

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Sissinghurst VA Church of England Primary School

Vision

At Sissinghurst Church of England Primary School in partnership with the Church, parents, and wider community, we offer an inclusive learning environment to nurture potential that enables all to be successful. Vibrant, rich curricular opportunities equip everyone with knowledge and skills to question, discuss and challenge.

Everyone's talents are discovered and celebrated. We foster spiritual growth and reflection to find wonder and joy in the World together. As light bearers, our shared responsibility is to encourage each other to be compassionate and kind so we can all shine with integrity, humility and wisdom. We find courage to act when we know there is darkness, illuminating the World with God's light and hope.

Let your Light Shine - Matthew 5: 14-16

Courage, Kindness, Forgiveness, Service

Sissinghurst (VA) Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Notable Strengths

- The school's Christian vision is clearly understood and embraced by the whole school community. This creates a strong sense of shared ownership. Its impact is evident in the positive culture experienced by both pupils and staff who take pride in contributing their best.
- Worship is carefully planned to be inclusive. Adaptations ensure that pupils, including those with additional needs, can engage fully. Pupils and staff from different faith backgrounds are respected and included.
- A broad and balanced religious education (RE) curriculum enables pupils to engage with a range of major world religions and worldviews. This supports fostering respect and understanding of diversity.
- The Christian vision roots school policy and practice. Pupils' behaviour reflects values such as courage, kindness and forgiveness, creating a harmonious environment where they feel valued and respected.
- An inclusive, well-adapted curriculum coupled with strong support from staff enables pupils to thrive. Through the vision, they shine their lights, develop high aspirations and flourish.

Development Points

- Refine assessment processes in religious education (RE). This is so teaching can more precisely support pupils of all abilities, helping them develop confidence and independence in their learning.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

A compelling and embedded Christian vision, rooted in Jesus' words 'Let your light shine' radiates through every aspect of life at Sissinghurst Church of England Primary School. Governors, staff, pupils and parents share the vision, united by a common moral purpose. Leaders and governors monitor the impact of the vision. This ensures it remains central to school life. For example, they evaluated the impact of the vision upon the flourishing of pupils and staff. As a result, changes have been made to the staffing structure to strengthen support for vulnerable pupils. This gives them firm foundations to achieve their best. The vision reflects a deeply held belief that every individual is valued and gifted. It creates a warm and nurturing culture, grounded in gratitude, authenticity and the confidence to 'shine'. Consequently, pupils and adults experience a genuine sense of belonging. Staff are trusted and empowered. This contributes to a collaborative culture where leadership is shared. Through committed leadership and partnerships with the church, diocese, wider community and charities, the school is an effective beacon of light. As a community of 'light bearers' pupils are inspired by faith and hope. They have aspiration to grow and shine.

Vision and Curriculum

The school's curriculum is inclusive, thoughtfully planned and carefully adapted to meet learners' needs. Knowledge is carefully sequenced so learning builds over time, allowing pupils to make meaningful connections. Creative activities such as outdoor den play, skateboarding and beatboxing enable pupils to discover talents and build confidence. It supports those who are vulnerable or have special education needs and disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils access the provision with confidence and dignity. The curriculum fosters and inspires spiritual development. Opportunities for awe and wonder, reflection and connection are commonplace. Prayer and quiet spaces extend spiritual opportunities. Collective big questions offer time for discussion and spiritual growth. This enables pupils to make meaningful links between their learning, the school's associated Christian values and the wider world. They reflect on their identity, purpose and how they can 'shine' in the world.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is a valued part of school life. It contributes to the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults. Carefully designed, it creates an environment where individuals feel welcomed and respected, regardless of faith, belief or background. The warmth of the welcome fosters belonging, encouraging participation and mutual respect. Thoughtful adaptations ensure that pupils, including those with additional needs, can engage fully. Worship is well-structured, drawing on diocesan guidance while remaining flexible to reflect current events. Themes are closely linked to the supporting Christian values, embedding the Christian vision within collective worship. Worship provides opportunities for stillness, prayer and reflection. This gives pupils and staff time to pause, think deeply and respond personally to what they hear. Pupils play an active role in leading prayers and contributing ideas to collective worship. They have ownership and an understanding of their contribution to the worshipping community. Worship provides meaningful opportunities to celebrate pupils' talents, achievements and contributions, both in and beyond school. This affirms the belief that everyone has unique gifts, and it encourages all members of the community to 'let their light shine'. Pupils and staff describe worship as meaningful and recognise how it encourages thoughtful consideration on their beliefs, values and actions. As a result, collective worship is a key vehicle through which the school enables the spiritual flourishing of both pupils and adults.

