

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary Academy	
Address	School Road, Alburgh, Harleston, IP20 0BY
School vision	
<p>Our Vision is rooted in Biblical Foundation: “Mighty Oaks from Tiny Acorns Grow” is based upon the parable of the mustard seed: “The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, that seed is the smallest of all seeds. But when it grows, it is one of the largest garden plants.” Matthew 13 V31-32.</p> <p>This is underpinned by the common language of our core values: Hope, Forgiveness and Justice.</p> <p>This theologically rooted Christian vision underpins our entire philosophy of education and development of our curriculum. In our context, we believe that this means that through a diverse curriculum that enables people to ask questions, find answers, reflect and form opinions, we are able to enable every member of our school community to flourish and grow educationally, emotionally and spiritually.</p> <p>This resonates with the vision and aspiration of St Benets, “Immeasurably more than we can imagine. Creating a culture of aspiration for all” and as such we work together towards a common goal.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision is well embedded and underpins all that the school does. It permeates school life and is well known by all. • Through care, kindness and reflection, school leaders create a learning community where all can flourish. Excellent relationships bind the school together. • Varied and inspiring collective worship sets the tone for the school day. It is valued by all and captures the pupil's interests and aspirations. The themes give focus to weekly reflections. • Pupils appreciate the many opportunities they have to develop curiosity and are able to articulate their thoughts and ideas well. This means they reflect effectively on their learning. • Religious education (RE) is a strength. A rich and engaging curriculum is carefully planned so pupils flourish. They respond enthusiastically and knowledgeably, demonstrating their ability to discuss and consider religious themes and ideas . 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to map points for spirituality across the whole curriculum. This is so the impact of planned spiritual experiences and opportunities for individual reflection are enhanced. • To develop pupils' understanding of how they can become agents of change and initiate support for their ideas. This is so that they develop the ability to challenge injustice and make a difference to the lives of others. 	
Inspection findings	

The meaningful, relevant Christian vision inspires the school community at Alburgh with Denton to flourish and grow. It links the recognisable 'mighty oak from tiny acorns' expression with the biblical parable of the mustard seed. Underpinning this are carefully selected values of hope, forgiveness and justice. The vision is integral to daily life and the strategic direction of the school. Leadership and staff wholeheartedly promote it and provide an environment where everyone can achieve their best. Dedicated leaders ensure all opportunities to broaden learning are taken. In this nurturing school individuals feel cared for. Leaders carefully considered the vision of St Benet's Academy Trust, 'immeasurably more than we can imagine', before joining. That focus on opportunity and aspiration reflects the aims and Christian vision of the school. Trust leaders support school leaders well, because they all share a common vision.

Leaders equip pupils in this small school to be inquisitive, confident citizens. Everyone is motivated to work together and are well supported and nurtured in this inclusive environment. Strong, trusting and caring relationships are central to this. Consequently, pupils are collaborative and assured in their learning, growth and development. The vision drives leaders to provide education of the highest quality. Awareness of the isolation of this rural, village school informs decision making and enrichment opportunities offered. Strong partnerships with the trust and diocese enhance professional development. As a result, staff have high levels of confidence and all, including newly appointed teachers, feel well supported, enhancing well-being. Relationships throughout the school at all levels are welcoming, kind and respectful.

Pupils are inspired by their creative, diverse curriculum. Intriguing questions are embedded, helping them to prosper as inquisitive and reflective thinkers. Wider opportunities such as visits from the circus or to activity centres and museums enhance the curriculum. Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well served and achieve their best through carefully planned learning activities. Parents and carers enthusiastically attend learning cafés, most recently for maths. This enables them to live out the Christian vision by supporting learning at home. Outdoor education sessions are valued and contribute to personal growth, offering opportunity for spiritual experiences. A well-designed RE scheme effectively provides scope to broaden cultural awareness. Pupils are proud of their work, respond positively and flourish in their learning. Staff encourage them to be curious about the wider world and become global citizens. An elected school council makes recommendations to leaders and increases self-assurance. Pupils correctly say, 'democracy has given me confidence.' There is opportunity during the school day for individuals to pause and think, with carefully planned weekly reflection activities. Spiritual spaces around the school are not yet developed. Subject leaders have begun planning specific opportunities for spirituality within the curriculum, with the result that spiritual experiences are beginning to be embedded.

