

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Edwinstowe			
Address	Paddock Close, Edwinstowe, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG21 9LP		
Date of inspection	12 March 2020	Status of school	Primary academy inspected as voluntary aided Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham multi-academy trust
Diocese	Southwell and Nottingham	URN	144644

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 Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

St Mary's is a primary academy with 103 full-time and 18 part-time pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very 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 below national averages. There have been significant staff changes recently, including the new headteacher who took up her post in September 2019. The school converted to academy status within the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham multi-academy trust in December 2019.

The school's Christian vision

We aim, within our small school, to develop thoughtful individuals, confident and resilient 'children' of all ages who understand the positive contribution, which they can make to the world and their status as God's precious children. We are all God's children: learning together; looking after His world and each other.

Show love; act justly; give thanks

Key findings

- The inspirational leadership of the new headteacher during a time of change, has ensured the continued success of St Mary's as a flourishing Church academy.
- The school community have worked together with leaders in developing a revised Christian vision that is securely based on biblical teaching. This vision is being very effectively applied within the school as part of the diocesan multi-academy trust.
- Teaching and learning in religious education (RE), some of which is of the highest quality, ensures pupils are enabled to discuss theological issues at a high level.
- Collective worship involves some elements that are innovative and enhance pupils' spiritual development. The school works well with the local church to explore different ways of worshipping.
- The school's curriculum and wider experiences ensure pupils are developing spiritually. However, there is currently no shared understanding of spirituality so some opportunities to develop it are missed.

Areas for development

- Work with the Diocese to spread best practice in RE, both within the school to all classes and beyond to other diocesan schools.
- Create a shared understanding of spirituality, using it to ensure pupils are enabled to develop spiritually in different curriculum areas and wider experiences.
- Develop a range of pupil-driven social action projects, focused on both local and global communities, to enhance personal development for all pupils.

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

The school has recently revised its distinctive Christian vision under the inspirational leadership of the new headteacher. This vision that all should know 'their status as God's precious children' is lived out on a daily basis in positive relationships, ensuring the school's original foundation is securely developed and maintained. Much has been achieved in a short time. The vision to 'show love, act justly, give thanks' is rooted in a biblical understanding, partly from the Old Testament book of Micah. It is effectively modelled in the life of the school by the staff and the Christian headteacher. She is aware of, and draws her inspiration from, current thinking in Church school education. She has ensured that the vision and core Christian values, such as endurance and forgiveness, shape policies and school improvement, prioritising collective worship and RE well. Joining the Diocesan multi-academy trust has ensured Diocesan support through its service level agreement, in giving appropriate priority to the Christian vision. Governors have ensured continued self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the school as a Church school through a time of change. This broadly fulfils a requirement from the previous denominational inspection. The relatively new vicar is a valued member of the team in this. However, some recent governor monitoring is insufficiently focused on improvement. New members of staff have been supported in their understanding of working in a Church school through high quality professional development.

The vision to be 'God's children learning together, looking after his world and each other' is fulfilled through a vibrant learning environment and enriched curriculum that meets learners' academic needs well. Pupils enjoy their learning, achieving standards in core subjects in line with or above national averages. The school is effective in identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs, through regular pupil progress meetings. Extra provision at playtimes, the sanctuary, gives further support to pupils with additional needs. The spiritual needs of learners are met throughout the school day and through an exciting curriculum, enabling pupils to flourish. However, the school is aware that as there is no shared understanding of spirituality and times to develop it are sometimes missed.

The Christian vision to learn together as God's children means that pupils are developing resilience and perseverance in their learning. This is because of the ethos where they are aware that, as the headteacher said, 'they are not loved any less if they make mistakes'. The learning environment is one where positive relationships and an emphasis on good mental health enables all to flourish. For example, the school council were involved in organising an odd socks day where everyone wore odd socks to highlight individual differences positively. Teachers too point to the warm relationships in school where there is a 'unity of us all together'. The vision and associated values create a special place where all flourish because they are treated with dignity and respect as 'God's precious children'. The school's Christian vision to 'show love' means that pupils are encouraged to demonstrate hope for various local and global communities. For example, school council representatives attended an anti-slavery conference and shared their learning with others in collective worship and at a parents' evening. Pupils are deeply concerned about issues of exploitation of the natural world. The eco warriors are keen to ensure lights are turned off and wildlife is encouraged into the school grounds. The school charity of the year, World Vision, was chosen to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of injustice in majority world communities. Occasions for pupils to lead on social action projects of their own choosing, challenging injustice, are currently infrequent and limited to individuals.

Collective worship has a powerful impact on the life of the school. Adults and pupils enjoy this special time together that contributes well to the strong sense of belonging, driven by the Christian vision. Staff appreciate the way that 'everything links from collective worship' where the vision is communicated with 'passion and drive' by the headteacher. For example, pupils and staff were invited to contribute to a quietly reflective and innovative prayer activity. Leaves were added by painting on a tree outline to indicate their prayer for forgiveness or indicating they had forgiven someone. Therefore, in a variety of ways, worship is inclusive, inspires those present to take action and encourages spiritual growth in pupils and adults. The school works closely with the local church, effectively developing provision and policy including recently on the Eucharist. In addition, the youngest pupils enjoy attending Teddies' time for God at St Mary's Church. Pupils show good understanding of the teachings of Jesus such as the story of The Good Samaritan. They are confident in explaining the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One pupil described the Holy Spirit as being 'like the wind'. Pupils enjoy planning and leading worship on issues such as fairtrade.

RE teaching and learning are areas of strength, exceeding statutory obligations and reflecting the Church of England statement of entitlement. Pupils flourish and are enthusiastic, enjoying deep thinking about theological concepts such as incarnation. One pupil explained, 'Jesus wanted to show he was 100 per cent God and 100 per cent human'. A recent whole school project on Narnia enabled pupils to critically engage with texts, drawing their own conclusions and comparing Jesus and Aslan. RE reflects the school's vision and links are also made to the Christian values. For example, a Year 4 pupil said that Noah showed endurance because he 'never gave up when he built the ark'. Pupils show respect for the opinions of others and appreciate the safe space to reflect on their own beliefs. One pupil commented that RE was important because, 'other people have different beliefs, when you learn about RE, you can understand them as a person'. Pupils have a secure understanding of different faiths and world views. This was enhanced for Year 4 and 5 by taking part in a multi-faith day at Southwell Minster. The school has engaged well with diocesan professional development and made good use of their guidance on RE assessment. The school is benefiting from the Christian vision and leadership of a dedicated headteacher and her staff.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The headteacher, as an experienced RE lead, supports teachers in ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is sometimes better than good. Monitoring and inspection evidence confirm that practice is good and some teaching is of the highest quality. The grade is not higher because there are some slight inconsistencies in quality across the school. Assessment outcomes for pupils show standards are at least in line with age related expectations and with core standards.

Headteacher

Maria Parkin

Inspector's name and number

Liz Youngman 465