

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

Rushbury Church of England Primary School			
Address	Rushbury, Church Stretton, SY6 7EB		
Date of inspection	5 March 2020	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Diocese	Hereford	URN	123497

<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>Excellent</b>
<b>Additional Judgement</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### School context

Rushbury Church of England Primary School is a school with 46 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The headteacher is based for three days a week at school. The assistant headteacher is responsible for the running of the school at other times.

### The school's Christian vision

'Love one another just as I love you' John 15 v12

Rushbury CE Primary School is committed to high-quality learning for all, within the values and virtues of the Christian tradition. We recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of each child. We support all to achieve their God-given potential, care for others and have a sense of the Divine.

### Key findings

- The school's strong and deeply held Christian vision fuels all aspects of school life. The school is caring and compassionate and this fosters excellent relationships amongst the whole school community ensuring that all individuals flourish. However pupils' ability to articulate the idea of spirituality is not yet fully developed.
- The inspirational and highly committed leadership drives forward excellence. It ensures the vision which requires Christians to love one another as Jesus would have wished is lived out in all its fullness in daily school life.
- The school's drive for innovation ensures that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are nurtured so that they can reach their God-given potential.
- Collective worship is highly inclusive and invitational. It allows pupils to reflect upon what it is to love one another as part of a Christian family in a world of differing faiths. The prayerful life of the school is strong.
- Religious education (RE) is very well led and given a high strategic importance. This is reflected in displays around the school and pupils' knowledge of the Bible and that of differing faiths.

### Areas for development

- Develop a whole school shared understanding of spirituality so that pupils can more fully articulate its role in their spiritual journey.
- Review school policies so that they may more explicitly explore the school's vision in order to cement its understanding in whole school practice.
- Promote additional opportunities at diocesan level for the school to share its excellent practice regarding its curriculum innovation relating to the school's Christian vision.

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 school has a highly effective and deeply embedded Christian vision. It is very well-defined and underpinned by a clear biblical message. Rushbury is highly inclusive, aspirational and its vision promotes a sense of wellbeing for others. This vision fuels a school which is compassionate, caring and filled with a strong desire for equality and inclusion. Rushbury has flourishing relationships and promotes a sense of nurture. The school's vision is articulated at all levels of leadership and drives forward innovation and whole school development. For example, by the choice of innovative curriculum materials centred on 'respecting yourself' pupils can explore their own uniqueness and consider how to show respect and dignity for others. The school makes ethical and moral decisions linked to its finances such as those when considering staffing levels. The school's leadership is exceptionally reflective and forward thinking. It has rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation procedures driven by the Distinctiveness Committee. All recommendations from the previous SIAMS inspection have been fully addressed.

The broad, thematic curriculum is enhanced by high quality displays as well as enrichment activities. These include, for example, Friday afternoon craft sessions creating items such as a 'Creation Frieze' for a local church. Such activities serve to promote pupils' aspirations for their future role in society. With a love for one another the school uses its parish church as a starting point for learning. For example, chronicling how sisters now buried there can be linked to the sinking of the ocean liner RMS Lusitania. Pupils, including those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, achieve high levels of attainment and make sustained progress. Rushbury is recognised for their dedicated commitment to learning and the community, for example by the 'John Muir Award' for community and conservation work. The pupils' love of school promotes excellent levels of attendance. However Rushbury's policies do not as yet explicitly make overt links from its vision to its practice.

As positive, courageous agents of change and fuelled by the school's vision pupils have, for example, instigated and undertaken a renovation of their local telephone box. More regionally the school has been recognised by the Shropshire Safeguarding Board for advocating the need for individual's positive life choices and online safety. Pupils' concerns for others extend to a more global focus with the monitoring of the climate using the Rushbury weather station. This results in regular reports being made to the parish magazine on weather conditions. Parents enthuse regarding excellent pupil behaviour and the positive relationships between pupils and staff. The mental health and wellbeing of all is given a high priority by the school. This has allowed the school community to thrive no matter whatever of life's adversities may come along.

Items such as a commemorative chair, located equidistant between the school and the local church, along with class based prayer corners allow pupils opportunities to pray and 'talk to God'. High quality displays, for example linked to plastic pollution, show how we need to care for God's creation. Rushbury plans for and evaluates its spirituality. This allows pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder regarding God's creation. However the school community has a limited shared understanding of spirituality. This limits a common dialogue as to its importance in an individual's existence.

Rushbury creates many innovative and inspiring ways for developing and enriching collective worship. It is effectively planned for and involves close and long established links with the Apedale Benefice. The unique use of philosophical discussions after 'Open the Book' provides pupils with a chance to explore and deepen their faith. The school sees the links it has with the wider Apedale community as being vital. Christian festivals such as Harvest allow for pilgrimages to local adjacent churches for worship. Messy church is considered invaluable in continuing to promote pupil involvement in the Christian faith. The school promotes a palpable sense of a school family coming together in worship. Pupil involvement in creating and leading acts of worship is encouraged through a yearly focus such as 'wonders of the world'. For example, one pupil eloquently spoke of how the 'Khasi' tribe used living roots over decades to support their community. As the pupil noted, 'Just like Jesus they are passing down their wisdom to others'. Worship allows older pupils to support and encourage their younger peers promoting a love for one another. Pupils beautifully sing hymns with joy and reverence. Their love of this form of worship extends to the wider community. For example, the use of a 'flash mob' allowed pupils to sing 'Here I am Lord' to shoppers in Church Stretton. One member of the community praised this work by suggesting how such an act had kindled 'special memories' and given 'pure joy' which

served to 'brighten their day'. Pupils can articulately explore the idea of the Holy Trinity. Through the planned use of liturgical colours on the school's worship table and by saying the Grace, pupils are allowed to consider and are able to take part in Christian traditions and practices.

Highly effective RE teaching explores the bigger philosophical and spiritual questions such as 'what is suffering?' Rushbury uses the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus as well as the recent introduction of 'Understanding Christianity' to provide valuable resources to explore Christianity. It also allows pupils to explore religious beliefs and practices occasionally acknowledging that there is no right or wrong answer to bigger questions. The school plans effectively for an exploration of differing faiths and cultures as well as that of other Christian denominations. RE is underpinned by leaders who undertake appropriate curricular training. Regular, planned assessment, which includes observations of teaching and work scrutiny, promotes high standards of attainment in RE. RE, along with collective worship, significantly contributes to pupils' spiritual and personal development. The school through its involvement in a local 'school development group', supported by the excellent professional expertise of the headteacher, ensures an ongoing programme of effective professional development. However the school's innovative approach to its vision-driven curriculum could be more widely shared at diocesan level.

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Inspector's name and number	Colin Howard 517