

# Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

## Christ Church CofE Primary School, Newark

**Address** Flaxley Lane, Middlebeck, Newark, United Kingdom, NG24 3XB

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

We want our pupils to experience life in all its fullness and seek to ensure deep personal growth. We aim to help our pupils discover who they are and who they might be. We promote a take care ethos and encourage our children to take care of other people and the environment. We encourage our children to go beyond expectation and to shine in all that they do. Growing together in faith, hope and love.  
Let your light shine Matt 5:16 Life in all its fullness John 10:10

### Key findings

- The motto 'learning and growing together in faith hope and love' is known to pupils, parents and staff. The values 'faith, hope and love' are lived out in the daily life of the school. The resilience, commitment and determination demonstrated by staff through the changes of school size, building and location are admired by governors and the Diocese of Nottingham and Southwell and seen as an outworking of the vision. Links between the biblical basis for the motto (Cor. 13:13) and the vision statement and the values which underpin them are less explicit.
- Leaders, including governors, work together and make decisions for the benefit of all. Strong relationships with local churches and the Diocese of Nottingham and Southwell have shaped the design of the new school building, helping it to live out its vision.
- Opportunities for spiritual growth are planned across the curriculum and take place in collective worship. A shared understanding of spiritual development is at an early stage.

- As the school is established in a new building in a different location, leaders, including governors, are determined to continue to live out the vision of the school as 'Christ's church' at the heart of the community. The school is place of welcome, creating a sense of belonging and a focus for all those moving into the area.
- Pupils enjoy learning about major world religions including, from Christianity, in religious education (RE). Although systems which help teachers know what and how pupils have learnt in RE are in place, they are not developed to take into account necessary changes to practice as the school grows.

### Areas for development

- Consolidate understanding of the vision and values statements so that each is known to be distinct from, but complementary to, the other. Embed understanding of and links between the two, and which develop as the school grows.
- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality that is understood by all, so that pupils and adults grow spiritually through planned and unplanned opportunities.
- Develop systems which build on existing practice, so that teachers, including those new to the school, know how and what pupils are learning in RE.

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

Christ Church CofE school has undergone rapid and significant change over past years. Initially a smaller than average infant and nursery school, it is now transitioning into to a large, all through primary school. Moving to purpose-built premises, it essentially opened as a brand-new school in September 2021. Leaders are passionate that the school will continue to fulfil its vision in a new role and in a different place. They are proud of the part the school plays in establishing the community growing around it and in developing a sense of belonging to those moving to the area. This has not been without documented challenges, including significant flooding to the building shortly after the school moved in. Despite the rapid changes and challenges presented by moving to a new site, staff have demonstrated determination, hope and faith, reflecting the vision and values the school lives by. Leaders, including at the diocese, are proud of the resilience shown by staff, who see overcoming barriers as an outworking of the school's Christian vision. Artefacts, such as photographs, were brought from the Victorian school building and are displayed around the school. Aspects of the previous vision are incorporated into the vision for the new school. These provide roots from which the new church school community is growing. Situated on a housing development, increases in pupil numbers are frequent and ongoing. When their children join the school, parents experience welcome, kindness and support from staff, illustrating Christian love. Activities for families are set up through the Christ Church Network, which help families to meet and make new friends. Newly appointed staff feel equally welcomed. They appreciate the induction days, which include church school distinctiveness.

Leaders, including governors, are mindful of the school's role of representing 'Christ's church' in the locality and work together to build community so that all live well together. A worship centre is included in the school building for use as a church. The diocese shares this vision and has 'walked with the school' during its ongoing journey. Diocesan officers have assisted in planning the new building, ensuring that plans for the new worship centre are given due importance and the area is 'fit for purpose'.

The vision statement and motto were developed alongside the move to new premises. Pupils who had been at the old site recognise them and explain that the vision 'is what we think our school should be like' and the aims 'show us how we can shine'. As pupils join the school, they understand the importance of the motto, especially the values 'faith, hope and love'. They provide examples of how they are used each day, in resolving playground issues, for example. The significance of the longer vision statement, including the Bible verses, is less clear to them. Leaders are aware of this. Also, of the importance of consolidating, embedding and understanding the motto, vision and values with all members of the school community as staff and pupil numbers grow.

