



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Howden Church of England Infant School	
Address	Hailgate, Howden, Goole, DN14 7SL

School vision

Roots to grow so together we flourish.

At Howden Church of England Infant School, we live and learn together and look after one another as part of the family of God. We are deeply rooted in the values of the Christian faith and experience the kindness, respect and support that come with being connected in a loving community. Together, our children are able to grow, flourish and bear much fruit which they will take with them as they travel through life and out into the wider world.

‘I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit’. John 15: 5 ‘Rooted and grounded in love’. Ephesians 3: 17

School strengths

- Leaders, The Education Alliance (Trust), governors, and staff are deeply invested in this Church school. Central to all they do is a well-understood Christian vision, nourished by Christian love. This creates a culture where roots are firmly planted, and people are growing and flourishing.
- The curriculum grows from the vision and is threaded with opportunities for pupils to experience the values in action. Curriculum development, undertaken with different people, captures and reflects the intention for pupils to be rooted in and connected to a loving community.
- The vision actively drives a culture that is supportive, inclusive, and nurturing. Leaders ensure there is strong and visible support for vulnerable pupils, and those who have special needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The rich support for emotional needs is well-placed and helps pupils and families to flourish.
- Effective partnerships with the diocese and the trust are evident and welcomed. These relationships enrich and deepen the Christian work of the school. This enables professional and personal fulfilment. Staff recognise this as being key to the school’s recent improvement journey as a Church school.
- Worship is a valued part of each day. Providing meaningful moments to gather and opportunities for reflection and a focus on the school’s vision and values. Being embedded in collective worship, the vision and values encourage adults and pupils to think deeply. This includes about themselves, others, and issues important to the world.

Areas for development

- Embed the approaches to evaluating the school's Christian vision and distinctiveness. This is to ensure the impact of initiatives is secured, sustaining improvements for the longer term.
- Explore, with pupils, an understanding of spirituality. This is to help them recognise the opportunities for spiritual flourishing they will experience as they grow and ‘travel through life’.

- Embed the religious education (RE) curriculum. Ensuring staff continue to have access to relevant professional development and resources. This is to make sure pupils' experiences of RE are high quality and they benefit from the breadth of the planned curriculum.

Inspection findings

The Christian vision is woven through all aspects of the school. Leaders ensure that it is central to policy and practice, driving decisions and alive in the school's daily life. The community were involved in its development, and leaders conscientiously ensure it encompasses and reflects what is needed most. Governors are instrumental in ensuring the school maintains its Christian character. They recognise and value the support and expertise from the diocese when making long term strategic decisions. Such as the decision to join a trust and leadership arrangements. There is a shared understanding of the Christian values, these are talked about, embedded in the curriculum, and lived out in relationships. This shapes how everybody lives and learns together. There is close alignment with the values of the trust. Leaders are well supported by the additional capacity provided by the trust, which focuses on quality church school education. Evidence from leaders shows the impact of the vision is monitored, demonstrating that the roots are firmly established. Evaluation is not systematically embedded to ensure growth is sustained and the impact of the vision on flourishing is secured.

The curriculum embodies the vision, purposefully uniting the principles of being called, connected, and committed to flourish. Christian values are explicitly integrated into planning, and pupils explore 'big questions'. This, along with the vision, forms a shared understanding of the pupils' journey through the school. The breadth of experiences and opportunities is carefully planned, leading pupils to recognise that 'learning in the school is changing'. There is a commitment to ongoing curriculum impact monitoring, fostering collaboration among staff to identify strengths and make improvements. This inclusive approach empowers staff, providing support where needed and giving them a voice. Consequently, the curriculum unites people in a common purpose, fostering a shared understanding of its intended outcomes. Both pupils and adults flourish due to this distinctive, vision-driven curriculum.

