

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

The Norman Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	School Lane, Northwold, IP26 5NB
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
<p>Our vision is to ensure that children of all faiths and none can be the best that they can be, in an environment where everyone is valued, respected and challenged. In our school, individuals are supported in their personal journey of learning, growth and development, within an ethos of nurture, encouragement and love.</p> <p>'A cord of three strands is not easily broken' Ecclesiastes 4:12</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmth and welcome are a feature of this school which is deeply rooted in its rural community. Every child and family are known well, with a focus on meeting individual needs. • The Christian vision is highly important to the school and well articulated. Leaders are committed to raising the aspiration of pupils, through developing a learning community where all can flourish. Opportunities to develop courageous advocacy are limited. • The Christian vision acknowledges the strength of the Trinity Partnership of three schools. Pupils, staff and leadership benefit from shared opportunities to develop experiences, skills and support. • The well planned religious education (RE) curriculum is rich and creative, encouraging thoughtful discussion. However there are less opportunities for global learning and partnerships. • Collective worship is inclusive and engaging. It has Christian values at its heart and enables pupils to reflect and make connections. However overall in collective worship and the curriculum there are not enough opportunities for spiritual development.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop further opportunities for global learning. This is to enable pupils to develop their understanding of the world. • Build on pupils' current experience of helping others to enable them to become courageous advocates for justice for other people and to raise awareness of the need for social change. • Define clearly and share widely the school's definition of spirituality, mapping opportunities for its development across the curriculum. This is to enable the spiritual development of pupils and adults.



Inspection findings

The vision is integral to the working of this good Church school to which pupils and adults are proud to belong. The Christian vision underpins school life and the trinity is used to illustrate a range of collaborations involving the school. As one school of the Trinity Partnership of three, pupils and staff are enabled to flourish. The vision is introduced at pre-school and motivates pupils to work together and be the best they can be. It is displayed to make it meaningful for all and it is well known by pupils. Consequently, staff and pupils feel supported in their learning, growth and development.

Leadership has been strengthened by the appointment of a substantive headteacher and trust hub director. Partnerships are strong and include good links with the diocese, community and local church. Collaboration between the three local schools includes shared subject leadership, common resources and joint meetings on strategic direction. Wise leadership decisions are informed by the vision including developing wraparound care, improving pre-school provision and renewing the curriculum. The Trinity partnership provides strong support for pupils, staff and leaders and the chance to share workload, therefore enhancing wellbeing. Subject leaders have raised expectations and are ambitious for their pupils. Parents, families and the community are extremely supportive of the work of the school. Embodied by the headteacher, relationships throughout the school are welcoming, kind and respectful.

The vision is central to the curriculum and encourages pupils to be aspirational. Progress and attainment are improving, and pupils enjoy the opportunity to increase their knowledge and consider big questions. Experienced, dedicated staff work hard to support and enhance learning. The curriculum is designed to encourage ambition and aspiration and make pupils curious about the wider world. However, this is not yet fully developed. Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are carefully supported to develop and thrive. Practitioners and co-ordinators, shared across the three schools, enhance provision and provide support which would otherwise be difficult to offer. A popular breakfast club and extra-curricular activities facilitate wraparound care and are a direct support for families in this remote, rural community.

With the support of parents, attractive reflection areas have been developed inside the school and classrooms. Pupils and staff value the opportunity for pupils to use the areas for thought and quiet reflection. This provision is not yet developed in the outside environment. Collective worship offers pupils some opportunity for spiritual experiences and time to pray, think and reflect but this is limited. Opportunities for spiritual development are not yet identified within the curriculum, nor is there a shared definition of spirituality.

Underpinned by the ethos of nurture, encouragement and love, the vision impacts relationships. Local families have a long association with the school and its caring reputation has attracted new ones. Parents actively choose this provision and praise the school's encouragement for individuals. Families feel 'supported and not alone'. During the pandemic leaders were clear that every child needed the opportunity to continue learning regardless of home circumstances. Practical and considerate support was offered, from laptop provision and welfare calls to the recording of worship. Staff actively promote good mental health, helping pupils overcome anxieties and develop positive coping strategies in order to flourish. Consistent behaviour management, underpinned by the code of conduct - respectful, ready, safe, has had a positive impact. Year 6 leaders are responsible and valued role models for younger pupils in the playground. Pupils are taught to stay safe. Personal swimming survival is taught due to the proximity of a river. They learn mutual respect and that bullying, including




on-line, is unacceptable.

The Christian vision is evident through the good transition arrangements that are in place. This means that pupils settle quickly, often into pre-school, where carefully managed activities smooth the way into Reception. The oldest pupils become confident and independent examples for the youngest. The new curriculum builds pupils' experience of diversity, although this is an area to develop further. Children are encouraged to become the best they can be and inspired to become considerate members of society. Seemingly small acts, inspired by the vision, such as kindness, patience or litter-picking, are acknowledged and celebrated in the citizenship book. Thoughtful fundraising choices which include support for local and international charities are made by the democratically elected school council. To enable all to flourish, practical support was provided for families in need through a uniform drive. Personalised provision for local Ukrainian families enabled them to settle and become part of their new community. However, opportunities for courageous advocacy are not consistently provided. Council representatives took part in the children's parliament, encouraging further involvement and helping pupils understand their part in society. Community spirit, as demonstrated by the re-organisation of the pre-school after a flood, minimised disruption to the new pupils start to school.

Collective worship is carefully planned, underpinned by Christian values and includes liturgical features. Pupils are positively engaged and collective worship has an impact. The preparation of worship themes and materials means that the experience is understood and relevant to the lives of pupils. There is clear structure and routine, with opportunities for prayer and reflection. Christian symbolism such as candles and a cross are prominent. Year 6 leaders are involved in leading and evaluating the worship. Visiting the local church for celebrations and worship creates a sense of awe and wonder for pupils that they value. Church leaders are actively involved with the school, linking it to wider community activities. The strong links between the school and the church are important to both.

The RE lead, who works over all three schools, has introduced a creative and engaging RE curriculum, which is enthusiastically implemented by the staff. RE is well planned, engaging and given sufficient curriculum time. It balances the teaching of Christianity with world faiths. Professional development to improve subject knowledge has been delivered by the RE lead and well received by staff. Christian subject knowledge is supported by local church leaders. The RE scheme supports the delivery of focused lessons which engage the pupils and demand a range of responses. This means pupils who have talent in RE but difficulties with writing, still achieve well. Class scrapbooks and individual books demonstrate thoughtful responses made by pupils to their learning. Pupils feel learning about different religions in RE is important 'so you can make choices when you are grown up'.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good
	<p>The highly knowledgeable and committed RE lead has introduced and adapted a creative RE curriculum. Staff deliver engaging lessons about Christianity as well as major world religions and beliefs. Pupils consider and discuss big questions and knowledge organisers support the learning. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in RE.</p>		
Information			
School	The Norman Church of England VA Primary School	Inspection date	9 November 2022
URN	140914	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	Ely	Pupils on roll	114
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Anna Fisher		
	Jo Brown		
Inspector	Lynne Golding	No.	2124