

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Orton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Address Orton, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 3RG

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

Our school vision is to be an excellent place to learn: rooted in Christian values of love, forgiveness and hope; growing strong in a caring and safe environment; thriving and flourishing to go out into the world. A happy place to learn, grow and thrive. The Parable of The Sower Matthew 13:1-23

Key findings

- The school's Christian vision is deeply embedded. Children and adults flourish, growing strong in a caring and safe environment. It is a happy place to learn, grow and thrive. Families were well-supported during the pandemic. The school is highly inclusive, celebrating the uniqueness of every individual so that all feel valued.
- Collective worship is enriched by leadership from within school and the wider community. Monitoring and evaluation are not yet sufficiently developed to take account of the views of all adults and children. As a result, they do not accurately inform planning.
- The school's Christian vision supports the moral development of pupils. It is strongly based on the values of love, forgiveness and hope. However, there have been few opportunities to develop this further by addressing issues of social injustice and exploring global issues.
- The RE curriculum supports good teaching and learning. Pupils make sound progress. The RE leader is enthusiastic and supportive. As a result, teachers are confident in teaching this subject. Monitoring and assessment are effective, resulting in continuous development and improvement. Consequently, RE enables all pupils to flourish.
- Pupils' understanding of diversity is developing. RE provides some support for pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures. There are some opportunities in the wider curriculum for pupils to explore diversity. However, this is an area for development.

Areas for development

- Ensure that a thorough understanding of the views of pupils and other members of the school family feeds into self-evaluation of collective worship and informs development planning.
- Develop opportunities for pupils to explore global issues beyond their local area. This is so pupils are equipped to take the lead in social action and responding to injustice, gaining a deeper understanding of world events.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to engage with different faiths and cultures so that they further develop their understanding of diversity.

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 Christian vision is understood and embraced by leadership at all levels. It informs policy making and decisions, ensuring that it is fully embedded in the life of the school. Pupils and adults explain the vision using the Parable of the Sower. They recognise that the school provides a rich and fertile soil in which they can grow and thrive. The headteacher exemplifies the vision through developing middle leadership and supporting individual professional needs, providing opportunities for all to flourish. Adults appreciate her caring and nurturing approach. In embracing the vision, governors welcome opportunities to support others beyond the immediate school family. This was evident in the decision to allow the headteacher to take on an executive interim headship of another school when it was in need of support. The school has strong links with the diocese, local church and wider community. These relationships impact on the development of the vision. New governors undertake diocesan training which ensures that they monitor the impact of the vision. A review of the vision each year contributes to the vision being central in the life of the school.

The school's Christian values of love, forgiveness and hope are evident in the caring and nurturing learning environment. Pupils feel safe and secure and love coming to school. Consequently, behaviour is good. Children talk openly about the impact of the school's values on their relationships and relate them to Biblical stories. The school's vision and values had a positive impact throughout the Covid pandemic. Parents were supported well. They said that staff were concerned to ensure that the individual needs of each family were accounted for and they were compassionate in responding to individual circumstances. Actions such as the distribution of teddy bears to all pupils during Lockdown demonstrated a focus on mental health and wellbeing and a continued focus on flourishing.

The school curriculum promotes the vision of providing an excellent place to learn. It is enhanced by an environment in which pupils can thrive. The school's priority is to maintain four small classes with two year groups in each, rather than three larger classes with additional year groups. This ensures that learning is highly personalised, including for those with SEND and vulnerable pupils. Extra-curricular activities enhance opportunities for pupils to thrive. Singing is a particular strength of the school, providing opportunities to engage in activities with other schools as well as being a source of joy. The curriculum accommodates opportunities for spiritual development, including opportunities for quiet reflection, appreciating the inspiring local environment or discussions on the big questions of life.

Pupils have limited understanding of diversity and global issues. School leaders recognise the lack of diversity in the local community and opportunities to engage with wider global society. They have begun to address this so that children can flourish and thrive as they go out into the world. Recent actions such as purchasing literature to promote knowledge of diversity and curriculum opportunities such as learning about Nelson Mandela are seeking to widen pupils' awareness. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to think about wider global society, challenge injustice and undertake social action.

Worship is an important way in which the vision is shared with the community. Through worship, pupils gain a deep understanding of the school's Christian values. Pupils enjoy a variety of worship led by visitors, such as Open the Book, Charlie's Church and Fajita the visiting puppet. Worship provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their values, attitudes and behaviour within the context of Bible stories. Spaces for reflection, stillness and prayer are also evident in other areas of the school such as the Jesus and Me (JAM) Corner and the new school library. Pupils of all ages enjoy planning and delivering weekly child-led worship. Parents speak positively of the impact that collective worship has on their children. They supported the daily opportunities for worship during Lockdown. Staff appreciate the daily act of worship and speak of occasions when it has provided them with opportunities to reflect and be still. However, few opportunities exist to monitor and evaluate collective worship. This means that leaders do not have comprehensive and meaningful feedback to inform future planning and bring about continuous improvement.

Leadership of RE is strong. As a result, pupils enjoy RE and think deeply about their work. Training and advice from the diocese provide continued professional development to ensure continuous improvement. This has recently included support for the introduction of new teaching materials. These have been recent significant changes to the RE curriculum, but staff feel well-supported in delivering this as a result of training by the curriculum leader. The curriculum for Christianity develops understanding of skills and concepts across the key stages. Pupils have a positive attitude to diversity and learning about other faiths. They have enjoyed learning about Islam and Buddhism. As a result of the

school's vision, pupils feel safe and confident to share their views and reflect critically on their learning with their teachers and peers. Discussion and reflection are integral to their learning. However, they have few opportunities to engage with people of different faiths and cultures. This restricts their understanding. Although the school's remote location means this is challenging, it is a significant priority for development.

Orton is a caring and supportive school family where all feel valued and thrive. This has been particularly evident as it has faced the challenges of Covid and lockdowns. It is looking forward to the future with hope as it builds on current good practice.



The effectiveness of RE is

Good

Teaching and learning in RE are good. The curriculum is sequenced to build on prior learning. Confident teaching is underpinned by effective monitoring and assessment strategies that drive further improvement. Likewise, appropriate feedback promotes the development of RE skills and concepts. Effective teaching and support ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND and vulnerable pupils, make good progress.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	15 March 2022	URN	112419
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2015		
School status	Voluntary Aided Primary including nursery	NOR	61 including 5 in the nursery
Name of MAT/Federation	N/A		
Diocese / Methodist District	Carlisle		
Headteacher	Emma Pomfret		
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 school is situated in a remote rural area		
Inspector's name	Joanna Brookes	No.	C1804