Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Rickling Church of England Primary School

Vision

Through faith and nurture, we thrive. 'Life in all its fullness.' (John 10:10)

Rickling 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

- A rich and varied diet of inspirational collective worship leads to pupils and adults flourishing spiritually together.
- The Christian vision equips leaders to create an environment where wellbeing is central. Pupils and adults flourish personally in a culture of nurture.
- Engaging and reflective religious education (RE) lessons enthuse pupils. Effective approaches to assessment support pupils to make progress.
- Empowered by the vision's aim to enable people to thrive, leaders foster a culture of equity, inclusion and fairness. This leads to pupils understanding their responsibility to act in ways to promote justice.
- A vision centred on compassion and personal growth is threaded throughout school life. This leads to families, staff and pupils thriving through close partnership.

Development Points

- Strengthen pupils' understanding of religions and worldviews. This is to foster a sensitive and accurate way of discussing and exploring the diversity of how beliefs may be represented.
- Develop how spirituality is routinely explored throughout school life. This is so that opportunities for spiritual growth can be noticed and celebrated through the curriculum.

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Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

A Christian vision centred on life in all its fullness is the living reality at Rickling. It is woven throughout school life and evident through the care on offer for pupils and adults. They have a shared trust and faith in the vision. The focus on nurture as the way to enable pupils and adults to flourish underpins leaders' decisions. This informs key policies and practice, such as the antibullying, behaviour and relationship policies. The vision is evident in how leaders work closely with outside agencies to tailor support for pupils and families who need it. This means the vision leads the direction of the school. Leaders check how the vision is lived out. This enables them to know that the vision empowers pupils and adults to grow in an ethos of care. The vision informs associated values. These are collectively underpinned by a passage of scripture where Jesus tells his disciples how to follow his example. Each value is individually linked to Christian scripture. This means that the vision informs values that are true to the school's foundation as a Church school. Leaders teach, praise and promote values such as love, responsibility and people being themselves. This leads to pupils demonstrating the essence of the vision within and beyond the school. Pupils show love, through caring relationships with younger pupils. Responsibility is evident in a range of leadership opportunities for pupils, as well as being shown in daily interactions. Pupils are encouraged to be themselves in the school's open and caring ethos. They are challenged to live out the school values beyond the school, taking their vision into the community. As a result, pupils flourish personally.

Vision and Curriculum

Driven by the vision's aspiration to thrive, the curriculum is tailored to the small, rural nature of Rickling. A focus on ensuring pupils achieve life in all its fullness informs how the curriculum is delivered. This includes ways it is altered for pupils with additional needs and/or disabilities. This includes working with outside partners to provide tailored provision for pupils. Careful adaptations and planning enable learners to flourish academically. Carefully crafted sessions, within themed weeks, link subjects and enable pupils to explore faith and nurture through a global lens. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to grow spiritually. Pupils cover topics that enable them to reflect and pose questions. Whilst opportunities for spiritual growth occur, they are not consistently planned for throughout the curriculum. This limits the impact of potential ways to grow spiritually, as they are not routinely noticed and celebrated.

Worship and Spirituality

Pupils and adults benefit from a wide and compelling offer of daily worship. Engaging sessions that take different forms provide opportunities for individuals to grow spiritually. Some sessions support pupils to connect with others in mixed age groups. These enable pupils to understand the views of others and reflect on their own perspectives. Pupils explore current affairs from across the world through acts of worship. Using the school's approach to exploring spirituality, pupils reflect on situations and consider how they may choose to act. Staff ensure that sessions are inclusive and alternatives are provided if required. Worship is enhanced by reflective singing, drama, written responses and moments of stillness. These each support pupils and adults to grow spiritually. An active partnership with the church supports wider opportunities for worship led by clergy and church services led by pupils. Leaders incorporate moments of spiritual development into these services. This includes fostering reverence and reflection in the use of candlelight in the annual Christingle service. Joyful singing of carols at Christmas and prayers across services underpin spiritual development for pupils and adults. Inspirational worship thrives in this community, impacting on the lives of pupils, staff and families.

Vision and School Culture

Rickling's vision empowers pupils and adults to live out the school's values, which focus on nurturing each other. The vision equips leaders in cultivating a culture of care. This results in pupils flourishing personally, through a wide range of experiences that span well beyond the academic. Woodland walks and time in connection with nature provide opportunities for pupils to talk and share feelings. Meanwhile, pupils and staff share time with the school dog or chickens, which promotes wellbeing. The vision enables staff to support each other with compassion. Leaders ensure staff access tailored training opportunities, including training on mental health and wellbeing. These contribute to staff flourishing professionally. Leaders work with outside

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partners, such as mental health charities, to provide pupil support in school and at home. This contributes to a culture of nurture and equity for pupils and adults.
Vision, Justice and Responsibility A culture of justice and responsibility is woven through school life. As one of the school's values, acts of responsibility are regularly celebrated and shared. Pupils are supported to understand what responsibility looks like in a variety of contexts, from everyday equity to worldwide examples. Staff challenge, praise and reward pupils when they show responsibility in different ways. This includes within and outside of school. Pupil leaders champion the views of children in the school. They work in partnership with leaders and pupils from other schools to explore and act on examples of injustice. Their work has included supporting the local food bank, engaging with international themes and focusing on environmental priorities.
Religious Education RE has a high profile within Rickling. It is prioritised within the curriculum and timetable. Leaders work in partnership with the diocese to ensure that the curriculum appropriately balances religions and worldviews. Leaders select and prioritise appropriate training to support staff subject knowledge and RE subject leadership. Pupils approach RE through questions that encourage them to pause and reflect. By using different 'lenses', such as philosophy and theology, pupils engage with different religious ideas. They also explore different religious texts that underpin religions. This supports pupils to understand how different beliefs impact on peoples' lives. However, pupils' understanding of the way that people may individually express religions and worldviews is limited. They are not equipped with an understanding of the diversity of ways in which people may individually express a religion or worldview. Assessment is used effectively to assess pupils' attainment and progress in RE. Staff use this information to inform future lessons. Pupils understand the ways the school uses to check their understanding. This means pupils know how well they are performing in RE. Engaging lessons capture pupils' enthusiasm and enable pupils to respond in a range of ways. This enables pupils to respond through art, writing and discussion. As such, pupils are empowered to express their understanding. Pupils make good progress through the balanced RE curriculum.

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National Society for Education
Church of England & Church in Wales

Methodist Schools

Information

Address	Rickling Green, Rickling, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3YG		
Date	23 September 2026	URN	115130
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	92
Diocese	Chelmsford		
Federation	The Federation of Farnham and Rickling Primary Schools		
Headteacher	Tracey Bratley		
Chair of Governors	Richard Ward		
Inspector	Chris Grey		

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