

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

<b>Edward Peake Church of England Middle School</b>			
<b>Address</b>	Potton Road, Biggleswade, SG18 0EJ		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	10 June 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Voluntary Controlled Middle School
<b>Diocese</b>	St Albans	<b>URN</b>	109694

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Requires Improvement</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>Additional Judgement</b>		
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Requires Improvement</b>

### School context

Edward Peake is a middle school with 509 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above national averages. In 2016 the school expanded to meet local needs and further expansion is planned. Since the last inspection there have been significant changes in leadership and staffing. The headteacher took up post in January 2017, and the chair of governors in September 2018.

### The school's Christian vision

Live Love Learn

'I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.'  
Psalm 32:8

### Key findings

- The school is just beginning to articulate and implement the biblical roots of its vision. Currently, few in the community can express the Christian context of its values and practice. This is because there has not yet been enough time for leaders to clearly explain how their biblically inspired vision drives the school's values.
- Governors regularly visit the school but do not robustly monitor it as a church school. This means they are unable to independently verify how well pupils are flourishing in all aspects of school life.
- Leaders have responded to challenging behaviour with practical measures. The positive impact of these measures is not yet felt in all year groups.
- Pupils with additional needs make strong progress. However, others, including those who are disadvantaged, do not.
- Opportunities exist for spiritual development. They are not always explicitly addressed and developed because staff have not developed a shared definition of spirituality.

### Areas for development.

- Ensure that the biblically expressed vision informs provision and drives school improvement because it is clearly articulated and rigorously monitored by leaders.
- Accelerate the progress being made to establish an environment in which all pupils are supported, respected, and appropriately challenged in order that they thrive academically and personally.
- Build a collaborative understanding of spirituality with staff and pupils so that it can be explicitly discussed and developed across the school, enhancing the impact of collective worship as a result.

## **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**

Change is, and has been, a key feature of the school in this period of growth and development. Additional pupil numbers, new leaders and staffing changes have led to some turbulence and some positive new directions. Moving forward, leaders are building on well-established values which help pupils 'Live, Love, Learn'. Recently they identified the biblical roots of their vision. This has not been articulated clearly enough, or had sufficient time, to impact on the school community. Few, therefore, can express the specifically Christian context of the school's values and practice. Staff have not clearly reviewed their work in light of the vision, which is limiting development of church school leadership. However, middle leaders' meetings led by the deputy headteacher are beginning to rectify this. Governors regularly visit the school but do not monitor it robustly enough as a church school. Consequently, some developments from the last inspection are not secure. Edward Peake is in an informal federation with Northill Church of England school. Partnerships with local schools, and good relationships with clergy from different denominations, benefit staff and pupils. Leaders acknowledge the value of support available to them and understand its relationship to their effectiveness.

Almost all pupils attend school regularly. Staff monitor attendance closely and support those who need to improve it. Academic assessments of pupils joining the school show that, historically, many needed to catch up with others of the same age. Leaders actively address this through liaison with local upper and lower schools. A trial project to increase reading fluency has yielded very positive results. Pupils with additional needs make strong progress from their starting points. This is because of effective partnerships between staff and parents. Other pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, progress more slowly. Key outcomes, and work seen, show that achievements are below national averages. Pupils say that work is often too easy in lessons. Much hard work goes into developing pupils as rounded individuals. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Varied clubs and activities enable pupils to develop different skills and talents. Parents say staff work hard and provide 'something for everyone'. Leaders deliberately revised the traditional format of sports day. Now it strengthens a sense of belonging by engaging everyone throughout the day. The Baptist minister leads Rock Solid every week. Physical Education (PE) is very popular, and the school's steel band are well known locally. All these varied activities help pupils develop personally, socially and spiritually. Staff have not developed a shared definition of spirituality so opportunities to explicitly develop it further are missed.

Curriculum topics and charitable work help pupils to become outward facing. They ask questions about the wider world and encounter different cultures. China's one child policy generated keen debate. An African connection, made through the parish, links pupils to peers in another country. Pupils, motivated by kindness, choose and support numerous charities and projects, some of which are very close to their heart. They do not link these activities and school values to biblical stories or the teachings of Jesus. However, they clearly know and respect the school's values because they are strongly promoted and celebrated across the school. Pupil values ambassadors meet weekly and play an important role in the school. Newsletters link the values to biblical texts. Parents nominate values for pupils to focus on over a two year period. This unites the whole community in helping pupils to flourish.

Leaders have responded to challenging behaviour with strategic and practical steps which are beginning to make an impact. Across the school exclusions, although still high, are falling. The school's vision emphasises the love of God as a constant guiding support for every individual. To implement this, leaders, have recently established HIVE as a base where pupils receive focused individual support. Already this holistic approach is having a transformative effect on some pupils. One, formerly at risk of exclusion, rightly says, 'I am now the best person I can be.' This testifies to the reality of a culture of forgiveness and second chances. Nonetheless, improvements are largely confined to the oldest pupils where concerns were greatest. They have yet to consistently reach other year groups where pupils are more likely to say that behaviour disrupts learning.

Currently the school's Christian vision is not implemented consistently enough to ensure that pupils are always treated with dignity and respect by their peers. Parents cite examples of staff dealing effectively with bullying. Some pupils echo this and describe how they have supported friends to report it. Others lack confidence in the ability of some staff to tackle bullying or poor behaviour. Consequently, some do not report it. Encouragingly though, parents say children benefit from some positive staff role models. A new inclusion team is developing an

integrated approach to supporting barriers to learning including behaviour, attendance and special needs or disabilities. They, and the HIVE team, are developing strategies which support pupils' mental health. Staff enjoy the community they work in and say leaders support them and consider their well being.

The impact of collective worship is inconsistent across the school. Some is inspirational and clearly links school values to biblical teachings. Pupils are encouraged to 'take a leap of faith like Abraham did' by staff who trust each other and radiate confidence in pupils. Prayer and reflection are established features of collective worship. Values ambassadors frequently plan whole school worship and others sometimes lead it, particularly in class. Different leaders and settings enrich pupils' experience of worship through the year. Overall the worship programme is well planned and resourced. It builds a sense of belonging for new staff. However, the quality of class worship, and the priority given to it, vary. Therefore, pupils do not find it very influential. Staff and governors monitor worship. Pupils do not have the same opportunities to drive improvements.

The religious education (RE) curriculum enables pupils to engage with a variety of religious texts. The dedicated subject leader attends local training and ensures the curriculum takes good account of national developments. Lessons prompt pupils to raise deeper questions such as 'What gender is God?' Lessons are safe spaces and pupils share their views confidently. They have some understanding of Christianity as a world wide religion and appreciate learning about different religions and beliefs. Assessment outcomes and regular team meetings support pupils' progress.

Pupils recognise the different roles of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One pupil described the Holy Spirit as 'always being there to guide you'. The school's vision aims to make this a reality for everyone. Further improvement is required but clear advances have been made.

Headteacher	Zoe Linington
Inspector's name and number	Elaine Skinner 914