

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Pulham Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Harleston Road, Pulham Market, Diss, IP21 4SZ
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

School's vision
<p>Children are the heart of our vision. Everyone will flourish when working together in a safe environment, rooted and grounded in Christian values. A culture of excellence together with our broad-based curriculum ensures pupils are equipped with wisdom, knowledge and skills. A desire for learning enables us to make a difference in the modern world.</p> <p>'Shine as lights in the world' Philippians 2:15</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the recent period of change and challenge, leaders have been motivated and guided by the school's distinctive Christian vision. It has been the driving force of all decisions, actions and policy, creating an environment where all can flourish. • The newly adopted curriculum provides for academic, social and personal flourishing. The school is yet to secure an approach to spirituality and spiritual thriving which is used and understood by all. • Pupils are equipped and inspired to 'make a difference in the modern world'. Consequently, they are motivated to engage in social action and are ambassadors for change locally and globally. • Leaders plan and lead inspirational collective worship that is appreciated by staff and pupils. Pupils deliver worship weekly and readily share their reflections, however, they are not involved in planning these times. • Leaders have implemented a curriculum for religious education (RE) that includes theology, philosophy and human sciences. Pupils are thoughtful in their responses to their learning. Systems for the assessment of how well pupils learn and their progress are less well developed.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure the school's understanding and approach to spiritual development and explore how this can be integrated in the wider curriculum. This is so that pupils can further reflect on the meaning and mystery of life. • Involve pupils in the planning of collective worship. This is so that pupils can have a consultative role and feel a greater sense of ownership in this area. • Enhance teacher expertise in assessment for RE in order to provide more information about how well pupils are learning. This is so that staff can plan lessons even more effectively.

Inspection findings

Leaders are wholly motivated to ensure that the school's distinctive Christian vision is the core purpose of their actions. During the recent time of change and challenge, the vision has been the driving force of policy. Leaders are adamant that the outcome of all policy and practice should result in the flourishing of all in the school community. This steadfast tenacity results in a culture of enabling the individual. Consequently, professional development for staff has been prioritised which has further informed and improved teaching practice. Financial decisions are rooted in the purpose of the vision. For example, temporarily creating smaller class sizes, has enabled progress for pupils. Decisions regarding partnerships with other schools are also informed by the desire for excellence in church school practice. The school works closely with the local church and diocese. These fruitful relationships have meant that staff are supported, collective worship enhanced and leadership capacity strengthened. Governors carefully consider the schedule for self-evaluation as they monitor the school's effectiveness as a Church school. This culture of enabling and focus on the vision means that pupils and staff can 'shine as lights in the world'.

The recent redevelopment of the curriculum gives opportunities for the rounded growth of pupils. In addition to the academic curriculum, forest school lessons build appreciation of the world. Leaders see the development of character, tenacity and resilience as important for success in learning and in life. Systems have been created or modified that enable early intervention for pupils and families. This means that those with additional needs or those who are vulnerable are supported. The school has a growing reputation for supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Parents speak warmly and appreciatively of the actions of staff to ensure that pupils get the help that they need as quickly as possible. There are areas in the classrooms and communal spaces that are set aside for reflection or prayer and are places of calm. Pupils who articulate their faith are confident that God loves and respects them and answers their thoughts and prayers. However, opportunities within the curriculum to explore spirituality are less prevalent as the school has yet to formulate a clear understanding of, and approach to, spiritual development.

Leaders have chosen a curriculum which has conservation as one of the four key elements. This has inspired positive action by pupils to protect the world's resources. The vision to 'shine as lights to the world' inspires pupils to engage in activities to improve their local environment as well as make a difference to the world. They take pride in their contribution to slowing the destruction of the rainforest through their work with the World Land Trust. The eco council is active, pupils are motivated to act as positive agents of change locally through litter picks. Pupils genuinely believe that they can be the kindest school in the world. They have developed links with a local old peoples' home and take part in regular charitable fundraising events such as Red Nose day. The school holds frequent enrichment days that offer a broad range of experiences, such as tasting African food and a focus on fairtrade issues. The introduction of an emotional recognition and regulation tool has helped pupils understand their feelings and given them strategies to cope. This is beginning to build up attitudes of perseverance and resilience. There is a collective understanding of rights and responsibilities and an appreciation of the uniqueness of the individual. The mental health practitioner in school supports both individuals and groups of pupils on a daily basis. This enables the flourishing of pupils as barriers to learning are overcome. The support and strategies given to families are also appreciated. Staff feel valued, they speak of being understood and supported, being known as a person. They are appreciative of the 'open door policy' of the headteacher and accessibility of others on the team should they need support. The vision has created a school environment where all pupils can flourish. Those

pupils surveyed said that they felt positive about school, listened to and that they felt safe. Anti-bullying week is used to help pupils understand the value of each unique individual. Pupils understand that whilst families may be different from each other, the love shared in each family is the same. The vision enables each individual to be respected and accepted for who they are and what they believe.

Leaders have ensured that collective worship is a central element of the school day. All are invited and included. Inspired by the vision. All are reminded to 'shine as lights in the world'. Over the course of a week, there are opportunities to worship in different ways. Stories or passages from the Bible are used, explained and their relevance to daily life is considered. Pupils lead a reflective circle time once a week, this is planned by adults. As yet, pupils are not part of the planning process. and so there is not a formal way for their opinions to be heard. Adults and pupils alike are appreciative of the time and space set aside for reflection and calm. A team from the local church deliver an 'Open the Book' worship time twice each half term. Pupils enjoy these events and speak enthusiastically about what they have learned from their time together. There is good communication between the church and school regarding themes for worship, often focussing on the value for the half term. Governors monitor worship and time is set aside for pupils to reflect on the messages. Pupils' reflections show that they consider how they can translate the messages in worship into their daily personal and social relationships. They are less likely to respond about their spiritual journey.

RE provision reflects the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement. It covers theology, philosophy and human sciences and there is an appropriate time set aside in the school week for learning . Pupils' religious literacy is growing and they can give age-appropriate and thoughtful accounts of Christianity. Pupils are confident to talk about their beliefs and when their thinking has been challenged. They are open about their responses to the belief systems of the major world faiths and human sciences or philosophy. They thoughtfully accept, modify or reject particular views whilst being open to others holding contradictory opinions. Assessment systems using 'express books' have been introduced. These books capture a piece of each pupils' work after each unit and sum up their learning. However, there is less evidence of rigour in the process of assessing these pieces to understand how well a pupil is learning in RE. Pupils generally enjoy the subject but would appreciate less writing and more active learning and debate.

Information			
School	Pulham Church of England VC Primary School	Inspection date	21 June 2023
URN	121051	VC/VA/ Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Norwich	Pupils on roll	128
Headteacher	Harriet Beckett		
Chair of Governors	Gill Hipwell		
Inspector	Jane Trampnow	No.	954