

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Adel St John The Baptist Church of England VA Primary School

Address Long Causeway, Adel, Leeds, United Kingdom, LS16 8EX

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**

The effectiveness of religious education (RE) **Good**

School's vision

Love, Serve, Support, Succeed. To love is to care for the world and its people. To serve is to put others before ourselves. To support is to grow and learn together. To succeed is to become who God intends us to be. Our vision is rooted in the words of Jesus: I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. (John 13:34)

Key findings

- The vision, based on the words of Jesus 'love one another', results in a deeply welcoming school. Here pupils are loved, nurtured and supported to succeed as individuals. Leaders prioritise wellbeing and this is reflected in the care offered to pupils and adults.
- Dedicated school leaders and governors recently reviewed and refreshed the school's Christian vision to truly reflect and shape the school. However, the expression of the biblical basis of the vision is at an early stage. Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the vision is under-developed.
- Engaging, varied and inclusive collective worship is enriched by close links with the local church. Pupils make an important contribution to the development of collective worship through their feedback and evaluation. The vision for loving others is shared through worship and pupils are inspired to serve and offer support.
- A broad, balanced curriculum and extra-curricular activities meet the needs of all pupils. Opportunities for spiritual development within the curriculum are insufficiently identified or planned.
- Religious education (RE) is led well. As a result, teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. This means that pupils enjoy exploring beliefs and have very good knowledge and understanding of theological concepts.

Areas for development

- Develop and embed the biblical underpinning of the vision. This is so that all members of the school community further understand and more readily articulate its Christian theological foundations.

- Extend the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the Christian vision carried out by school leaders. This is so that this ongoing process informs future school development.
- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality so that opportunities for spiritual development for pupils of all ages are planned and included in the curriculum.

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's Christian vision has been recently revised and renewed whilst continuing to draw on long established Christian values. The words 'love, serve, support, succeed' are chosen to sum up the school's purpose to enable pupils to flourish. Love, as expressed in the words of Jesus which underpin the vision, is at the heart of school life. As a result of this vision rooted in love, nurturing relationships within the school community are a key strength. Pupils behave with kindness towards each other. New pupils are supported individually to become part of a warm and welcoming school family. Staff and pupils embrace the vision because leaders involved them in its development through the governors' working party and school council. Leaders have begun exploring the theological foundations of the vision. However, this is an area for further development.

The importance given to the wellbeing of pupils and adults springs from the Christian vision. For example, pupil peer mentors describe how they love others and try to support them to succeed. Peer mentors have been trained to listen thoughtfully to pupils who ask for help and then to suggest solutions. A peer mentor described this as 'enforcing love'. When difficulties occur, approaches that encourage forgiveness and reconciliation are well-established. The headteacher and governors value staff as individuals, taking many practical steps to ensure their welfare. Supporting each other with kindness characterises relationships for both pupils and adults. Pupils demonstrate respect for difference, for example, in giving dignity and acceptance to those with autism and other additional learning needs. They show mutual consideration towards each other. A pupil described the school as 'loving because everyone treats everyone the same'. As a result, behaviour is very good, enabling pupils to flourish. Attendance is generally high because pupils love learning and being part of the school community. The school deploys a wide range of creative strategies to help pupils with mental health concerns or family difficulties. During the Covid-19 pandemic the school used every available resource to meet the needs of families so that pupils could learn well. The school also works pro-actively with external agencies. The impact is seen in good communication with families and in pupils successfully overcoming challenges.

The broad and engaging curriculum is enriched by varied opportunities for outdoor learning and a range of extra-curricular activities. 'Big questions', used in some topics, prompt wide-ranging discussion. However, specific opportunities for spiritual development across all subjects are insufficiently identified or planned. The vision for loving others drives determination to care for the world. Through committees, such as the school council and the eco committee, pupils explore wider environmental and social issues. As a result of participation in the eco committee, pupils understand a number of reasons to save energy and, therefore, take practical action to reduce consumption. School councillors show initiative in decisions about the school's support for charities. They are aware of wider global issues and want to take action. For example, they chose to raise money to help those suffering through the war in Ukraine. They are proud of their part in developing the school's Christian vision and in planning improvements to the reflection space outdoors.

The committed headteacher and governing body work hard to develop the school as a Church school. As a result, school benefits from strong partnerships with the Diocese and local Church schools. These deepen understanding of Church school education and provide professional development for staff. In a new initiative, link governors monitor RE and collective worship through visits and report back to the governing body. However, leaders make limited use of evaluation of the impact of the school's vision in their plans to drive improvement. The school is further helped by strong links with the parish Church and also with a local Free church. Leaders from both churches regularly lead collective worship in school. In addition, the vicar also contributes widely to the life of the school, for example, through the worship committee.

Invitational collective worship is central to the daily life of school. It is a key way in which the vision of loving others is shared. Pupils experience variety in worship which includes liturgy, Bible stories presented through drama and discussion, prayer and song. As a result, pupils and adults find collective worship engaging and relevant. The parish Church provides an inspiring setting for services three times a year. Pupils appreciate it as a place of worship down the generations. Pupils also value opportunities for reflection and prayer in school. For example, pupils contribute to a prayer tree in each classroom by attaching their own prayers. Pupils may place their thoughts and prayers in a box to be used in collective worship that week. Consequently, some pupils talk about how prayer helps them. The worship programme enriches pupils' understanding of the Church's year and chosen Christian values. It draws on a wide range of Bible passages selected by the leaders themselves. Teachers are confident in leading worship because they are trained and supported well. The worship committee, which includes pupils, plays a vital part in ensuring the quality of the collective worship. Pupils give honest evaluation to worship leaders. In response, staff have sharpened their focus to make their talks as clear as possible. Additionally, due to pupils' feedback, there is an emphasis on inviting pupils and adults to reflect and put into practice what they have heard. As a result, for example, the message of collective worship helped a pupil to deal with someone else's anger. Consequently, collective worship supports the vision for pupils and adults to develop spiritually as 'who God intends us to be'.

Governors value RE as a core subject, ensuring that it is suitably resourced. Its teaching and learning are led well. The skilled and knowledgeable RE leader provides strong direction and support to the class teachers of RE. This means that staff are confident in their teaching of the subject and expectations are high. A key feature of RE lessons is well-structured discussion where teachers probe and deepen pupils' understanding. Lessons are planned to build on previous learning. Pupils explore topics through a variety of approaches. For example, recently acquired virtual reality headsets allow pupils to make virtual visits to places of worship. Therefore, pupils understand and explain theological concepts such as salvation, using accurate terms to describe these. Pupils thoroughly enjoy discussion. They find learning about a range of beliefs interesting and important, both in understanding others and reflecting on their own beliefs.



The effectiveness of RE is

Good

The balanced RE curriculum, following the diocesan syllabus and the resources of Understanding Christianity, ensures that pupils gain broad understanding and knowledge. The school has effective processes for regularly monitoring teaching and learning in RE. In addition to regular book scrutinies and observing lessons, the experienced RE leader plans and teaches alongside teachers to ensure consistency. The standard of teaching and learning is at least good. Most pupils are making at least expected progress.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	21 June 2022	URN	108041
Date of previous inspection	01 December 2015		
School status	VA	NOR	205
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation			
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Leeds		
Headteacher	Peter Dalrymple		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Below National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector's name	Eleanor Benson	No.	0920

