

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

| <b>Ancaster Church of England VC Primary School</b>  |  |
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| Address  | Mercia Drive, Ancaster, Grantham, NG32 3QQ |
| 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   |
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| In the spirit of St. Martin, we are a welcoming and inclusive community where every individual is celebrated. Through exploration, we promote local and global citizens who realise they have the power to change. Our Christian values of wisdom, courage and respect, allow everybody to be the best we can be.   |
| Key findings  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A deeply loving, inclusive ethos enables all to belong and flourish. Following the example of St. Martin, leaders have enabled the Christian vision to be deeply embedded into school life. Consequently, it is lived by everybody.</li> <li>• Leaders ensure that collective worship is at the heart of school life, bringing a profound sense of wholeness to the entire community. It is vibrant, invitational and enjoyable. Collective worship reflects the school's vision and values.</li> <li>• Dedicated spaces around the school encourage personal reflection. However, the school does not have a common language to explore spiritual development and how it can be nurtured.</li> <li>• Based upon St. Martin's example, pupils know about social injustice and raise funds for charities. However, pupils do not often independently lead social action.</li> <li>• Due to a well organised and progressive curriculum pupils remember their religious education (RE) knowledge well. They enjoy discussing their learning. Their awareness of a range of cultures is limited.</li> </ul> |
| Areas for development   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a common language for pupils and adults to talk about spirituality. This is to make the most of opportunities for spiritual development across the life of the school.</li> <li>• Facilitate more opportunities for pupils to initiate and lead a range of social action. This is so that they can develop as courageous advocates, bringing positive change to their world.</li> <li>• Further enhance pupils' knowledge and direct experience of world religions and cultures, so that they gain a greater understanding of an interconnected world.</li> </ul>  |

## Inspection findings

The school's Christian vision is embedded in everything that it does. Pupils, staff and governors refer to the life of St Martin and they follow his example for living with wisdom, courage and respect. It is the foundation upon which the school builds its decisions. A deeply loving and inclusive culture enables everyone in this community to feel they belong, consequently they flourish. They explain how they embrace wisdom in their learning. They recognise that by having courage to try, even when they find things difficult, they grow in experience. By respecting each other they build inclusive relationships where everyone is valued.

A well-informed and able governing body encourages and supports the school leadership. Governors are proactive and share a passion for inclusive practice with all staff. Leaders, at all levels, ensure that the school Christian vision is at the root of their decision making. It is the driving force for monitoring and evaluation. Governors have deep insights into the way the vision impacts on all pupils. Frequent visits to school mean that they know the pupils and staff well. Alongside school leaders, governors are a welcoming presence at the school gate. This makes all leaders accessible and known to families. There is a deep sense of mutual connection in this school. Leaders actively seek out opinions from pupils, parents and staff to inform their decision making. Everyone has a voice. Through their monitoring, governors evaluate first-hand accounts of the pupils' experience. With their vision firmly in mind, governors make bold financial decisions. For example, they demonstrate courage by maintaining the special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) position without class teacher responsibility. This enables the SENDCo to focus fully upon provision for the more vulnerable pupils. Governors make very good use of the support offered by the diocese. This includes training for foundation governors in their Church school oversight.

The vision influences pupils in their learning, behaviour and attitudes. Through their secure knowledge of each pupil, staff carefully construct high aspirations for all. Consequently, pupils and adults prosper because together they strive to be the best that they can be. This enables the celebration of all, accepting everyone for their God-given talents. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is characterised by their engagement in lessons. They recall their knowledge well and delight in discussing their understanding. Leaders have created a curriculum that is securely built upon inclusivity, exploration, empowerment and is values-led. As one pupil commented, 'We all work together. We help each other'. Through St. Martin's example all live with mutual respect and recognise the value of kindness. Leaders have ensured that classrooms have clearly defined areas for reflection that remind everyone of the Christian vision. These spaces are used well in bridging the classroom to themes in collective worship. Additionally, the extensive outdoor space is well managed and includes areas where pupils can be calm and thoughtful. This provides areas of tranquillity. However, there is not a shared language to explore spirituality to enable deeper discussion.

Through the example of St. Martin pupils are inspired into action. Wisdom, courage and respect underpin the school's work in training pupil leaders, enabling all pupils to flourish. For example, the 'mini police' have the responsibility to notice who is living the vision. Consequently, pupils' kindness and courage are recognised and then celebrated in the weekly achievement assembly. Such proactive measures underpin relationships and sustain how pupils flourish. In other leadership roles pupils' concern for the environment promotes regular organised litter-picking. Looking beyond their locality the school supports national and international charities. These include Children in Need and sponsoring a child in Africa. However, pupils do not independently lead action for social change.

There is a mutual trust which enables all to thrive within this inclusive school family. Everyone

is met with respect and love. Staff confidently explain how the vision is the catalyst for meeting each person's developmental needs. Leadership listens to staff ideas and values their contributions. Leaders quickly acknowledge the impact of staff actions and recognise the difference that they make, especially for the more vulnerable. On-going professional support enables adults to be the best they can be. Consequently, they are valued and empowered and are well placed to contribute to the school's success.

Collective worship is given high priority by leaders. It is firmly rooted in the Christian vision. It enables pupils and adults to reflect and respond as they look to apply the vision into daily school life. Worship is invitational and engaging. Pupils participate enthusiastically whilst maintaining a sense of reverence. During worship pupils are invited to share their ideas about Bible stories and associated Christian values. Leaders ask pupils to evaluate the impact of collective worship and, through their discussions, modifications occur. For example, in response to their ideas, periods for reflection are longer and worship songs are livelier and more fun. This exceptionally inclusive, harmonious, peaceful and respectful time is a measure of the positive impact of worship. Staff ensure that the messages from collective worship transfer into the school's daily life. This enables collective worship to positively influence attitudes and behaviours. School newsletters share themes from collective worship, including associated biblical quotations. This enables the wider community to reflect upon the school's worship themes. Pupil worship leaders lead invitational prayer in each classroom at the end of each school day. Pupils are invited to say their own prayers. Clergy regularly lead collective worship and support staff in the planning and delivery of Christian themes. Worship is enriched through the partnership with St Martin's church who welcome the school for major celebrations. Clergy remark how pupils 'bring the church alive' with their enthusiasm for worship.

The RE subject leader is knowledgeable and plans meticulously for progression. Pupils' knowledge of Christianity is strong. They discuss stories from the Bible and are knowledgeable about significant Christian festivals. Pupils recall learning about world religions and demonstrate intellectual curiosity. Staff encourage pupils to review their learning through theological, philosophical and social perspectives. The RE curriculum builds upon previous learning, deepening pupil knowledge. Visitors from different faith backgrounds visit to lead lessons and to support the delivery of RE. Consequently, RE lessons are a safe place to explore ideas and to ask 'big questions'. However, RE learning is limited by pupils' lack of experience of the impact of world faiths upon a multicultural world.

By living their vision, leaders are tireless in providing opportunities for pupils to grow in wisdom, courage and respect. Pupils value that everyone matters and that school is a kind and safe place.

| Information        |  |                 |                      |
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| School             | Ancaster Church of England VC Primary School | Inspection date | 13 July 2023         |
| URN                | 120512                                       | VC/VA/Academy   | Voluntary controlled |
| Diocese/District   | Lincoln                                      | Pupils on roll  | 189                  |
| Headteacher        | Lucy Jackson                                 |                 |                      |
| Chair of Governors | Joanna Entwistle                             |                 |                      |
| Inspector          | Mark Millinson                               | No.             | 2121                 |