

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Gayton Church of England Primary School

Address Bugbrooke Road, Gayton, Northampton, United Kingdom, NN7 3EU

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

Small enough to care, Large enough to inspire, Valuing All God's children
 'All things are possible for one who believes' Mark 9:23

Key findings

- The school's distinctive Christian vision that 'All things are possible' is the heartbeat and driving force of all action and policy. Leaders have built a school culture which supports, nurtures and empowers, ensuring all flourish.
- Leaders' visionary aspiration to 'inspire' is evident, fostering self-confidence, creativity, curiosity and embraces and encourages wonder. However, there are opportunities to further develop spirituality across the wider curriculum.
- The school's life affirming and life enhancing community is built on the bedrock of the Christian vision. All flourish and many speak of supportive care that is transformational.
- Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspirational; it is dynamic, exciting, biblical and life instructing. There are opportunities, post pandemic, to re-instate pupil involvement in the planning and delivery of worship.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about Christianity and all major world faiths, thoughtfully articulating their convictions and opinions. Whilst assessment systems are in place for religious education (RE), further development, capturing a broader range of thinking, would be helpful.

Areas for development

- Broaden opportunities to develop spirituality across the wider curriculum so the school community can continually review and reflect.
- Embed opportunities for pupils to plan and lead Collective worship so that creativity, confidence and spirituality can be further developed.

- Refine assessment opportunities in RE to further reflect the depth of pupil understanding and thinking more effectively.

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 passionate about the immense value that a small school can give to its learners and wider community. The distinctive Christian vision reflects this belief. It is clear, in the day to day life of the school, that the vision is outworked with extraordinary effectiveness. Leaders ensure that all are cared for, pupils are inspired and each member of the school community is valued. Renewed confidence transforms individuals, motivating staff and pupils to achieve aspirational goals that may have previously seemed unreachable. Potential is identified, self-belief is instilled and all are inspired to be their very best. The culture of empowerment has invigorated pupils and staff. This has resulted in career, personal, academic or spiritual development for many. Leaders have supported the professional development of staff which has, in turn, built strength, stability and capacity. The school itself has been part of the transformational process. Since the last inspection, it has developed from one with a falling roll, to one which has grown and expanded. Rigorous monitoring of the impact of vision by leaders ensures continuous school improvement. Senior staff are now able to share expertise beyond the federation. Formal partnerships established with other small schools have been mutually beneficial. Expertise and faith inspire leadership and then flow from the school through the federation and beyond. Leaders are supporting a number of small schools on their journey of development. As a result, institutional viability is strengthened and many schools are enabled and flourish.

The distinctive vision has been applied to pupils' learning. The curriculum design is based on a continuous provision model with the 5 Cs at its heart. Being curious, creative, Christian, confident and having a sense of community are learning behaviours evident in abundance. Leaders have expertly assessed the needs of their community and have established the curriculum key drivers of oracy and diversity. These are expertly woven into a culture of learning. Pupil achievement is high, pupil engagement and resilience, exemplary. Learners look beyond themselves, ask big questions and are not afraid to contemplate mystery and meaning. Pupils are self-motivated, independent and unusually confident to express their questions and ideas. Pupils flourish here. Where appropriate, individualised learning is offered for children with additional needs. Leaders value the development of all, whatever their starting point, physically, socially, emotionally and academically. This has led to exceptional progress for many. Some have overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles on their learning journey. An innovative approach to enable families who home school has been adopted. This flexible approach has ensured inclusion and is highly praised by families. The parent of a pupil who is home schooled for part of the week, was highly complementary of the school's bespoke approach. As well as pupils being encouraged to wonder why and question, prayer areas and bespoke spaces are available for personal reflection. There are opportunities to further embed this successful approach to spirituality. Pupils have a developing sense of social conscience, looking to support the poor and to support local initiatives as well as national charities.

Leaders relentlessly apply the distinctively Christian vision of belief that all things are possible and all individuals are valued. The sense of community is powerful. There is a culture of welcome, acceptance and doing good to one another. It is inspired by the vision, modelled by the headteacher and has been adopted by all. This is indeed a place where watching over one another in love is normal. Speaking of leaders, a number of staff used the phrase they 'believed in me'. One explained their 'massive journey' from a 'fragile place' to a position of responsibility. Staff consistently praise the supportive team, where wellbeing is central, and the school community is thriving. Staff development is strong. Potential is spotted and opportunities given; disaffection is transformed to career satisfaction and advancement. Pupils transferring from other schools settle quickly, feeling part of the community due to the love and kindness shown. Behaviour is commendable. Pupils speak of resolving differences with forgiveness. Drawing and Talking therapies are offered, to help them. Consequently, they find new inner strength and an ability to process emotions. Support leads to increased focus in school and the reduction of anxiety. There is an all-encompassing acceptance of people. A parent of a pupil with SEND praised the school ethos of celebrating and embracing difference. Through policy and practice, all members of the school community are protected and flourish.

Collective worship is a central part of the school day. Leaders have ensured that the vision 'to inspire' is outworked within it. A number of pupils say worship is their favourite time in school. It is invitational with call and response, and multiple opportunities for thoughtful reflections to be shared by pupils. They are invited to take part in drama and answer questions. There is a sense of energy and delight in worshipping together.

Pupils say that they enjoy the 'jazzy songs'. They contribute by reading the prayers as well as being responsible for technology. Small groups of pupils are assigned to evaluate worship each week. There are further opportunities for pupils to be involved with the planning of collective worship so that the spiritual life of the school is enriched. They have the opportunity to freely use prayer spaces without compulsion. Prayer has helped pupils when they have been going through difficult times. The school enjoys a positive and highly effective relationship with the local vicar who leads worship every week. The school holds services at the church during the year that are appreciated by all. In response to collective worship, some speak of a developing personal faith, others of genuine enjoyment.

Leaders have ensured that RE is treated as an important subject, with two subject coordinators. The school's provision reflects the Church of England statement of entitlement. Pupils are proud of their work and can readily talk about their learning. Progress is evident and deep reflections abundant. The school ensures that, along with Christianity, diversity of faith and thought is studied. Visits to the school by members of the Sikh community and the Jewish faith have inspired all. Pupils are highly engaged and creative ways of tackling the subject are evident. A strong feature of the curriculum is the pupils' confidence to ask questions and discuss their personal views. Whilst there is an assessment system in place, it does not capture the depth of thought and discussion pupils exhibit. Leaders have set the reviewing and refining of assessment in RE as a school development target.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	28 September 2022	URN	121971
Date of previous inspection	10 June 2015		
School status	VC	NOR	64
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation	Forest CE Federation		
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Peterborough		
Headteacher	Eliza Hollis		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Below National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Below National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)	Gayton CE primary is a smaller than average school. Pupils are of White British ethnicity. All pupils speak English as their first language. The school has recently expanded from two classes to three classes. Levels of mobility are higher than average. The school joined the Forest CE federation in 2016 and works in close partnership with three other small village schools.		
Inspector's name	Jane Trampnow	No.	0954