

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

<b>Isham Church of England Primary School</b>	
Address	Church Street, Isham, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN14 1HD
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	<b>Good</b>
The impact of collective worship	<b>Good</b>
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	<b>Good</b>

<b>School's vision</b>
<p>'Encourage each other and build each other up.' 1 Thessalonians 5:11 Nurturing the infinite worth of every person through love, respect, perseverance, honesty and forgiveness.</p>
<b>Key findings</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vision to 'encourage each other' shapes the daily life of the school and its community. Modelled by senior leaders, pupils and adults work towards a common purpose. However, whilst the vision shapes behaviour and relationships, its overall impact is not monitored and evaluated to inform positive change.</li> <li>• The religious education (RE) curriculum reflects the school's vision and contributes to pupils' development. Presented as a living faith, pupils show a deep knowledge of Christianity. However, their understanding of world faiths and worldviews is less secure.</li> <li>• Collective worship is a significant moment in each day. However, its impact on the spiritual life of the school is not evaluated so that it can be celebrated and positive changes made where appropriate.</li> <li>• Planned opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum is in its infancy. Whilst there is a shared understanding of intent this is not embedded in all subjects.</li> <li>• Relationships across the whole school community are a strength because they are built upon the vision. Staff and pupils see the school as an extended family. This authenticity enables staff, families and pupils to live well together with dignity and respect.</li> </ul>
<b>Areas for development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a rigorous and strategic approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of the vision, including in collective worship. This is so that improvement planning is driven by self-evaluation from all stakeholders and results in positive change.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for pupils to broaden their knowledge in RE. This is to enable them to increase their understanding of world faiths and worldviews.</li> <li>• Establish a shared understanding of spirituality and create opportunities for courageous advocacy across the curriculum. This is so that staff are equipped to plan effectively for spiritual development across the wider curriculum. Also, pupils will become positive agents for change.</li> </ul>
<b>Inspection findings</b>
<p>Isham Church of England Primary School provides a nurturing and welcoming environment. The Christian vision underpins a caring community where pupils and adults 'encourage each other and build each other up'. Through the established Christian values, the dedicated staff team express the</p>

vision. As this is lived out, they get to know and nurture each pupil so that they can help them to grow. Peterborough Diocese Education Trust (PDET) know Isham well. With coherent and shared vision statements, Isham and the multi-academy trust (MAT) work in partnership to enhance positive outcomes for pupils and staff. There is a shared commitment to encouraging and building each other up to be the best they can be. The relationship with Peterborough Diocese is firmly established, providing staff with regular opportunities for professional development.

Pupils are at the centre of decision-making. Leaders talk articulately about the vision directing action. A range of personal development opportunities, including ELSA training and Lego therapy, have been made available to all staff, for example. As a result, they develop their pastoral skills and encourage pupils to flourish. However, although the vision has impact, this is not measured. Opportunities to link the vision to school improvement planning and other processes are missed. Consequently, this does not feed into strategic or daily planning.

Following the example of the headteacher, the staff team are keen to 'encourage' each other. The vision is clearly communicated to parents and pupils. This means that they know and engage with it eagerly. Staff speak of their delight in seeing their pupils and colleagues succeed. Individual pupil needs are identified early and by liaising with parents, tailored support is put in place quickly. Parents value that they are kept up to date with changes and events. They speak positively about the care that they, and their children, receive especially during times of personal challenge. One stated, 'We are comforted in the knowledge that the pastoral network is always there.'

Christian distinctiveness is promoted throughout the school environment through visual displays. 'The Big Frieze', which is centrally located in all classrooms, illustrates the core concepts from the Understanding Christianity RE Resource. This encourages pupils to dig deeper into the 'big story of the Bible'. Word art postcards are a source of encouragement in line with the vision. Examples of pupils' own artwork act as an expression of how the skills of each unique individual are valued. Displays exploring natural objects such as feathers, encourage pupils' inquisitiveness and offer opportunities to ask questions about the nature of God. Staff embody the vision in their relationships with others, leading to a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Consequently, behaviour across school is of a high standard and pupils are welcoming and polite.


