



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Duchy of Lancaster Methwold Church of England Primary School	
Address	Hythe Road, Thetford, IP26 4PP
School vision	
<p>A cord of three strands is not easily broken Ecclesiastes 4:12 We are stronger together than apart.</p> <p>The cord of three strands is seen as the school, families and the community working together so that the strengths that each part contributes can combine. This is seen in the Trinity partnership, which embodies the strength and unity of three schools working as one. The Trinity partnership engages across schools, churches and communities, working in partnership with DEMAT and school leaders to ensure that life is lived in all its fullness. The ethos is threaded through all of school life so children, staff and families can be supported and empowered, knowing that we are stronger together than apart.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's theologically rooted Christian vision is embedded. It supports an inclusive, nurturing and caring culture, where adults and pupils treat each other well. • The strength and unity of working together as three strands is celebrated and demonstrated throughout the school. This enhances pupils' experiences and develops their ambition to succeed. • Collective worship is prioritised and gives many opportunities for pupils to actively participate in, lead and evaluate worship. • A rich and engaging religious education (RE) curriculum inspires pupils to explore a range of religions, beliefs and world views. • The curriculum and the work of the school is underpinned by the Christian vision. Leaders at all levels, work hard together to develop the best educational experiences possible, including enrichment and extra-curricular activities. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on pupils' current experiences of helping each other and charitable giving, to enhance opportunities to become advocates for change. • Develop a shared understanding of spirituality throughout the school, within worship and the curriculum. This is to ensure all have the opportunity to flourish spiritually. • Build on the pupils learning in RE to encourage connectivity in their thinking about world beliefs. This is to encourage them in making links to prior learning. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Warmth, care and a family atmosphere are offered by Duchy of Lancaster Church of England Primary School. The school is a third of the Trinity partnership and member of the Diocese of Ely Multi</p>	

Academy Trust. Permanent leadership is in place in all three schools and this successful model is now an aspiration for others in the trust. The leadership team, Trinity partnership and staff members wholeheartedly support and promote the vision, working together to provide aspirational education. Duchy of Lancaster has a well-established theologically based Christian vision which is integral to its strategic direction and daily work. The 'cord of three strands' is promoted and displayed to make it meaningful and well-known by all. The principle of 'stronger together than apart' is understood by the pupils, staff and community.

Enhanced by the trust's vision 'To learn, to know, to lead out' leaders equip pupils to be inquisitive, confident citizens. The whole school is motivated to work together and live life in all its fullness. Consequently, pupils are collaborative, assured and well supported in their learning, growth and development. The Christian vision drives leaders to provide direction, and well considered choices are supported by the governing board. They are aware of the isolation of this rural, village school and this informs decision making and enrichment opportunities offered. Deeply connected partnerships with the trust, partner schools and the diocese enhance professional development opportunities. As a result, staff have high levels of confidence and all, including newly appointed teachers, feel well supported. Weekly leadership meetings and joint working between Trinity schools enables the sharing of professional development, resources and enrichment activities. This supports staff and leaders, therefore enhancing wellbeing. Relationships throughout the school are welcoming, kind and respectful.

The vision inspired, knowledge rich curriculum has been carefully designed to meet the needs of all and strengthen learning. An inspiring RE scheme provides opportunities to broaden pupils' cultural awareness and elements are being mapped across the whole curriculum. Adults compassionately support all pupils, accepting and embracing needs and difference. The curriculum encourages curiosity, collaboration and ambition, so pupils develop wisdom, knowledge and skills for life. Pupils are interested in their learning, respond positively and flourish. They are encouraged to be curious about the wider world and begin their role as global citizens. Staff encourage pupils to connect ideas between world beliefs in RE, but this is an area of development. Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported to achieve their best and succeed. A consistent shared understanding and language of spirituality are not yet embedded although staff do make time for reflection.

Worship is relevant and memorable and pupils are respectful and reflective. All pupils have the opportunity to join in aspects of collective worship, ably supported by pupil worship leaders. They formally applied for their roles, and are proud to be chosen. A carefully planned, sequenced worship programme is underpinned by Christian values and relevant to the lives of pupils. There is clear structure and routine, with opportunities for prayerful response and guided reflection. To ensure all fully access spiritual growth, leaders have identified the need for an understanding of spirituality. Physical objects such as a candle, bell and cross are prominent and add to the children's understanding of Christian symbolism. Pupils are positively involved and support this integral part of the day. Collective worship offers pupils and adults time to pray, think and reflect. Partnerships are strong, including developing links with the local village church. Visiting for seasonal Christian celebrations enables pupils to feel part of the wider Christian community. Collective worship deepens relationships with families, who are welcomed. Parents say they value these links. Worship is inclusive, with staff lovingly supporting pupils with SEND in taking part. As a result, worship helps to guide the actions of all, enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Pastoral care is a strength of the school and pupils behave well. The friendly atmosphere is appreciated and parents praise the 'family feel' and support given by the school. Parents and families are supportive of the work of the school. Careful consideration is given to all aspects of school life including catering wisely for individual needs. Staff promote good mental health, helping

pupils develop positive coping strategies. Pupils value the chance to use the ‘rainbow’ nurture room for thought and reflection. In combination with Trinity schools, Duchy finance ‘The Nest’, a successful joint provision for individual pupils with additional emotional needs. Regular pupil surveys provide evidence of the positive impact of Christian values on behaviour, inclusion, spiritual development and learning. Leaders support and understand staff professionally and emotionally and this is supported by staff wellbeing questionnaires. Therefore, both pupils and adults feel valued, loved and treated well.

Valuing everyone has shaped a culture where all are treated with dignity and respect. The positive behaviour policy is built on consistency and emphasises considerate behaviour. The school community are caring and older pupils are allowed opportunities to nurture and encourage the younger ones. Positive transition arrangements result in new pupils being quickly welcomed and becoming confident members of the school community. They know how to reconcile after disagreements, stay safe on and off line, and that bullying in all forms is unacceptable. Through planned curriculum opportunities, such as Black History Month, pupils gain an understanding of injustice. Christian generosity is evident in the fundraising efforts of the school community. Acts of charity have included families donating to the local food bank. Empowering pupils to make independent, ethical choices to challenge inequality is less evident.

RE is well planned, engaging and meets the requirements for the subject as a Church school. It balances the teaching of Christianity with world faiths. Leaders benefit from the support of the diocese, who provide guidance on improvements to the quality of RE. The Trinity RE lead facilitates staff development to ensure effective practice is widely shared. The RE scheme is enquiry based, engages the pupils and demands a range of responses meaning all pupils can succeed. It is regularly monitored through learning walks and work scrutiny. Individual and class RE books demonstrate thoughtfulness from the pupils about their learning. Assessment and ongoing feedback ensure pupils understand their learning, build on it and make progress. Pupils are proud of their work, consider RE an important subject and say they enjoy it. They confidently share personal views and understand that these will be respected and valued. Christianity is recognised as a global faith and pupils are encouraged to discover more about religions and world views.

The inspection findings indicate that Duchy of Lancaster Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	3 October 2023	URN	140712
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	86
Diocese	Ely		
MAT/Federation	Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Damon Finney		
Chair	David Barrett		
Inspector	Lynne Golding	No.	2124