

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Garton-on-the-Wolds Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Address Station Road, Garton-on-the-Wolds, Drifffield, YO25 3EX

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

Our school works in partnership with the Church and the wider community to give a caring and nurturing environment. Together we enable and equip everyone to have life to the full as Jesus promised. This vision is underpinned by the values of hope, friendship, respect, forgiveness, perseverance, tolerance and thankfulness.
"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10 v.10)

Key findings

- Garton-on-the-Wolds is a school deeply committed to its community. The high value placed on each individual results in nurturing relationships within the school family, creating a happy, safe and respected place to learn. This was particularly exemplified during the pandemic.
- Driven by the school's Christian vision, the headteacher leads with passion and integrity. He has created a fresh impetus for being a distinctive community where all can flourish. This has positively influenced decision-making and improvements. Processes for all leaders to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school are developing but are not yet effective.
- There is a clear vision for a broad and balanced curriculum, resulting in recent positive changes. Religious education (RE) effectively supports pupils' understanding of Christianity. However, it is less effective in supporting their understanding of diverse faiths and cultures.
- Collective worship, springing from the Christian vision, is valued, varied and affirming. It is enriched by strong partnerships with the local Church. As a result, it positively influences the lives of both pupils and staff.
- Pupils are happy, keen to learn and excited by new opportunities. They have the confidence to challenge injustice and want to make a tangible difference in their community and beyond. They have limited opportunities to lead collective worship and social action.

Areas for development

- Ensure rigour in the monitoring and evaluation of the Christian ethos. This is so it regularly informs decisions, enabling leaders and governors to measure the impact of the vision and values over time.
- Deepen learning opportunities that promote exploration and understanding of global diversity. This is in order to help pupils develop their knowledge of different faiths and beliefs.
- Plan and facilitate greater pupil involvement in leading and supporting the spiritual life of the school. This is to enable pupils to use their curiosity and voice to positively influence change in the world around them.

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

Garton-on-the-Wolds is a happy, nurturing school, proudly committed to its local area. The vision of 'life in all its fullness' is valued and is a driving force in school life. This enables pupils to embrace new opportunities and to feel safe and secure in their learning. During the pandemic period the school continued to live out its values of hope, friendship, respect, forgiveness, perseverance, tolerance and thankfulness. As a result, the whole school community can articulate how these impact on their lives, including enhancing wellbeing and supporting in bereavement. The staff know each child very well and support individual needs with professional skill and Christian love. Parents speak positively about the recent leadership changes and appreciate the school as a 'wonderful community that's like a family'.

The headteacher is determined to ensure the flourishing of all. A renewed focus on the school's vision and values have exemplified his leadership and as a result he is respected by staff, pupils and parents alike. The vision is having a positive impact on learning and relationships. The passionate support of the special educational needs co-ordinator enhances outcomes for those who may be vulnerable. The school celebrates its partnerships, including the pastoral support offered through their relationship with the church and its longstanding collaboration with a partner school. The school's Christian vision underpins the curriculum and some strategic decision-making. The governing body does not consistently ensure that monitoring measures the impact of the school's vision upon the flourishing of pupils and adults. This is developing again following the pandemic.

Through a school wide commitment to every pupil as a unique child of God, pupils are confident in their learning. Parents speak positively about the breadth of opportunity offered, characterised by 'amazing communication', including through lockdown. Older children show care and consideration for those in younger years. Instances of breakdown in relationships are rare. When they do occur, they are dealt with via a restorative approach in line with the school's values of forgiveness, respect and friendship. This was articulated well by a pupil as 'letting things go and moving on'. The school is outward looking and promotes a range of charitable activities to highlight local, national, and global issues. Whilst pupils enjoy contributing towards and volunteering for these activities, there are few pupil-initiated opportunities for leadership and acts of courageous advocacy. An understanding of spirituality across the whole curriculum is emerging. The recent introduction of the 'big question of the week' is deepening pupils' thinking and reflection through responses to challenging topics. For example, 'Do you think people have forgotten about Jesus at Christmas?' and 'How would you bring peace to the world?'

The vision for enabling and equipping everyone to have life to the full drives the commitment to professional development. Supported by the Diocese, training to equip staff to work in a church school has been updated. They share subject knowledge regularly and their collegiate approach supports them to flourish professionally. This enables new staff and teaching students quickly become part of the 'school family'.

Collective worship is at the heart of school life and 'roots the day in worship'. Training to support staff to lead worship has built confidence, creating a more varied and intimate experience for pupils. Positive relationships with the parish, other neighbouring churches and Open the Book provide different experiences of worship and prayer. Greetings and lighting candles support pupils' understanding of the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An opportunity for pupils to prepare for first holy communion also celebrates the breadth of Anglican tradition, of which the school is a part. The collective worship group lead their peers in facilitating music, prayers, readings and drama. This has had significant impact on some members, one commenting that in leading others, 'I didn't have courage before, but this has pushed me to be more confident'. Opportunities for pupils to plan and lead significant parts of worship are in their infancy. The importance of gathering as a community was not diminished during the pandemic, with parents invited virtually and sharing in awe and wonder moments from home. Governors monitor worship; however regular, robust evaluation is not always used to inform improvements.

Religious education has a high profile in school. Pupils develop skills of enquiry and address big questions. Examples include raising questions about Pentecost from works of art and the youngest pupils potting plants whilst talking about creation. The integration of the Understanding Christianity resource into the curriculum has supported flourishing through quality opportunities for questioning and debate. Pupils' knowledge of faiths and beliefs other than Christianity and of diversity within faiths is less developed. This limits enjoyment and impact for some pupils. Enhancing learning through experiences of visits and visitors is gathering fresh momentum again post-pandemic.

The headteacher and school team, supported by the vision of living 'life to the full', are bringing love and encouragement to many young lives, which, in the words of one parent will 'carry on well beyond their time at Garton'.

Contextual information about the school

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| Date of inspection | 15 March 2022 | URN | 117977 |
| Date of previous inspection | 5 March 2015 | | |
| School status | Voluntary controlled primary school | NOR | 92 |
| Name of MAT/Federation | n/a | | |
| Diocese | York | | |
| Headteacher | Jamie Baxter | | |
| Pupil profile | 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 above national averages. | | |
| Additional significant information (if needed) | The executive headteacher took up post in April 2020, during the pandemic period. This followed a brief period of interim leadership. The school has been in a collaborative arrangement with another Church school since 2012. There has been significant change in leadership, including governance, since the last inspection. | | |
| Inspector's name | Revd Simone Bennett | No. | 949 |