Vision and School Culture

Policies and daily practices are rooted in the school's vision. These promote shared expectations and as a result, a harmonious environment is created where pupils are respected and valued. Pupils are encouraged to express themselves, embrace new challenges and develop confidence. This reflects the leaders' commitment to enabling everyone to 'shine' their light in the world. Staff are treated with kindness and dignity through a strong culture of



support and appreciation. This is exemplified by regular encouragement and personal recognition provided by school leaders. This contributes to the deep sense of belonging. Staff know pupils and their families well, walking alongside them, particularly during difficult times. They are listened to and respected. Relationships are built on mutual respect, fostering belonging and strengthening a cohesive, supportive environment across the school. Behaviour is managed through a restorative approach. This encourages pupils to reflect on their actions and make positive choices. Kindness is actively promoted and understood by pupils as important. A range of wellbeing strategies, including the provision of quiet spaces, reflection areas and inclusive clubs, enable pupils to regulate their emotions. A strong emphasis on pastoral care enables pupils to be their best selves.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils are encouraged to think deeply about fairness, responsibility and their role in the wider world. The curriculum promotes this through thoughtful engagement with ethical issues, enabling pupils to develop a clear understanding of fairness, responsibility and citizenship. School leaders have developed a strong culture of courageous advocacy, rooted in the Christian vision. Pupils are given opportunities to engage with issues of injustice and take action to support others. They speak out against injustice respectfully and confidently, questioning others' views and sharing their own. They know that their voices can make a difference and have led projects such as writing letters to parents about parking. This has made improvements to peak time congestion and safety on the local roads. Through leadership opportunities, pupils reflect on how they can further contribute positively to the school. They benefit from undertaking leadership roles such as school council, ethos leaders and play leaders. This enables them to develop as confident and responsible members of their community. Pupils actively live out the vision through initiatives such as charitable fundraising. They also support locally through activities such as litter picking. These experiences deepen their understanding of compassion and responsibility, leading them to act with integrity and purpose.

Religious Education

The curriculum enables pupils to engage with a range of beliefs and worldviews. This fosters respect and understanding of people's perspectives and beliefs. As a result, pupils demonstrate empathy and appreciate diversity. The curriculum is carefully planned, ensuring learning builds progressively. Leadership of RE is strong, with a clear commitment to maintaining its importance within the curriculum. Staff benefit from ongoing diocesan training and local school collaboration. This develops their confidence and ensures greater consistency in planning.

Teaching in RE is effective, enabling pupils to engage in deep thinking. Teaching is inclusive, using approaches such as discussion, drama and reflection. As a result, pupils participate confidently and contribute their ideas. Leaders monitor provision rigorously and keep governors well informed, enabling effective challenge and support that strengthens the quality of RE for pupils. Pupils approach RE with enthusiasm and respond well to opportunities to ask questions and explore ideas, particularly through big questions and reflection. Pupils speak confidently about their learning. They discuss key concepts such as the trinity, making connections to their own lives and other areas of learning. Assessment is mainly informal, using discussion and questioning to inform next steps. As a result, pupils' progress is not identified or tracked with sufficient precision. Consequently, evidence of pupils achieving at every level is less clearly demonstrated.

Information

Address	Common Road, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2BH		
Date	19 June 2026	URN	118717
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	190
Diocese	Canterbury		
Headteacher	Sarah Holman		
Chair of Governors	Andrea Griffiths		
Inspector	Geraldine Shackleton		