Being connected in a loving community is demonstrated in the school's commitment to the support for pupils and families. Communication is carefully considered, inclusive and encourages parents and carers to work alongside the school. Leaders recognise there are times when all pupils and families can be vulnerable. They understand pupils with SEND may need additional help and support. There is investment in emotional literacy, an expanded pastoral team and strong local agency links. Consequently, support for mental health and wellbeing is strong, attendance is improving, and an inclusive culture exists. Parents recognise staff remove barriers and make adjustments enabling pupils, including those with SEND, to flourish. The accessibility of staff, including leaders and the pastoral team is appreciated by parents/carers. As a result, there is confidence the school lives its values in its approach to family and community.

Collective worship has a high status. Leaders' decision to begin the day with worship is deliberate. It enables adults and pupils to start the day actively engaging with the vision and values. It provides opportunity for reflection about Bible stories, current world events and the values of Christian faith and love. Collective worship is inclusive with opportunity for invitational prayer. This is time for quiet and stillness, providing a sense of belonging. Singing is a joyful expression of the enthusiasm and community at Howden. The lead plans worship across the school with opportunity for staff to deliver it, including to their classes. As a result, staff are invested, recognising its importance in developing the school's distinctiveness. Pupils support in worship, this is strengthening as pupils become confident members of the 'worship squad'. Staff receive worship training, from the diocese

which is leading to approaches becoming embedded. Celebration worship to which families are invited is appreciated, sharing the way pupils live through the values. A mutually beneficial relationship exists between the school and local church. The rector is a regular visitor, delivering worship, as a governor, and friend of the community. Shared services are special times for all, events such as messy church are increasingly popular with families. Governors are involved in the monitoring and evaluation of worship, recognising the positive impact it has and informing future planning. However, opportunity for spiritual flourishing through worship and the wider curriculum is not fully realised. This is because there is not a shared understanding of spirituality through which opportunities can be explored.

Leaders are committed to living out the vision, integrity and authenticity is the common refrain. The implementation of policies, such as behaviour and inclusion centres on people and pupils. Pupils are aware that adults can help them if they need it. However, they also know that they can try to live well together, thinking about the vision and values to help. Pupils say they are 'kind and helpful at Howden', parents explained the school is 'enabling' for children. Staff appreciate the way in which their views are respected, and concerns addressed. There is commitment and interest in the wellbeing of adults and pupils. As a result, adults in the school are flourishing personally and professionally.

Fundamental to the school's improvement journey are the actions of adults, modelling expectations and being positive advocates for change. The head of school, alongside other leaders, use the Christian values as the road map for improvement. For pupils, the curriculum includes themes on people from history who fought for justice. This provides meaningful opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of injustice and fairness. The curriculum and worship encourage pupils to take responsibility for themselves, others, and the wider world. The reading scheme includes carefully chosen books which explore diversity and difference. Consequently, pupils have opportunities to respond by being curious about difference finding joy in learning about it. They are encouraged to respect views which challenge their own and nurtured to also look beyond Howden's loving family.

RE has a high priority in the school. The curriculum follows a recognised learning scheme, enhanced by inclusion of quality resources supporting the teaching of Christianity. The subject leader ensures the school's context is considered in planning. Therefore, in addition to Christianity, pupils learn about world faiths and non-religious worldviews. This is done through learning about beliefs, the way people live, exploring 'big' and pupils' own questions. Professional development is provided by the diocese, helping ensure the curriculum is balanced for the ages and stages of pupils. There is investment in resources to support teaching and learning including visitors from different faiths. The RE curriculum is not fully embedded. As a result, approaches to build on prior learning and make the best use of resources are not secure.

The inspection findings indicate that Howden Church of England Infant School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	25 January 2024	URN	149974
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	159
Diocese	York		
MAT/Federation	The Education Alliance		
Executive Headteacher	Lee Quinn-Hill & Jane Hunt (Head of School)		
Chair	Ian Stewart		
Inspector	Paul Bowlas	No.	2200