

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Grade-Ruan Church of England School	
Address	Ruan Minor, Helston, TR12 7JN
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	Good

School's vision
<p>Setting sail on life's journey with an anchor to keep us safe, sails to let us fly and God to calm the storms along the way.</p> <p>Luke 8: 22-25</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school lives out its deeply Christian vision. The vision is appropriately specific to the school's context and broad enough to include everyone. • The Aspire Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is providing substantial support for the school. Although strategic plans are in place, rigorous monitoring of the vision has not yet begun. • Pupils flourish at Grade-Ruan School because adults ensure that there are rich opportunities for their spiritual development. • Pupil leadership of collective worship is a significant feature. This currently involves only the oldest pupils. • Religious education (RE) is well led and resourced and is enabling pupils to develop their understanding of major religions including Christianity.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the MAT strategic plan for monitoring the effectiveness of the school as a Church school is implemented swiftly. This is to ensure Grade-Ruan's continuing improvement and flourishing as a Church school. • Consider involving younger pupils in leading worship. This is to enrich opportunities for spiritual development and to strengthen pupil leadership still further. • Encourage and enable pupils to initiate and plan their own social action projects. This is to help them understand more deeply the impact of the vision in inspiring hope and aspiration within and beyond the school community.

Inspection findings

The Christian vision of Grade-Ruan richly reflects the coastal context of this small village school. The roots of the vision are deeply Christian. Together with clergy, leaders set out its clear biblical foundations and explain its relevance to the local area. At the same time, the vision is inclusive and accessible to everyone. For some adults and pupils, the vision means that 'life is a journey with Jesus and with others'. Most understand that the school value of aspiration is at the heart of the expression, 'sails to let us fly'. Pupils 'set sail' when they join the school in Reception and again when they leave after Year 6. Some pupils speak of teachers as the 'anchor', keeping them safe. The account in Luke's gospel of Jesus calming the storm provides a starting-point for pupils to reflect on 'storms' in everyday life. A sequence of actions enables even the youngest pupils to learn the vision. Many visual reminders are evident around the school, including a rich patchwork cloth, made by pupils for the worship table in the hall.

This year, the school has transferred from its existing multi-academy trust to another MAT. The headteacher speaks movingly of the impact of the vision in sustaining the school through some unsettled times. The MAT vision, 'working together, inspiring excellence' aligns with Grade-Ruan's vision of aspiration. Leaders are currently in the process of adopting the MAT's policies. However, Grade-Ruan retains the autonomy to write certain key policies, such as those for collective worship and RE. These policies are clearly shaped by the vision. Leaders ensure that both RE and collective worship have a very high profile in the school.

The school's vision, with the associated values of aspiration, wisdom, respect and relationships, is evident in all aspects of its work. Pupils' attitudes to their learning exemplify the vision, particularly as they talk about respect and aspiration. A pupil admitted that he enjoyed the challenge in his work, saying that it was 'just in the stretch zone'. The new MAT has recently enabled the school to employ a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). This is further strengthening the school's support for vulnerable pupils.

The MAT is active in caring for Grade-Ruan. It is strengthening the school's capacity to support all pupils and the staff. Adults say that the new MAT is making 'a massive difference'. Staff wellbeing is a clear priority. After a difficult season, they are noticing a greater feeling of settledness in the school. MAT leaders are aware of many strengths in the school, such as the strong leadership of the headteacher and of the RE leader. The new Christian Ethos Committee has not yet met. The MAT's strategic monitoring of the Christian vision is at an early stage. Staff value the wealth of MAT training opportunities, many of which can be accessed virtually. Given the school's remote location, this is important.

Leaders are proactive in seeking and maintaining partnerships with the local church and the diocese. The school sustained good connections with the diocese during the pandemic and these continue. Pupils benefit from online worship provided by the diocese, for example with choristers of Truro cathedral. Staff attend a range of diocesan training. This ensures the school remains in touch with current developments in Church school education. The school has good links with other schools beyond those in the current MAT. For example, the worship team shares videos of its work with other schools.

The school's Christian vision drives its social action projects. Local needs, such as dusting their historic church for the coronation celebrations or cleaning the beach, inspire pupils. Staff select specific charities to support because of their connections with the school's priorities or the local context. These include the Fisherman's Mission, School in a Bag, and providing reading books for hospitals. Most of these initiatives are led by adults. The vicar quotes examples of pupils demonstrating compassion beyond the school. Pupils are currently

learning what it means to volunteer.

Pupil leadership is a significant feature of worship. Trained by teachers, a competent team of older pupils is actively involved in planning and leading worship each week. Some of them identify 'spiritual connections' as they lead, such as when they light the candle or lead prayers. Younger pupils aspire to being worship leaders. One explained that 'it's a really big responsibility and you're trusted with it!' Log books in each class enable all pupils to play a part in evaluating collective worship. A simple Anglican liturgy provides a predictable structure which pupils enjoy. The weekly involvement of the Open the Book team is deepening pupils' familiarity with a range of Bible stories. Pupils listen well. Adults speak of being moved by pupils' responses during worship. They quote one example of two pupils' spontaneous and sustained debate about 'Is trust more important than love?' Pupils value the safe space in which to reflect. They find it helpful when leaders 'talk about feelings in the prayers'. Worship is multi-sensory, active and inviting.

The school culture is highly reflective. Modelled by the headteacher and staff, this provides a rich environment for pupils' spiritual development. Teachers plan opportunities for spiritual development in relation to the self, others, the world and beyond. This ensures breadth and progression in the school's provision. Adults are skilled in helping pupils to talk about spiritual things, or 'special connections'. One pupil states that books are her spiritual place, as a book is 'a doorway to another world'. Other spiritual places include 'my papa's boat' and 'when I rest quietly on the couch – it makes me feel safe'.

Pupils are developing good religious literacy. This is because curriculum planning is effective. The enthusiastic and experienced RE leader ensures that there are clear systems for assessing pupils' learning. She accesses relevant and up-to-date training from the Cornwall hub for Learn Teach Lead RE. She also ensures that the school benefits from the extensive online resources from the diocese. The school's rich provision of relevant artefacts is helping pupils to embed and remember their learning. Pupils show a keen interest in learning about major world faiths. They can talk knowledgeably, for example, about Judaism and the Passover meal. Through engaging with Bible texts, the youngest pupils are able to discuss with some maturity some common themes in Jesus' parables. Pupils in Key Stage 2 talk enthusiastically and respectfully about Judaism and Islam. Virtual visits and visitors inspire them. They explain how RE challenges their thinking. Mutually respectful relationships between pupils and adults support pupils' learning.

Information			
School	Grade-Ruan Church of England School	Inspection date	10 July 2023
URN	140632	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Truro	Pupils on roll	74
MAT/Federation	Aspire Academy Trust		
Head of School	Jane Talbot		
Chair of Trust Board	Penny Shilston		
Inspector	Penny Burnside	No.	772