

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

| Tenterden Church of England Junior School | | | |
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| Address | Recreation Ground Road, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6RA | | |
| Date of inspection | 6 February 2020 | Status of school | Academy inspected as VC Tenterden Schools Trust |
| Diocese | Canterbury | URN | 143789 |

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| 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 | Good |
| Additional Judgement | The impact of collective worship | Grade | Good |

School context

Tenterden is a junior school with 229 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 national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The school is part of the Tenterden Schools Trust. This includes both Church and community schools.

The school's Christian vision

With God as our companion, we learn, grow and flourish.

As a welcoming Church school, we aspire to provide care and support for each other and the wider community. Through the practical application of Christian values and a positive growth mindset, our pupils challenge themselves to be independent, inquisitive and knowledgeable; a positive influence on society.

Key findings

- The ways in which the school provides care and support for the wider community are excellent. This is in partnership with the church, with parents, and with other schools in the trust.
- Considerable progress has been made in accelerating the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This helps these pupils to flourish.
- Pupils have a growing sense of the importance of spiritual development. They do not, however, make full use of the prayer and reflection areas.
- Religious education (RE) is taught very well. This means that pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. It is too early to judge whether the new assessment system allows more effective tracking of pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is creative, and it allows pupils to learn in a wide range of ways. This enables them to challenge themselves and to value everyone's talents.

Areas for development

- Continue to diminish the progress gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils, and improve the progress of all pupils in national tests so that they all flourish.
- Ensure that the newly adopted assessment strategies in RE are used consistently so that pupils' progress can be tracked accurately and effectively in this area.
- Increase pupils' independence to use the prayer and reflection areas and to lead collective worship more often so that they take a lead in their own spiritual development.

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

Leaders have involved the whole school community in identifying the school's Christian vision. Adults in the school speak of this as 'pinning down who we are'. Everyone feels a sense of ownership of the vision because of a shared understanding of this principle. Adults and pupils understand that the vision is grounded in biblical stories, particularly in the parable of the Mustard Seed. The school works closely with the community infant school. Leaders have established continuity for pupils joining the school from the infant school. This means that pupils use the same values to drive their learning and their good behaviour. In the junior school, these values (perseverance, faithfulness, respect, love) are firmly rooted in Christian teaching. The values help pupils to understand and to apply the school's Christian vision. The impact of the vision and associated values can be clearly seen, both in pupils' learning and in their attitudes towards others. Pupils persevere with challenging tasks and often learn collaboratively. Pupils' attitudes towards those who are different from themselves are often exceptional. Difference is valued and celebrated. Pupils from a variety of backgrounds, and those who identify differently, are welcomed and accepted into the school. Pupils show care and concern for others and this enables them all to flourish.

The care that pupils and adults show extends beyond the school and into the wider community. The school has excellent initiatives to fulfil its vision by providing care and support for the community. This is often in partnership with the local church and with other schools in the trust. For example, pupils speak with passion about the art group for a memory café that they run in school. This is an intergenerational project for people with dementia and it benefits all involved in it. The school has worked with the church to provide a local 'one stop shop' for victims of domestic violence. This service had been stopped due to funding issues. These, and many other examples, show the strength of the school's impact on the community. Pupils have a good understanding of the causes and the charities that they support. They display positive attitudes in wanting to make a difference to others. This includes helping people across the world, but the primary focus is on helping people in their own community. Pupils from different backgrounds, for example refugees, have shared their experiences with the school community. This has helped pupils to appreciate the very different lives of children in other parts of the world and to show empathy. Pupils are considerate towards one another and they often use the Christian values to reflect on their behaviour. Pupils are skilled in using restorative justice to settle disagreements. Many pupils embody the school's vision of being 'a positive influence on society'.

Leaders have taken robust and rigorous measures to address historic poor progress. This means that they have a clear picture of how pupils are progressing. Governors hold leaders to account and have a good understanding of the issues surrounding pupil progress. Leaders accurately target interventions to ensure that everything possible is done to help pupils to make good progress. As a result of this work, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils has diminished in many areas. The curriculum is highly creative and pupils enjoy the varied approach to learning. This enables pupils to challenge themselves and to celebrate the diversity of talent within the school. Art, particularly, is employed to aid learning in a wide variety of areas. This often leads to community exhibitions, such as that held recently in the church. Leaders have ensured that staff have had training in the meaning of spiritual development. As a result, adults speak confidently about this. Teachers often create opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to stop and to reflect on their learning and what it means for them. Most pupils think deeply and enjoy the opportunities to reflect. However, they do not make full use of the prayer and reflection areas around the school. Leaders make good use of training opportunities afforded by the diocese. Senior leaders model Christian leadership and so teachers can grow as future Church school leaders.

Daily collective worship is invitational, with a recognition that individuals will have differing beliefs. Everyone is made to feel welcome and part of the school community. As a result, pupils enjoy taking an active part in school worship, whatever their own beliefs. Year 6 worship leaders take an increasing role in planning and leading collective worship. They are confident in doing this, but they would like to be given greater independence to lead acts of worship more often. A range of adults leads collective worship, including clergy and a church youth worker. This, together with festival services held in the church, ensures that pupils develop an understanding of Anglican worship. Pupils pray or reflect in whichever way they feel most comfortable. However, they do not all appreciate that prayer can happen at other points in the day as well.

RE is taught very well so that pupils think deeply and develop a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of other world religions. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning in RE because of the varied approaches taken. Pupils are confident in forming and expressing their own opinions, which they know will be respected. Leaders have adopted a new RE assessment system. This is to give a clearer picture of pupils' progress and is in response to the previous denominational inspection. It is too early to determine the success of this. RE reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.

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| Inspector's name and number | Anne Southgate 820 |