

# Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

## Guyhirn Church of England Primary School and Pre-School

**Address** High Road, Guyhirn, Wisbech, PE13 4ED

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

Agape – To live, to learn, to love, together.

Through our Christian values we aim to inspire all of our school community to show equality and tolerance to all in a safe, challenging environment. Developing resilient, aspirational, compassionate individuals who are enthused by all faiths and lifestyles showing faith and belief in one another.

### Key findings

- The vision, understood as unconditional love, permeates all areas of school life. The richness of the Christian concept of agape, and its biblical roots, are not yet fully understood.
- Bold decision-making has placed the school firmly at the centre of the community it serves. Inspired by core values, staff and pupils show acts of compassion to others.
- A rich religious education (RE) curriculum allows pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of lived religion and belief and provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others.
- An engaging curriculum allows pupils to explore big questions and think globally. Although a shared understanding of spirituality and its development is in place, this is not yet consistently applied across all subjects.
- Collective worship strengthens the community's commitment to 'live, learn and love together'. Governors and pupils are not involved in monitoring or evaluating worship. Pupils do not yet have opportunities to plan and lead their own independent acts of worship.

### Areas for development

- To explore the biblical roots of the Christian concept of agape more fully so this is known by all leaders and explicitly show, through robust monitoring and evaluation, the impact this biblical understanding has on shaping and enriching school life.
- To continue to apply the school's understanding of spirituality across all subjects and reflection areas to fully meet the spiritual needs of all.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to plan and lead their own independent acts of collective worship so that they may contribute fully to the expression of 'living, learning and loving' together through worship.
- To develop a regular and effective monitoring and evaluation programme of collective worship which involves governors and 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's vision of agape, expressed as an unconditional love for each and every member of the school community, permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils, staff and governors are inspired by a deep compassion for one another to ensure the flourishing of all. This sense of a strong, purposeful community is tangible. The main corridor proudly displays pupils' reflections on what agape means to them and how it inspires them to 'love their neighbours as themselves'. Because of the school's emphasis on Christian values, relationships are highly positive. Although the vision underpins key policies and decision-making, the biblical roots of the Christian concept of agape is not yet fully understood. Arriving at this shared understanding would enable leaders, including governors, to further articulate and monitor how this biblical understanding drives and impacts school life.

Leaders are unswerving in their commitment to 'establish foundations' and give pupils 'all they need to flourish' now and in later life. Pupils benefit from an exciting and well-planned curriculum offer. Pupils thrive academically because staff are deeply committed to ensuring that all, including those considered to be vulnerable, have their individual needs met. Tailored and monitored support ensures that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities learn well. Punctuating this offer are opportunities for learners to develop an understanding of diversity; curriculum topics, reading texts, vibrant outdoor displays and planned events such as British Values week broaden pupils' awareness of the world and enables them to show dignity and respect to all. This curriculum offer is further complemented by a wealth of enrichment opportunities including sports festivals, themed days and the recently established forest school. A close partnership with the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust has supported the school in living out its vision, improving standards for all through continuous and monitored development. This purposeful and positive relationship, developed through regular liaison, has enriched the daily experience of both pupils and staff.

Everyone is embraced and personally known within this small school community. The aspirations and goals of each member are prominently displayed within the school's main corridor. All are proud of these goals, and describe how the encouragement of others helps them to achieve these. As one pupil stated, we 'all come together' to support one another in our learning and growth. Parents speak movingly about how staff regularly go above and beyond to ensure that their children are flourishing. This was evident in the school's response through lockdown in which a high-quality education – combined with a priority on well-being of families – enabled the school community to navigate this difficult period well.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school. Instances of bullying are rare and, if they do occur, are swiftly responded to via a restorative approach which allows for reflection on choices made and how it impacted on others. Effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support pupils. Pupils know the school values well and describe the impact they have on being the best they can be for themselves and for each other. Recent newsletters allow the values to be known by parents and prompts reflection and discussions at home.

Leaders use the vision to make bold decisions for the school, placing it firmly at the centre of the community it serves. A free breakfast club, community fridge and library are valued and provide for the needs of the community. Pupils are inspired by the vision to show unconditional love to members in the local area. For instance, letters were written and sent during the pandemic to those locally who were isolating or shielding, which had a real positive impact on those receiving. Pupils actively shape and express the schools' vision of 'living, learning and loving together' through the school council and eco-committee. Charitable events, such a sponsored run, are seen as vital in the school's commitment to see flourishing in school and out.

The long-serving and passionate staff see each other as 'one big family' who live, learn and love together. Staff benefit from a wealth of training opportunities and value them for how it enables them 'to do and be the best for each other'. Their well-being is taken seriously by leaders and governors, aided by an open-door policy and wise decision-making which takes workload into account.

RE has a very prominent place within the curriculum. A well-planned and rich RE offer has been shaped by the highly effective subject leader, which allows pupils to progress well. Pupils enjoy the subject and talk about its importance in helping them to understand and appreciate a range of world religions and beliefs; this enables them to develop their respect and tolerance of others. RE allows pupils to reflect further on the school's vision. For instance, pupils were

able to link loving relationships to the Christian concept of agape. Opportunities for spiritual development are well-established within RE, with pupils afforded opportunities to ask and explore spiritual questions and reflect on their own beliefs in the light of the content studied. Such opportunities for spiritual development are not yet consistently understood or present across other curriculum subjects.

Collective worship is a jubilant expression of the school's vision. Pupils, staff and parents explain the importance of this shared time together where they are able to think deeply about self, others, God and 'living, learning and loving' as a community. Worship is enriched by a range of leaders and worship styles, and allows the school community to go deeper into its values which centre around love. Pupils ably facilitate the weekly celebration assembly which draws attention to pupils' achievements. Opportunities for pupils to independently plan and lead worship so that they may contribute fully to the expression of the vision through worship are limited. Outside of collective worship, a variety of classroom areas (such as prayer chairs) offer a space for pupils to pray or spiritually reflect throughout the school day. Although these areas are valued by some pupils who like to reflect in these ways, not all view them as spaces which help them to reflect spiritually. How these and additional reflective spaces – inside and outside – can more fully meet the spiritual needs of all is an area which would benefit from exploration.

Governors demonstrate their commitment to helping all flourish through wise decision-making and regular monitoring and evaluation across school life. They identify future priorities which informs school improvement. Although governors monitor RE, collective worship is not routinely evaluated. Provision of worship and its impact would be strengthened by ensuring that pupils and governors are regularly involved in monitoring and evaluation in ways which lead to improving practice.

Pupils particularly value the weekly opportunity to think about current issues and global events within worship. They spoke emphatically about how it inspired them to think about how they could live out the school values in their own lives (such as through contributing to the community fridge), and this often led to rich discussions at home. In a growing number of instances, this compassion overflows into pupil-initiated actions to support those who are less fortunate, such as clothes collection for refugees and the cutting of hair to raise funds for a young person's charity.

### Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	21 October 2021	URN	144288
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2015		
School status	Academy (VC)	NOR	72
Name of MAT/Federation	Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust		
Diocese / Methodist District	Ely		
Headteacher	Karen Milnthorpe		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities below national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector's name	Ryan Parker	No.	982