

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Northaw CofE Primary

Address Vineyards Road, Northaw, Potters Bar, United Kingdom, EN6 4PB

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

Loving for Today, Learning for Tomorrow, Forever in Faith 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever' Hebrews 13.8 Our 6Rs – resourcefulness, respect, reasoning, responsibility, resilience and reflection

Key findings

- The Christian vision is a compass pointing the school community towards love, learning, and faith. Although pupils and adults flourish as a result, the existing curriculum does not promote the vision sufficiently. Consequently, it does not fully meet the academic or spiritual needs of all pupils.
- The new headteacher epitomises the Christian vision and has swiftly and accurately identified the school's next steps as a Church school. Northaw's vision and associated values are robustly monitored by dedicated governors. This ensures that leaders at all levels are promoting and living out the Christian foundation of the school.
- The whole school community flourishes within a respectful and nurturing environment. The inclusive Christian vision ensures that all are welcomed. There are some missed opportunities to enhance pupils' experiences of diversity and difference beyond the school.
- Collective worship is a strong expression of the Christian vision. Worship is welcoming and inspires everyone. Regular opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship are underdeveloped.
- Pupils enjoy religious education (RE) lessons and make good progress because teaching is engaging. They competently develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and major world religions.

Areas for development

- Embed the new curriculum, so that the Christian vision has a greater impact on the provision, the learning needs, and spiritual growth of pupils of all abilities.

- Involve pupils regularly in evaluating collective worship. Broaden their experiences of worship so that they have a wider range of Christian traditions to draw upon when planning and leading worship for themselves.
- Enhance experiences across the curriculum for pupils to learn about diversity, so that all pupils understand and celebrate differences beyond the school community.

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 whole school community is united in upholding the Christian vision and associated values which are promoted effectively by leaders at all levels. Everyone at Northaw articulates the biblical roots of the vision, which are inclusive of all and deliver a safe and happy school. This fully embedded Christian vision is supported by the '6Rs', which are biblically grounded values. Coupled with the vision, these values are central to enabling pupils and adults to flourish. The Christian legacy of the previous substantive headteacher who sadly, recently died, shines bright at Northaw. The vision enabled the school community to be united in love during difficult times. The sense of support between staff continues to be strong. This is enhanced by the new headteacher, who embodies the Christian vision and associated values. Governors ably monitor the impact of the vision on pupils and staff. They know the school exceptionally well. The desire for all to flourish galvanises leaders' decisions and actions.

The headteacher has quickly and accurately identified the essential areas for the development of Northaw as a Church school. The curriculum is being revised so that it better meets the needs of pupils and enables them to flourish academically and spiritually. Improvement plans set out to address this. They are grounded in the vision to ensure that the curriculum is coherently developed to enable 'learning for tomorrow'. A definition of spirituality is established and ensures that opportunities for spiritual growth are evident. The spiritual garden and reflection areas in classrooms are used to reinforce the vision and enable the development of spirituality. However, the current curriculum misses some opportunities for pupils to engage in spiritual experiences.

The teachings of Jesus inclusively infuse many aspects of the school. One pupil explained, 'Jesus loved everybody by sacrificing himself. His example helps us learn from our mistakes and forever keep the faith if we are Christians. We are respectful of others' beliefs'. This inclusive point of view truly reflects and exemplifies the school's invitational promotion of its Christian vision. Strong and mutually beneficial partnerships exist between Northaw and the parish church. Clergy support teaching in RE, and plan and lead weekly worship in church for the school community. This supportive relationship is valued by the pupils, church congregation, staff, and parents.

The Christian vision supports pupils in understanding the charitable causes they choose to support. Links with an Anglican school in Uganda and a local care home are examples of the school's outreach and regular commitment to fundraising for good causes. Through participation in local projects, such as collecting for food banks, pupils are learning sensitively about deprivation. The curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities enable pupils to develop a keen interest in the exploitation of the natural world. The safe space that is created at Northaw allows pupils to ask and explore the big questions of life in the knowledge they will be listened to. Pupils are beginning to engage in social action projects within the school to develop their understanding of injustice in society.


