



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. Cuthbert's CofE Primary School

Address

The Chase, Great Glen, Leicester. LE8 9EQ

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

Doing all the good we can, through faith, love and excellence.

'This is what the Lord requires of you: to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God.' Micah 6:8

Key findings

- Clearly defined Christian values are firmly embedded and promoted, developing aspiration and hope in pupils. The whole staff team readily articulate the influence of the school's Christian character in their lives, but the wider school community are less able to share knowledge of the redefined vision statement.
- Governors have a comprehensive strategic plan although monitoring and evaluation of its impact on the school's Christian vision is not robust.
- There are strong links with the local Anglican church. The vicar and church team offer positive support to the Christian character of the school.
- Remote daily collective worship during lockdown and beyond was accessed by many families, giving a sense of unity and resilience. However, there are limited opportunities for personal prayer and spiritual reflection at present.
- Religious Education (RE) is effective because pupils understand and explain why it is crucial in preparing them to be citizens in a multi-cultural society.

Areas for development

- Promote and develop greater understanding of the school's redefined Biblically based vision within the school and beyond so that all have a deepening knowledge and are enabled to flourish.
- Ensure governors deliver their strategic plan by establishing a rigorous system of monitoring and evaluation to ensure the school's distinctively Christian nature is maintained.
- Develop a clear and secure understanding of and approach to spirituality and provide greater opportunities in collective worship for personal prayer and reflection to encourage spiritual development.

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 overarching Christian vision statement was redefined in the early stages of the pandemic and as yet, has not been widely promoted beyond the school environment. Life at St Cuthbert's has been impacted significantly by the Covid pandemic, not only during imposed lockdowns but as a result of ongoing pockets of high case levels in school. Despite restrictions, the whole school community articulate how they have flourished during difficult times, explaining how the school's Christian vision has given them guidance and resilience. There are two sets of values which are important to the school. Christian values linked to the vision statement and learning values which reflect pupils' learning behaviours. These are distinctly separate, but both shape the school's purposes in developing character. Bible stories are readily related to the values. The text in documents accompanying the vision is lengthy. As a result, the meaning is not always clear. Display boards promote the values in a visual way through the words of songs, each linked to a Bible verse. Policies explicitly reference the vision to ensure that it is at the forefront of decisions made.

'The family of St. Cuthbert's is a school community following in the footsteps of Christ and built on the teachings and traditions of the Church of England.' Governors readily refer to the statement regarding 'The Christian foundation of St. Cuthbert's'. It is considered in discussions and decisions including financial spending to shape development plans and actions. Monitoring and evaluation takes place but is not yet cohesive and robust enough to impact fully on improvements. Positive partnerships with other Church of England schools are developing for mutual support and sharing good practice.

Many speak of the strong leadership of the headteacher and her 'living out' the school's Christian values in difficult circumstances. There is a unity amongst the staff team irrespective of their role. They describe work expectations as 'being realistic', how trust has been built and well-being given high priority. They speak of receiving well-being packages, being recipients of an anonymous 'kindness mug' and an 'open door' policy in school. This sense of encouragement, empathy and Christian love radiates from staff who were eager to share experiences in a school where all beliefs are valued, and they feel supported.

Pupil mental health and well-being is given high priority. An Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) takes a significant role in supporting families and pupils and coordinating a range of unique and relevant initiatives. Activities during lockdown included individual phone calls, one to one Zoom sessions and home visits if required. In conjunction with the local vicar, food parcels were delivered to vulnerable families and other members of the community. One parent described the assistance given as 'brilliant.' The ELSA offers a range of interventions including psychological help, self-confidence, esteem and anger management support. One activity, making 'emotion' biscuits, enables pupils to chat through their worries and concerns. Pupils are clear that behaviour is good and any disagreements which do occur are dealt with fairly and quickly. They talk openly with staff about issues relating to gender and equality. They say they are encouraged to respect others and articulate a greater awareness of difference as the school becomes more diverse.

The curriculum has recently been revised into thematic units. Progression grids are used to track pupil's knowledge and key skills. This is now being trialled in RE which is taught in half termly blocks linked to curriculum themes wherever possible. Pupils speak of simultaneous teaching, for example learning about India and Hinduism at the same time which gives them greater understanding. The statutory entitlement for RE is met. Pupils enjoy learning about religion when it is fun and engaging such as through drama or art enabling them to achieve well. They can remember visiting places of worship pre-pandemic. The vicar also contributes to RE with the 'St Cuthbert's Trail' focussing on the Easter story and the theme of salvation. One pupil said RE was important because, 'it gives us a good understanding of the world's cultures and religions so that when we're older we won't insult people and can explain their beliefs.'

Due to current restrictions, collective worship still takes place remotely. Although each class accesses worship in their classrooms, pupils contribute through the chat feature, making thoughtful and applicable reflections. Parents articulate how daily 'live' collective worship during lockdown was valued and appreciated in bringing the community together. The local church congregation provides strong support with the vicar and support worker regularly leading times of

worship. Invitational prayer and reflection times take place, but pupils were unable to express the particular importance of personal prayer and reflection in their daily lives. The school does not yet have a shared definition of spirituality. Prior to school closures, the pupil Worship Workshop team played a key role in in planning and leading collective worship. Currently the staff team have a greater involvement because of operating remotely. They collaborate to plan worship experiences. A weekly 'Picture News' themed worship time encourages pupils to have a greater awareness of life beyond their locality and challenges them to think about social action, for example.

The school council meets regularly. They explain how they were involved in the choice of words for the vision statement through discussion and class votes. Pupils take part in fundraising for several charitable initiatives including national causes however these are usually chosen by adults. They are currently raising funds to support a former pupil who continues to be considered as part of the 'school family'.

St Cuthbert's has 'blossomed' during very difficult times. This school community is working towards 'doing all the good it can through its vision of faith, love and excellence' and has relished recent challenges. Opportunities taken by leaders have ensured that the Christian vision is lived out in creative and innovative ways and provides a solid foundation for pupils and staff to flourish.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	6 December 2021	URN	120131
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2015		
School status	Voluntary Controlled Maintained Primary	NOR	294
Name of MAT/Federation	None		
Diocese / Methodist District	Leicester		
Headteacher	Jenny Hawkins		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below with national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	The school was judged to require improvement by Ofsted in November 2019.		
Inspector's name	Joy Hardy	No.	944