

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Denton Church of England School	
Address	Church Street, Denton, Grantham, NG32 1LG
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>With God, together we can Learn, Encourage, Aspire, Respect and Nurture. We believe in a collaborative approach – developing the whole child by developing the whole community together. As an inclusive Church school, we use positive and consistent expectations to help all members of our community to flourish.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deeply loving and inclusive culture enables everyone to belong and flourish. The school's vision promotes harmony. However, the use of the vision to review decision making is not fully in place. • Associated Christian values, known as 'habits', flow naturally throughout the school's curriculum. They are deeply embedded into school life. However, the lack of a shared language of spirituality limits pupils' capacity in making the most of reflection times. • Pupils respond compassionately to social need by immersing themselves in fund raising activities for charitable causes. The school is proactive in raising awareness of the need to challenge inequality through a variety of partner organisations. Pupils are learning to be agents for social change. • Collective worship reflects the calendar and tradition of the Anglican Church. It offers the whole community a time of reflection and unity because it is inviting and inclusive. It brings a profound sense of wholeness to the entire community. • Religious education (RE) enables pupils to develop a strong understanding of Christianity. However, their knowledge of world faiths is less embedded.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further enhance the use of the Christian vision in reviewing decisions so that it can become the catalyst for the school's direction. • Establish a common understanding of spirituality so that it enables clearly planned opportunities for spiritual growth within and beyond the curriculum. • Further enhance pupils' knowledge and direct experience of world religions and cultures, so that they gain a greater understanding.



Inspection findings

The Christian vision enables a shared understanding of this small rural school as a highly inclusive community. It is the driving force that enables pupils and adults to flourish in a supportive and loving school. Through adopting seven guiding 'habits', the vision's associated Christian values have evolved. The 'habits' are constantly referred and consequently are well known and understood by all. The habits provide a reflective scaffold, influencing the way each person strives to be the best that they can be. Embedded into the culture of the school, they have become the guiding lights for how each person interacts within this community. Together with the vision they underpin inclusive practice where everyone, including the more vulnerable, is respected, nurtured and celebrated. Each person is cherished within this community, individually valued and loved as a unique child of God.

The skilled, knowledgeable and very active governing body are mindful of the school's Christian vision. They ensure that it acts as the root of their decision making. However, the vision is not used to review those decisions. Consequently, ensuring that the vision remains a consistent driving force for monitoring and evaluation is impaired. Governors make very good use of the support offered by the diocese, this includes training for foundation governors in their Church school oversight. Governors are therefore well equipped to hold the school leadership to account. Leaders maintain constructive partnerships that enhance pupil learning and further develops the Church school ethos. This extended community includes the school's federation, the diocese and a proactive collaboration with many other local small Church schools. Together they work tirelessly to enhance the best outcomes for all.

The vision positively impacts upon pupils' learning, behaviour and attitudes. As a consequence of an aspirational and engaging curriculum, pupils thoroughly enjoy learning. This is characterised by their interactions in lessons, high motivation and mutual respect. Staff are relentless in their determination to improve teaching and learning. Through their secure knowledge of each pupil, staff have high aspirations for all. Furthermore, they constantly model how to be loving and compassionate. Through associated Christian values, pupils and adults 'seek first to be understood'. Consequently, they are thoughtful in sustaining their relationships. This enables all to flourish with mutual respect through acts of kindness. Pupils spontaneously notice the needs of others and respond thoughtfully. By reflecting upon the vision, pupils and staff consequently invest in each other. Pupils remark that this is a kind school. One pupil commented 'when I came here I didn't have any friends, but now that I'm here I have many'.

Collective worship nourishes all and enables a sense of belonging. It provides a bond between everyone in the community. Strong links exist between the school and the local church. With limited space available in the school, leaders wisely utilise the adjacent church building for regular worship. This is supported by members of the local Christian community who regularly attend and lead worship. This enables pupils to build their knowledge of liturgy and the traditions of the Anglican Church. There is an open invitation for parents and carers to attend. This enables the pupils to meet a range of different Christians in the expression of their faith, and this enhances community cohesion. Furthermore, pupils independently organise and lead collective worship, using the school's cycle of themes within the Anglican Church calendar and tradition. This has a positive influence on spiritual development. However, the school has not established a shared language to explore spirituality and enable deeper discussion. Pupils do not have dedicated places to go for spiritual reflection. In leading collective worship, pupils retell Bible stories that deepens their understanding of the Christian faith. While remaining open and invitational, pupils can offer spontaneous prayers during worship. Child-led collective worship is well planned, varied and engaging.

Furthermore, parents report that collective worship inspires pupils to write prayers at home and to read their Bibles, which were thoughtfully distributed by the school.

Pupils are concerned about how they can address social injustice and take care of each other in challenging times. Supporting a range of charities, such as Christian Partners in Africa, pupils are inspired to be agents for positive change. Consequently, they have learnt about the challenges that other children face and overcome. Pupils are learning to be independent agents for social change. Furthermore, pupils welcome new arrivals from other countries. They ensure that their new classmates are included and feel valued for who they are, each as one of God's children.

School leaders instil confidence and trust, they are well respected. They make themselves 'visible' and available to support families and staff at the beginning and end of each school day. Through the vision, leaders practice their core purpose by 'working together' so that all flourish. School leaders are very mindful of staff wellbeing who, in their turn, report that they feel nurtured by senior leaders. Senior staff take the time to ensure that each member of staff is spoken to everyday, valuing each person as precious. Leaders ensure that staff's professional development is a high priority. Consequently, staff flourish and strive to be the best that they can be. Together, the staff are a cohesive team with clear aspirations and the drive to achieve them.

RE expresses the school's Christian vision. Through their collaborations the school enjoys strong RE partnerships with local church schools and the diocese. Using the locally agreed syllabus the RE curriculum is planned with appropriate resources. The subject leader is knowledgeable and plans meticulously to ensure continuing improvements in pupils' progression. Pupil knowledge of Christianity is strong. They are able to discuss stories from the bible and significant Christian festivals. RE lessons are a safe place to explore ideas and to ask 'big questions' that challenge. However, learning is limited by pupils' lack of experience and age-appropriate understanding of the impact that world faiths have upon societies and cultures.

By living their vision daily, the school provides opportunities for each pupil to grow with love, respect and kindness. Pupils value what they receive from this happy, compassionate and inclusive school. As one pupil affirmed 'there is always a smile on everyone's face'.

Information			
School	Denton Church of England School	Inspection date	11 July 2023
URN	120518	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Lincoln	Pupils on roll	64
Executive Headteacher, Head of School	Sheriden Edwards, Linda Orme		
Chair of Governors	Janet Hannah		
Inspector	Mark Millinson	No.	2121