Behaviour is good. Forgiveness and reconciliation are imperative within behaviour policies and procedures, which grow from the vision. When they make a mistake, pupils understand that their actions are as important as saying sorry. As a result, pupils learn to disagree well and listen to each other's points of view respectfully. Good support for wellbeing and mental health ensures pupils and adults flourish in a nurturing environment. Strong relationships are underpinned by Christian values. Pupils' needs are well known to adults. The school is proactive in offering support to families during challenging circumstances. Vulnerable pupils are well supported to achieve their potential.

The relationship and sex education (RSE) curriculum ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of healthy relationships. The RE curriculum offers a sustained exploration of the diversity of Christianity and major world religions. Leaders ensure that diversity and differences within the school community are respected. However, experiences to learn about, understand and celebrate different backgrounds and beliefs beyond the school community are limited.

Collective worship is a strong expression of the Christian vision. Pupils' knowledge of the Bible is impressive. They understand that Jesus' teachings are meaningful today. Connections are made by pupils between the teachings of parables and the positive choices they make. The language of the trinitarian nature of God is well articulated by pupils of all ages. This is woven throughout worship, which is invitational, inclusive, and inspiring. Leaders plan worship to explore the vision and values, alongside the liturgical calendar and Anglican traditions of the local parish. This did not diminish during the pandemic with virtual worship taking place regularly. An online DIY Christingle is an example of how the school skillfully reshaped worship during this time. The local clergy continue to support the worshiping life of the school. A parent said, 'The church has been a constant for the whole school community during difficult times'. Invitational prayer has a central place within the school. Pupils and adults develop spiritually within thought-provoking reflection times and acts of worship. Older pupils are invited to become Reflection Ranges to contribute ideas for collective worship. Reflection Rangers are supported to plan some acts of worship but request more scope for their roles to develop worship across the school. Since the pandemic opportunities for pupils to regularly plan, lead, and evaluate worship have not been resumed. Consequently, pupils do not experience a wide range of Christian traditions within collective worship.

RE has a high priority across the school. The subject leader monitors RE efficiently and shares training from the Diocese of St Albans with teachers. This gives clarity of vision and supports pupils' exploration of theology, philosophy, and the human social sciences. Theological concepts are effectively unpicked and explored at age-appropriate levels. As a result, pupils' conversations about worldviews, faith, and beliefs, are well articulated. Pupils have developed age-appropriate skills of inquiry, critical analysis, and interpretation. Moderation of pupils' work with local schools ensures consistency. Pupils learn about the global aspect of Christianity. One pupil explained how, 'Learning about Hinduism, helps us to understand the culture and religion of others'. Pupils demonstrate an informed and respectful understanding of a range of religions and worldviews.

Northaw is an inclusive Christian community where love is key. Surrounded by Christian values, pupils and adults are helped to realise the vision. Pupils are learning for tomorrow and leaders are ensuring this grows into the future. The whole school community is united in an inclusive understanding of faith and hope for the future.

	The effectiveness of RE is	Good
	The RE curriculum engages all pupils. Regular, accurate assessment of pupils and monitoring by leaders, demonstrates that teaching and learning in RE are consistently good. Pupils learn well and make good progress over time. Occasionally, the RE curriculum planning and learning intentions for lessons are not focused sufficiently on RE subject-specific knowledge. However, all pupils are challenged in RE lessons. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply and draw conclusions about big questions within lessons.	

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	07 July 2022	URN	117569
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2015		
School status	VA	NOR	109
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation			
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	St Albans		
Headteacher	James Inglis		

Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	In Line with National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)	The headteacher has been in post since April 2022, following a period of interim leadership. The proportion of pupils of White British heritage is above the national average.		
Inspector's name	Toby Long	No.	0896