

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Marston Thorold's Charity Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Address School Lane, Marston, Grantham, NG32 2HQ

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

True to Sir John Thorold's legacy, we strive to create a safe, inclusive, nurturing family where all flourish. Faith inspires all we do whilst empowering us to treat God's creations with dignity. We aim to raise independent, resilient, caring individuals alongside nourishing a healthy mind, body and spirit.
'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Matthew 22:39

Key findings

- Every child is appreciated for their uniqueness and their ambition is encouraged. Pupils with special educational needs, or who may be considered vulnerable, are provided with consistently high quality approaches. As a result, transformational changes in pupils are witnessed.
- Leaders are ambitious for all to flourish through the outworking of the vision and encourage pupils to make bold decisions. Pupils are provided with rich opportunities to reach their full potential, from a curriculum rooted in Christian teaching. As a result, pupils are confident and feel secure to explore their own spiritual and academic potential.
- The school's Christian vision, to love your neighbour as yourself, is rooted in biblical teaching. It has focused the school to develop opportunities for pupils to work with local charities. As a result, they know how to treat people and God's world with respect and dignity. Opportunities to develop global awareness are emerging through the school's curriculum and community work.
- Collective worship is at the centre of this church school. It is inclusive, invitational and inspirational. Pupils have opportunities to plan and lead collective worship and have a voice in evaluating its impact. However this could be enhanced.
- Following recent revisions, the religious education (RE) curriculum is now relevant to the school context. Pupils enjoy the subject. RE is effective in developing their learning through exploring believers' practice, thinking and living. Assessment is established but moderation of pupil work is not fully embedded.

Areas for development

- Develop global awareness in building on the opportunities within the school's curriculum and charity work.
- Enhance systematic and structured opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship enabling them to monitor its impact.
- Embed current assessment practices by establishing moderation procedures.

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

Marston Thorold's is a caring community. The culture and Christian ethos enable pupils to feel safe enough to take risks and challenge themselves. As a result, pupils achieve their potential and live out the school's vision. Leaders speak of a togetherness built out of respect for every child's uniqueness. Parents/ carers reflect this in their views, particularly those with pupils who have additional needs. They say the school gets to know them as a family and includes everyone. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/ or disabilities, thrive. Strong and fruitful relationships with external agencies, particularly for mental health, ensure that the school provides quality provision. High expectations and rich learning opportunities are not compromised for any pupil. Everyone is treated with respect and dignity. These are two of the school's core values that ensure it lives out its vision of 'love your neighbour as yourself'.

Leaders, including governors, are led by the vision. Governors monitor its impact and receive regular reports from the dedicated headteacher. They are a role model of compassion, warmth and love, who enables the staff to bring joy and laughter to every pupil. This has not been easy to sustain during the disruption of the pandemic, but the actions and hard work of the staff ensured the school remained a strong community. The school lived out its vision through the support it generously gave. It provided additional help to families through doorstep meetings and online events. This created a sense of 'being together'. Families new to the school value the Christian welcome they receive before their children start. Similarly, the work of the Year 6 staff to ensure pupils had a supportive transition to secondary school means they are well prepared.

The school has a clear, shared understanding of what spirituality is. Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured through reflection, invitations to prayer and through open discussion in lessons. Prayer spaces in each class provide a place to sit, stop, think and reflect. There are carefully planned, rich spiritual opportunities that develop adult and pupils' curiosity. This makes them confident to question and respond to spiritual and ethical issues. Pupils and adults live out the school's vision and are equipped to respond to the changing world God created. It also contributes to pupils being calm and self-assured, ensuring they flourish in their daily life. This is seen in how well behaved and supportive pupils are to one another.

The school has a broad and balanced, ambitious curriculum. The staff have created it to engage the interests of all pupils so they can celebrate the success of individuals. Every child is given the opportunity to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities. These are designed to build resilience and encourage teamwork. Pupil's uniqueness is explored in the purposeful Relationships and Sex Education (SRE) curriculum, enabling them to be confident and considerate individuals. Opportunities for pupils to explore their own identity in the school are rich and varied, including workshops led by expert external providers. The headteacher fits the school around the child. It offers a range of nurturing activities that promote positive relationships. As a result, everyone enjoys fullness of life.

The school community values returning to the parish church for services. The school and church work closely together and bring cohesion to the wider village community. The harvest festival, held in church, enabled pupils to demonstrate courageous advocacy in the community. They collected food for the local Grantham foodbank and explored the injustice of people in God's world not having the basic essentials to live. The school works with several local charities and is proud of this. However, pupils are less aware of global campaigns that tackle injustice or inequality.

Collective worship is the centre of the school day and everyone enjoys coming together for this special time. Pupils sing with happiness. Every pupil is invited to pray and have time for reflection. Those who take part speak of how they invite God into their day and feel his presence. Biblical teachings are remembered and impact on how children behave with one another. The headteacher and staff worked hard in COVID lockdowns to maintain worship for the whole school. This was difficult at times. Since returning in September the school has valued holding daily whole school worship once again. It has worked hard to build worship up to what the school offered before the pandemic. Pupils have a role in the planning, leading and monitoring of collective worship but this could be enhanced further.

Pupils flourish in RE as it is led well. Leaders invest in it and ensure that it meets the requirements of the Church of England Statement of Entitlement. The school uses the locally agreed syllabus to effectively plan and sequence learning. RE meets the needs of every pupil by offering a range of support. This includes working with less able pupils before lessons to share concepts they may struggle with so they keep up with the pace of learning. High expectations for every pupil result in them becoming critical thinkers. RE is a safe space in the timetable that enables pupils to challenge ideas, reflect and shape their knowledge and understanding of world faiths. The curriculum planning ensures Christianity is experienced as a living, diverse world faiths and beliefs. Lessons embrace more opportunities for creative approaches to learning, including art and drama. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about RE and are developing their understanding in different ways. Pupils demonstrate good subject knowledge, and this enables them to be prepared for the modern world they live in.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

RE is seen as a core subject. Pupils respond positively to their learning because teaching is consistently good. It is reviewed and monitored by leaders. Staff are confident in delivering an ambitious RE curriculum because of the training they have received from the diocese. Assessment has been systematically introduced but moderation of pupil work is not embedded. However, pupil work is of a high standard and reflects the quality of teaching they receive.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	5 May 2022	URN	120605
Date of previous inspection	17 June 2015		
School status	Voluntary aided primary school	NOR	72
Name of Federation	Grantham Villages' Church of England Primary Schools Federation		
Diocese	Lincoln		
Headteacher	Michelle Waddell		
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	The school formed a federation in January 2020 with Saint Sebastian's CE Primary School.		
Inspector's name	Christopher Allen	No.	847