference in the world and often suggest good causes to support, both locally and overseas. A long-standing link with an orphanage in Kenya is an active expression of the vision to love and care for others.

Partnerships with families, the church and local community add to the rich experience the school offers its pupils. This extends to the relationship with the diocesan board of education which established and affirms the school's Christian foundation. It is very much to the school's credit that, when clergy were less actively involved, leaders engaged with others in the church and local community. Weekly worship in St Mary's Church is a highlight for staff and pupils. Parents speak with great warmth and gratitude for the love shown to them as well

as their children. When families face difficulties, school staff notice, listen and offer whatever support they can. This culture of mutual support is integral to the way staff care for each other. Many staff regard the school as their second home. In this way, the vision of Ide Hill is a lived reality.

Collective worship provides truly beautiful moments of togetherness and joy. It is skilfully planned to be relevant and engaging for pupils. Acts of worship regularly inspire deep responses from all ages, including adults. Worship honours the Christian heritage of the school, while allowing those with no religious affiliation to attend and engage with integrity. Pupils enjoy sharing the leadership of worship, in church and school. They take pride in the responsibility to support such an important part of the school day. Lively music and enthusiastic singing enrich the experience. Prayer is a natural and sincere expression of the vision. A rhythm of reflection surrounds the day. Pupils are invited to share the lunchtime and end of day prayers. Many pupils offer to share their prayers aloud. Their words convey great compassion for others and a growing sense of thankfulness for the riches in their lives. Worship has a high degree of creativity, while introducing explicitly Christian traditions. Pupils benefit from experiencing aspects of Christian worship, such as Candlemas, Ash Wednesday and the Eucharist. As a result, they have a significant depth of knowledge of Christian beliefs and practices. This is excellent and testament to the considerable thought that has gone into making worship meaningful.

RE has a high status in the school. Pupils enjoy the active debate and practical activities inherent in RE. The subject helps them understand their place in their diverse world. While work has been done to improve consistency of curriculum coverage, this is an area that leaders are aware requires further work. Consequently, the way RE contributes to the flourishing of some pupils is limited.

Ide Hill is a thriving Church school, snug in the centre of its village. In living out its Christian vision to show love, it is cherished in return. A pupil expressed the view of many in the school family, 'I love being here because my teachers really care and love us'.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good	
Information				
School	Ide Hill Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	12 July 2023	
URN	118722	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	
Diocese/District	Rochester	Pupils on roll	154	
Headteacher	Louisa Hillman			
Chair of Governors	Anne Fletcher			
Inspector	Allyson Taylor	No.	768	