The curriculum is designed so that pupils, including those with special educational needs, disabilities or are vulnerable, can flourish. Reading is creatively promoted. Pupils relish the opportunity to engage with a menu of texts which represent a diverse content. Titles allow children to enjoy learning about difference, neurodiversity, hope and joy from the perspectives of a range of characters. Authors and content come from a range of black and minority ethnic backgrounds. The 'mystery reader' initiative facilitates wider community involvement and is talked about enthusiastically by pupils and parents. Central to 'encouraging each other' in all aspects of learning is the 'sports offer'. The extra-curricular timetable ensures that pupils experience sporting activities which 'build up' their confidence. They are motivated to find enjoyment in trying something new. Whilst spiritual experiences do happen across the curriculum these are not consistent. A deep, shared language of spirituality is not well-developed. This limits opportunities for the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults.

In RE, pupils demonstrate respect for the beliefs of others as they are encouraged to explore big questions, make connections and dig deeper into Christianity. As a result, RE provides a safe space to reflect and consider their own beliefs and opinions. However, learning about, and exposure to a range of religions and worldviews other than Christianity is not embedded within the curriculum. Pupils say they enjoy lessons because 'they are fun and the teacher helps them improve' as they reflect on their learning. Lessons make use of 'brain dumps' to promote retrieval of knowledge and reflection. This is used by the school to gauge the pupils' progress.

The local clergy have developed strong and valued relationships with adults and pupils. They provide additional knowledge of the Christian calendar as well as pastoral support. The school's partnership with the local church is mutually appreciated. All stakeholders are enthusiastic about sustaining this. In line with the vision, these links have also enabled the flourishing of the community through offering additional avenues of support to families. Every opportunity to engage with them is warmly welcomed. Invitations for parents to attend special services in church result in high levels of attendance. Parents say this involvement helps them feel part of the school family.

Collective worship, is central to the life of the school. The vision and values are lived out through the chosen themes. The structure of collective worship includes a weekly celebration of individual achievements and attainment. Pupils introduce worship by reading liturgy and joining in with prayers. One pupil noted that engaging in prayer can 'change the way they feel'. There is a strong sense of togetherness when pupils sing. Staff and pupils make a 'joyful noise' because 'that's what the Bible teaches us to do'. Pupils enjoy sharing their thoughts and ideas in this safe environment and readily make contributions by answering questions. Parents are equally enthusiastic about school and Church worship. Staff value it as a time for the whole school to come together to share in and learn about the Christian vision and associated values. Comments and thoughts about collective worship are gathered from staff and pupils throughout the school year. However, evaluations do not provide actionable reflections about its impact as an outworking of the vision.

Although not developed, opportunities exist to inspire pupils to engage in social action and become courageous advocates. They are motivated to alter their behaviours or thinking in response to worship themes or key events. However, this is not yet planned for or transformational. Therefore, pupils do not fully appreciate their role as agents for positive change. Pupils have the opportunity to seek forgiveness and reconciliation if things go wrong. 'Play leaders' encourage others to make healthy choices and offer support during break times. Indoor and outdoor 'pupil caretakers' speak with conviction about taking care of their school environment and community.

	The effectiveness of RE is		<b>Good</b>	
	<p>RE meets the requirements of the statement of entitlement. The curriculum makes effective use of the Understanding Christianity resource which enables pupils to deepen their understanding of Christianity as a living faith. However, opportunities for them to broaden their knowledge and understanding of a range of world faiths and worldviews are limited. Pupils, including those with SEND and vulnerable pupils, discuss Christian concepts with confidence. Feedback promotes the development of RE skills and concepts. However, systems and processes for assessment are not developed.</p>			
<b>Information</b>				
School	Isham Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	30 March 2023	
URN	144858	VC/VA/Academy	Academy VA	
Diocese/District	Peterborough	Pupils on roll	104	
MAT/Federation	Peterborough Diocese Education Trust			
Headteacher	Alexandra Price			
Chair of Governors/ Trust Board	Peter Kraftl			
Inspector	Fiona Booth	No.	C21/22	