

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ruswarp Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Ruswarp, Whitby, YO21 1NJ
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
Think for Yourself and Act for Others. Based on Christian teaching (Matthew 22 v. 37 & 39), we want everyone to be kind, respectful, generous, thankful and humble and compassionate. We want children and staff to recognise their roles and responsibilities within the school community and the wider world and equipped to live life to the full.
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruswarp's embedded Christian vision and values celebrate the individual and root the school firmly in its coastal community. It is the driving force that enables everyone to feel valued and flourish. • Leaders know the school well. Their vision led, compassionate leadership is securing improvement. Processes to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school as a church school are at an early stage. • Rich learning experiences enable pupils to 'think for themselves' and encounter life beyond the school. They have a growing sense of social justice and support a range of good causes as an example of 'acting for others'. • Collective worship is enhanced through a strong partnership with local churches. It engages the school community and affirms the vision and values of the school. Pupils are keen to have further opportunities to lead worship. • Religious Education (RE) is an important subject in the life of the school. It opens pupils' minds to a range of world views and religions. Challenge is inconsistent as a result of assessment systems being in their infancy.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure rigour in the monitoring and evaluation of the school as a Church school. This is to inform school improvement and enable leaders, including governors, to evidence the impact of the vision over time. • Extend opportunities for pupils to plan and lead collective worship. This is to broaden their invitational opportunities to experience worship and see themselves as partners in the spiritual life of the school. • Establish effective assessment systems in RE. This is to inform challenge, continuity and progression, so all pupils flourish in their RE learning



Inspection findings

Ruswarp School is an inclusive community where all are supported and nurtured to flourish. The vision is deeply embedded and is a constant reference point throughout each day and in the life of the school. As a result, this is a school where everyone feels valued and cared for.

Loving relationships permeate this school. Through listening and kindness staff enable pupils to be confident and know that they matter. Pupils learn and play well together. If they do disagree, adults are there to help them to rebuild relationships. Many pupils observe that the school is just like a family. Parents are appreciative of the extra mile staff go to in caring for every child. As one parent rightly summarised, 'relationships between the children and staff are very strong, I feel my child is known'. This care extends to staff, who look after each other and are a strong team both professionally and pastorally. They are supported by compassionate leaders who are sensitive to their wellbeing and workload.

Driven by their Christian vision to act for others, the school is highly inclusive. All are welcome here. The biblical narrative of the Good Samaritan is lived out in the courageous way leaders never give up on vulnerable individuals. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and individually supported with a range of interventions. Leaders invest in training and families are offered support, exemplifying the school's commitment to enabling all to flourish. As a result, pupils who have found school difficult elsewhere join Ruswarp and are transformed.

Collective worship is a special daily time. It is a living expression of the vision as pupils are given time to think for themselves and reflect on how they might act for others. Pupils and staff enter worship to quiet music and a welcome from the Leading Lights pupil group. The lighting of three candles acts as a reminder of the Christian teaching of God as father, son and holy spirit. These all make this gathering distinct from 'assembly' and bring a sense of togetherness. Weekly values awards are cherished by pupils, recognising those that live out the school's vision and values. These reinforce well planned worship themes and support pupils to make connections with their lives and learning.

Celebration at St Hilda's Church in Whitby enriches worship. The closure of the local church has not hampered relationships with the parish. Three members of the local clergy provide regular support in school and their involvement in worship provides pupils with a sense of belonging to the wider Anglican community. Pupils have a sound understanding of Bible stories. There are some occasions when worship is not invitational, which hinders how accessible it is to all. The Leading Lights group lead aspects of worship effectively and are used to enhance the experience in class, hall and church. Pupils are keen to take on greater responsibility.

Spirituality days enable opportunities for pupils to pause and reflect. These include outdoor learning such as the forest school and wildlife areas, which provide moments of awe and wonder. Prayers, prayer spaces and time for reflection take place in classes before lunch and at the end of the day. These focus minds on being thankful and are enabling pupils to explore their personal spirituality. Consequently, pupils are confidently exploring some of life's 'big questions' and are sensitively supported to think deeply. Despite its importance to the life of the school, there is as yet no shared definition of what spirituality means. This means some opportunities for spiritual flourishing are missed.

Pupils enjoy religious education which they see as an important subject. This is because encouraging RE leadership supports colleagues to gain a breadth of subject knowledge and make lessons engaging for pupils. The RE curriculum ensures pupils deepen their

understanding of religions and worldviews studied as they move through school. They make connections between different cultures and beliefs across the world, which supports the development of their own views. Assessment processes do not yet capture the development of knowledge sufficiently well. As a result, the level of challenge in this academic subject is variable.

The school's curriculum enables pupils to explore the purpose and meaning of the world around them. A rich programme of visits and learning opportunities sparks and extends pupils' interests and contributes to their flourishing. The vision permeates all subjects as pupils are guided to think for themselves and act for others. Pupils are thrilled to take on leadership roles, whether supporting environmental issues or worship. The Archbishop's Young Leaders Award encourages pupils to see themselves as leaders and make positive changes in their local community. This is enabling pupils to increasingly be active agents of change in the world.

The school is led by a passionate team that are fully committed to Ruswarp as a flourishing Church school. Monitoring processes are informal which means that some evaluations are imprecise. The school has faced significant challenges with changes in leadership and staffing over recent times. Throughout, Ruswarp's vision has been at the heart of overcoming these. As one governor shared, 'our vision and ethos have been the one constant during these turbulent times'. Whilst there are pressing areas for development as a Church school that present work for leaders, this is a place where a deeply rooted Christian vision is supporting the flourishing of adults and pupils alike.

Ruswarp is a school of love, kindness and welcome. As a parent new to the school said, 'there is a real sense of togetherness here that we all feel a part of'. This shared vision and togetherness are evident, as the school looks forward with confidence.

Information			
School	Ruswarp Church of England VC Primary School	Inspection date	3 July 2023
URN	121525	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	York	Pupils on roll	67
Acting Interim Executive Headteacher	Helen Isaac		
Chair of Governors	Victoria Smith		
Inspector	Darren Dudman	No.	2101