



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Rudham C of E Primary Academy

Address School Road, East Rudham, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 8RF

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

The school's vision is based on the parable of the sower and helps children to navigate the rocky patches of life to help them find solid ground to grow in.

'We aspire to sow the seeds to allow children to flourish through the field of life and create generous, spirited, lifelong learners.'

Luke 8:11 The seed of the word is God.

Key findings

- The Christian vision is successfully woven into the everyday life of the school. It underpins plans, actions and the support to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.
- The school benefits from the strong leadership of a highly committed headteacher. The governing body are proactive and dedicated. Leaders at all levels are passionate about fulfilling the vision.
- Pupils learn about global injustice and enjoy raising money for charity. However, opportunities for them to lead social action projects as well as act as agents of change are yet to be developed.
- Religious education (RE) is well led and managed. Pupils enjoy the subject. They have a good understanding of other faiths, but their knowledge of Christianity is not as secure.
- A bespoke curriculum, underpinned by the vision, provides a wide variety of enrichment opportunities and additional experiences. This contributes to the rounded development and flourishing of all.
- Collective worship is an important part of the school day. Pupils enjoy listening to Bible stories, discussing the school's values and singing together. The educational value of this time is clear but spiritual opportunities for worship and reflection are limited.

Areas for development

- Strengthen pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, through RE, as a living and diverse faith, so they can benefit from a deeper understanding of the teachings of Jesus.
- Further develop collective worship so that it becomes a distinctively Christian, spiritual experience.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to grow into courageous advocates for positive change in the world, fuelled by a sense of compassion and a concern for justice.

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

Rudham is a caring school, deeply committed to the flourishing of every pupil and adult. Leaders articulate with passion and practical illustration how the Christian vision, based on the Biblical story the parable of the sower, underpins its work. Strong leadership is provided by the executive headteacher who established the sharing of expertise across the federation of three schools. Governors monitor the impact of the vision and evaluate its influence on school life. Restrictions on visits have not been a barrier to the support and challenge they offer.

The vision drives strategic decisions, including those with financial implications. This includes subscribing to a special educational needs service which reduces wait times for interventions. Parents who previously struggled to access support value this and pupils flourish because of the provision they receive.

Rudham is fully inclusive, and pupils are welcomed and accepted as they are, for who they are. Vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils are well cared for. Parents describe the school as supportive and appreciate staff who listen and help. Staff wisely and sensitively adapt the curriculum to reflect the rural context of the school and challenge and meet the needs of every child. Continued emotional, social, and academic support is available through the school's post lockdown recovery curriculum, including good provision for mental health.

All describe the school as a family where everyone works together for the benefit of all. As one pupil said, 'someone will always pick you up if you fall down.' Restorative principles underpin the behaviour policy, enabling pupils to practice forgiveness and reconciliation when disagreements take place. Pupils delight in each other's achievements through a strong culture of celebration and a wide range of awards such as artist of the month.

The Bible story underpinning the vision (how seeds can grow in different types of soil) supports the school community to learn. Pupils reflect on how the rocky patches in life, such as those experienced during the pandemic, can be character building. This teaching continues to be embedded in school life where pupils are taught strategies to build resilience and perseverance. As one pupil said 'we can flourish even during the tough times'. Families appreciated the additional support offered during the pandemic. Food parcels were provided for those in need. The allocation of school places during lockdown was sensitively managed. Regular communication and online collective worship enabled the community to feel connected during a time of isolation.

The vision underpins a rich curriculum. Topics such as 'secrets of the pyramids' excite pupils to learn. Visits, visitors and workshops provide further enrichment and bring learning alive. Pupils enjoy opportunities to respond creatively across a range of subjects. They are proud of their artwork and vibrant displays. A wide variety of after school and lunch time clubs are also available. These provide additional opportunities for flourishing.

The spiritual development of pupils is taken seriously with planned opportunities for children to reflect and 'simply be'. Godly play (a style of telling bible stories) creates a safe space to reflect and wonder. The pilgrimage to the shrine at Walsingham was planned as both an educational and spiritual experience.

The school is outward looking. There is an aspiration for every child to learn about the wider global society. The curriculum enables pupils to understand disadvantage and the exploitation of the natural world through topics on extreme earth and deforestation, for example. Pupils raise considerable sums for charity such as Kitz4Kids and 'The Eilidh Brown Memorial Fund'. Pupils vote on where to donate harvest collections. Compassion for others motivates pupil participation in these events organised by the school or by parents. However, pupils are not yet independent courageous advocates for change, who identify and lead their own social action projects in response to identified injustices.

Collective worship is valued by all. During this time pupils encounter Biblical teaching, enjoy listening to stories, singing favourite songs and reflecting on Bible verses. From knowledge gained in collective worship, they explain how Biblical proverbs helps them make good choices. Pupils appreciate how the takeaway thought at the end of worship enables them to put into practice what they have heard. Worship begins with a liturgy using a Bible, cross and candle. However, their use has not yet been refined, so pupils are unclear of their significance. Words spoken remind children of the purpose of worship, but opportunities for them, and adults, to think, reflect and connect with something other than themselves are missed. Worship is not consistently a spiritual experience as a result. The educational value of collective worship is strong. Teachers ask open questions and pupils engage in thoughtful discussion. Pupils

understand that prayer during worship is invitational. They say, ‘prayer makes me feel safe.’ Due to covid restrictions opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship are limited. However, the school is re-establishing these roles. Pupils led the harvest service for parents at the village hall and recount the experience with great pride.

RE has a high profile. Pupils enjoy opportunities to think deeply, exploring questions such as ‘why do people have different views about the idea of ‘God’?’ They explain core beliefs in world religions and worldviews. This is not reflected when they speak about the Christian faith, however. Pupils describe Jesus as ‘a brilliant man’ but make no reference to his special status as God’s son. Philosophy was chosen as a focus for home learning in RE during lockdown. As a result, this is a strength, but pupil’s theological understanding is not yet as secure. Plans are in place to redress this imbalance.

The RE leader is a subject ambassador for the trust and leads the subject effectively. Leaders ensure RE is well resourced and training provided. Online activities replace visits which were a feature of RE before the pandemic. Floor books celebrating pupil work demonstrate high standards of enquiry. There is a commitment to RE induction for staff new to the school to ensure high standards are sustained.

Contextual information about the school

| | | | |
|--|---|-----|--------|
| Date of inspection | 24 November 2021 | URN | 142852 |
| Date of previous inspection | 8 May 2015 | | |
| School status | Academy inspected as VC | NOR | 79 |
| Name of MAT/Federation | The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust Hope Federation | | |
| Diocese | Norwich | | |
| Headteacher | Belinda Allen | | |
| 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 is above national averages. | | |
| Additional significant information (if needed) | Since September three new teachers have been appointed including an early career teacher and a 50% job share with the head of school. | | |
| Inspector’s name | Gemma Taylor | No. | |