

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Townlands Church of England VC Primary School

Address Meadowcourt Road, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire, United Kingdom, LE9 7FF

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

Excellent

The impact of collective worship

Excellent

School's vision

A journey of learning in the light of God's love. "What shall we say the Kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade." The parable of the mustard seed - Mark 4:30-32

Key findings

- Exemplary leadership by the headteacher and senior leaders ensure the Christian vision underpins the inclusive environment where the whole community are respected and celebrated. The Christian vision is thoroughly embedded by dedicated staff and committed governors who are passionate in driving school improvement, reaching beyond the school walls.
- Pastoral care and support for mental health and wellbeing is highly effective, nurture is paramount across the school to enable pupils and staff to flourish as unique children of God.
- Collective worship is invitational, inclusive and integral to school life. The power of prayer and reflection are evident across all aspects of school.
- Spiritual development is carefully woven throughout the curriculum, children value opportunities for stillness to explore their inner self.
- The RE lead is excellent in her role. Through high quality provision pupils are inspired by RE, they actively explore different faiths and feel empowered to ask big questions in a safe environment.

Areas for development

- To further embed opportunities for prayer and reflection to deepen spiritual growth of the whole 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

Leaders are hugely proud of their school. United by their vision, they strive to enrich the lives of everyone, enabling them to flourish within an aspirational, nurturing, and loving learning community. The parable of the mustard seed is living and breathing throughout the whole school community. Everyone is supported to grow with firm roots from a tiny seed to a mighty tree.

Led by the Christian vision, governors monitor very effectively and challenge the school through evaluating the impact it has on learning. Curriculum design and continued professional development are a key focus area for governors. Staff are challenged appropriately to ensure all decisions made ensure all children flourish within a distinctively Christian learning community. Governors work closely with staff and are weekly visitors to school actively involved in all areas of school life. Their monitoring ensures staff wellbeing is central to strategic planning. Flexible working practices for staff are in place created to help the children receive the best possible education and ensure that staff have a positive work life balance.

The inclusivity of the Christian vision is seen through its impact on the life of the adults in school, staff retention is high. The school has excellent partnerships with local universities and teaching providers. Through this numerous staff began as volunteers and subsequently through the support and nurture within school have entered the teaching profession. Staff cherish the opportunities they are given. They speak highly of the senior leadership team and the excellent support they are given both as professionals and individuals. The school actively works with the diocese and values this strong relationship.

A well-resourced and highly skilled pastoral team ensures positive mental health is prioritised for all. The leaders took the bold decision to employ a mental health lead during the pandemic to work alongside the special educational needs co-ordinator and safeguarding lead to support individual pastoral needs. Through the exceptional nurturing and support pupils are enabled to flourish at their own levels and make the most of their God-given talents. Pupils thrive as a result which parents speak highly of and commend the care, compassion and support the pupils receive. Families feel empowered to support their children at home through the excellent guidance and help they receive from the school. Family workshops are well attended and cover all areas of the curriculum. Through these very positive connections are made between home and school, impacting clearly on pupils' development.

Pupils are extremely passionate about their roles of responsibility within the school. They link these roles to their understanding of the Christian vision and the school values. Pupils understand that living together harmoniously can sometimes be difficult. The core value of forgiveness is at the heart of the school and the children talk about how it is important to forgive others and reconcile differences, based on respect for ourselves and others. They take pride in actively contributing to school policies. Recently they helped rewrite the behaviour policy based on forgiveness. Behaviour is exemplary because of the respectful and consistent way in which expectations are modelled and lived out by the whole community. Pupils are enthusiastic about the roles they have in school. Peer mediators and anti-bullying ambassadors are incredibly proactive on the playground as part of 'Happy lunchtimes.' They organise different activities daily and support children playing together with respect and understanding. Areas of prayer and reflection are actively used by pupils and staff. Pupils passionately talk about the power of prayer and the ability to reflect and how this helps them have a relationship with God.

Pupils use their wisdom to be advocates of change in their local area. Excellent examples include the children selling old toys and pre loved books for local projects within the community. Through the school values of hope and respect pupils set up a litter picking group after they were not happy with the state of their local park. This has developed into further work on protecting the planet for the future. The pupils became very aware of the need to reuse and recycle through the litter picks. One pupil talked about work they had done with the Co-Op on the amount of plastic packaging and how this could be reduced.

Collective worship is highly inclusive, invitational, and integral to the life of the school. The Christian vision underpins all worship and allows everyone, pupils and adults, the opportunities to engage. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about worship and how it influences them as individuals. Worship is led by a variety of different people, who offer different worship styles that contribute effectively to the spiritual development of the pupils. All pupils from foundation stage through to Year 6 lead worship and take ownership of it. Faith ambassadors carry out constructive evaluations weekly and feed back thoughts and ideas to the worship lead. Pupils reflect deeply on biblical stories and their connections to everyday life. The school values its relationship with the local church and embraces the theological involvement the clergy have in school supporting both the pupils and staff with worship and RE. Strong community connections through the church are embedded following innovative practice during lockdown to engage families in daily worship. One pupil talked about the importance of worship at home reflecting on being together as one family within the community.

RE is an extremely safe space where pupils can explore their own, and the faiths and beliefs of others. Pupils state that everyone is allowed to express their own opinions and it is acceptable to disagree. They are

incredibly proud of the work they produce and talk eloquently about Christianity and world faiths. The children are enthused by big questions they are encouraged to both ask and respond to; this is now embedded across other curriculum areas. Opportunities for spiritual growth are woven throughout all curriculum areas. RE is led exceptionally well. All leaders are passionate that pupils should have real life experiences to enhance their understanding of faith and religion within the local diverse community and beyond. Staff and pupils within school enthuse about being able to share their faith and beliefs with others to support the teaching of RE. The RE lead actively supports other schools within the teaching alliance delivering continued professional development on RE. All subject leaders work closely with the local secondary school subject leaders. They create curriculum plans that link intrinsically ensuring the children have a coherent progressive learning journey from the foundation stage through to secondary education.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	23 June 2022	URN	141630
Date of previous inspection	07 May 2015		
School status	VC	NOR	355
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation	SAT		
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Leicester		
Headteacher	Marie Ward		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Above National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)	Townlands is a large primary school with 355 children on roll. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities is above the national average. Townlands became an Academy in January 2015.		
Inspector's name	Julia Marshall	No.	0980