Collective worship is thoughtfully planned incorporating the vision and values. Its impact on the life of the school is profound. Pupils are respectful and interested, with the eldest taking a leading role. Staff sensitively support those who need reassurance. Worship provides a rich source of opportunities to be still, reflect or pray. Pupils and adults value and recognise its contribution to their personal spirituality. Local churches regularly lead worship, and themes are carefully coordinated to ensure coherence. Parents and carers value invitations to worship, both in school and seasonal church services. This enables families to feel part of the wider Christian community. Worship includes Christian symbolism - a bible, three candles and cross make important Christian concepts, including the Trinity, memorable. Opportunities for guided reflection and response are part of every gathering. Members of the school community are positively involved, enjoy and value this integral part of the school day.

Relationships are excellent because pupils and adults feel respected and cared for. Enhancing wellbeing is a priority for leaders, and in line with the vision, this enables everyone to flourish and

grow. Effective transition arrangements make newcomers welcome and confidently integrated into the school community. The self-assurance and friendliness of the eldest impacts positively on the school and influences the behaviour of younger ones. Pupils correctly appreciate the purposeful, calm atmosphere provided, and so work effectively in a focussed learning environment. They understand the restorative behaviour policy and consequently develop mutually respectful relationships, behaving very well. Pupils know how to reconcile after disagreements, and that bullying in all forms is unacceptable. Parents and carers are rightly supportive of the work of the school, especially the care for individuals. The support of vulnerable pupils enables them to feel safe and valued. Attendance is high, with effective strategies in place to support families. Committed leaders ensure all opportunities for staff to progress and flourish are taken. Staff are resilient, happy and fulfilled. As a result, pupils develop into rounded, thoughtful and knowledgeable individuals who thrive because of the security the school provides. The whole school feels valued, respected and treated well.

Acts of generosity are evident in fundraising efforts, including enthusiastic support for national and local good causes. Pupils' understanding of the impact of social action on others is emerging. Engagement in the 'Dirt is good' programme enables older pupils to identify and act on social and environmental projects. Ethical choices such as reducing waste and improving efficiency have been selected. Pupils feel strongly about global challenges such as climate change and the protection of endangered animals. This promotes an understanding of justice and responsibility. Curriculum resources are used to explore local, national and global issues and pupils learn about justice through subjects such as slavery. Currently they are less aware of how they can be agents of change, both in their own communities and the world.

The RE curriculum enhances the vision. It is well-structured to enable pupils to learn about a range of religions and worldviews including Christianity and Hinduism. This enriches their understanding of difference and respect for diverse faiths and cultures. They consider RE important, and say it helps them see 'a slice of other people's lives'. The scheme is enquiry based, encourages curiosity and demands a range of responses. This means everyone can progress and succeed. The importance of being able to reflect on their own opinion and those of others is understood. A supportive partnership with the diocese provides effective training for staff. RE lessons provide a safe place for pupils to express opinions and they learn respect for others' viewpoints. Regularly monitored through drop ins, discussion and work scrutiny, RE books demonstrate reflection and achievement. Careful assessment and feedback mean pupils understand their learning, are proud of their work and are motivated to make progress.

The inspection findings indicate that Alburgh with Denton Church of England Primary Academy is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	25 January 2024	URN	148994
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	100
Diocese	Norwich		
MAT/Federation	St Benet's		
Headteacher	Leigh Goodhew		
Chair	Beth Barrett		
Inspector	Lynne Golding	No.	2124