The curriculum is written with the intention of enabling all pupils to 'shine', including as each new pupil and year group join the school. It is rooted in Christian values. Each term, a different value drives the main curriculum focus. For example, 'patience' is linked to learning how to wait and how time passes. Also, about how historical knowledge is gathered and shared. The core values of faith hope and love 'filter' across the curriculum. Written curriculum plans include opportunities for spiritual development. These are not implemented in lessons. 'Prayer stops' around the school and class reflection areas provide opportunities for pupils to think, pray and reflect during the day, and are used by some pupils. A shared understanding of spirituality is not in place to support new staff joining the school so that they can recognise planned and unplanned opportunities for spiritual development and make the most of them.

The school takes pride in being inclusive. Leaders promote that the best way to learn is by establishing connections and feeling safe. Building strong relationships between adults and children is given high priority. Committed to enabling all to succeed and enjoy 'life in all its fullness' all pupils have access to academic or other help as it is needed. Pupils with additional needs receive specific and flexible support. Parents note positive changes as a result of extra help. Trips away and visitors to the school support pupils' learning and extend their knowledge and love of the world. A trip to the county council offices supported their understanding of British Values, for example. Pupils enjoy after school clubs where they can discover and develop skills, 'and shine' in areas such as music and sport. A popular Bible club run by a local church meets weekly. Pupils are able to ask questions, challenge and explore aspects of faith in a supportive environment. Governors are actively engaged in all aspects of school life. Alongside the diocese, they have contributed to plans for the new building. They put 'the hopes and aspirations of pupils and staff first' when discussing strategic issues. In line with the vision, they make bold financial decisions 'in faith'. To fund additional staff, for example. Wellbeing has a high priority during governor visits. Staff appreciate their visibility and feel valued that they 'notice' what they are doing. Foundation governors undertake monitoring of church school distinctiveness, including of collective worship. Pupil voice, where their views are shared across the school, is developing. The school council makes suggestions on how to improve the school and pupils enjoy organising fund raising activities. Collective worship is an important time for pupils and adults. Responses are used to settle into stillness. Pupils learn from Bible stories about the relevance of faith in today's world. This is reinforced by actions through the week, such as hiding a toy sheep around the school, illustrating the Parable of the lost sheep and that 'God's love is always with us'. Close partnerships exist with local Anglican churches and churches of different denominations. Their clergy regularly lead worship. This ensures pupils experience a range of worship styles. Prayer is invitational, and pupils contribute with suggestions of what to pray for. There is no formal involvement of pupils in leading worship as yet. Successes – both inside and outside of school - are celebrated particularly during Friday assemblies. A range of resources for RE provide the basis of the school's written plans. These are not yet fully implemented across the school, including learning about other worldviews and from Christianity as a living world faith. Pupils understand the importance of learning about major world religions and demonstrate knowledge of them. Learning from Christianity, they know about God the father, God the son and God the holy spirit because of the candle with three wicks used in collective worship. They ask and debate 'big questions' in RE and learn to disagree well.

	<b>The effectiveness of RE is</b>	<b>Good</b>
	RE meets the expectations of RE in the Church of England schools. Leaders undertake monitoring of RE, ensuring the quality of teaching and learning is at least good. Pupil work is reviewed at the end of each RE module, so that teachers know how and what pupils are learning. Consistent systems to support this as the school grows are not yet in place.	

### Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	30 September 2022	URN	122792
Date of previous inspection	19 May 2015		

School status	VA	NOR	145
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation			
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Southwell & Nottingham		
Headteacher	Alison Richardson Acting headteachers - Harriet Jackson/Donna Cobb		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Above National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Below National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)	At the time of inspection, the leadership team comprised two acting heads.		
Inspector's name	Rachel Beeson	No.	0952