

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Warthill Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

<b>Address</b>	Warthill, York, YO19 5XL		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	15 March 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Voluntary controlled primary
<b>Diocese</b>	York	<b>URN</b>	121523

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
<b>Additional Judgement</b>		
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

#### School context

Warthill Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a primary school with 43 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The headteacher was appointed 18 months ago and there have been other recent staff changes. The school is in a federation with nearby Sand Hutton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School.

#### The school's Christian vision

Love abounds. Our community embraces opportunities to support one another in being 'The Best We Can Be'. Biblical teaching underpins all relationships providing networks, which we all use, helping to understand the principle 'practice makes better.' This vision drives the way in which we live, marrying distinctiveness and effectiveness together.

#### Key findings

- The school's clear Christian vision is rooted in biblical teaching and thoughtfully applied. As a result it inspires the whole school community to support each other in love so that pupils and adults flourish.
- A range of strong partnerships supports the high quality of school leadership, enriches the teaching and learning of pupils and enables staff development.
- Religious Education enables pupils to grasp key concepts in Christianity and to enjoy exploring theological and moral opinions. However, their understanding and experience of world religions and global issues are limited.
- Collective worship is engaging, relevant and varied. Pupils' spiritual and personal development is well nurtured through varied opportunities for reflection, response and prayer.

#### Areas for development

- Develop the teaching of world religions including opportunities for visits and visitors so that pupils and families explore and deepen their understanding of world faiths.
- Increase curricular opportunities for all pupils to encounter and address issues of disadvantage, both locally and further afield, in order to promote engagement in social action.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to independently plan, lead and evaluate collective worship.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### Inspection findings

The school's vision is clearly rooted in biblical teaching and shapes school priorities and practice. Christian love, as expressed in 1 Corinthians 13, underpins behaviour and relationships. The headteacher and governors consider carefully the school's context as they apply the Christian vision. The result is a strongly nurturing and inclusive school in which pupils and adults flourish.

With the aim of supporting each other 'to be the best we can be', school leadership has introduced a variety of strategies to remove possible barriers to learning. For example, an outdoor education programme for all addresses the lack of resilience of more vulnerable pupils. Staff are pro-active in supporting pupils and their families to forestall or reduce difficulties. In this small school, school meets the needs of pupils as individuals and nurtures their personal and academic development. As a result, pupils, including those who are vulnerable, make expected progress or more from their varied starting points. A parent talked of their child joining school from elsewhere 'in pieces' but moving to secondary school 'whole'. Social and emotional skills are emphasised so that pupils learn to express feelings and thoughts, are able to negotiate with others and persevere. The resulting excellent behaviour is underpinned by pupils' understanding of how to apologise and forgive, which is demonstrated and taught by staff. Pupils are articulate, thoughtful and respectful of others. All pupils, therefore, develop academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally. They enjoy coming to school and attendance is good.

Pupils also express their concern for others in fundraising activities. They show initiative and conviction in championing charities in their discussions about which to support. As yet, they do not engage in social action, which might challenge injustice and inequality.

The school's vision of mutual support is applied to adults as much as to pupils. Openness and respect mean that staff see themselves as a family in which they can speak freely and help each other. New staff feel at home at once and continuity is maintained due to colleagues' welcome and assistance. Governors take practical steps to promote staff well-being, regularly visit school and give effective challenge and support to school leaders.

The headteacher and governors make effective use of local networks. As a small school, leadership is strengthened by successful partnerships with other schools and organisations. Key to these is the federation with Sand Hutton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School. This enhances teaching and learning through collaboration and the exchange of ideas between staff who might otherwise be isolated within small schools. For example, the subject leader for religious education (RE) works with teachers in both schools so that pupils enjoy a consistent curriculum and standard of teaching. The Howardian Alliance extends the opportunities for staff continuing professional development (CPD) and, in consequence, for the provision of high quality of teaching and learning. These networks support the moderation of pupils' work and, therefore, consistency in standards when numbers of pupils in each year group are small. Diocesan advice and CPD strengthens school leadership and governance as well as the teaching of RE.

The close partnership with the local parish is very beneficial to the school community. Clergy visit the school regularly so they are well known and accessible. Pupils are intrigued by question and answer sessions with the vicar where deep questions about life and faith are raised. On the day of inspection they were still talking animatedly about a previous discussion, 'Why were Jesus' 12 disciples all men?' As a result, pupils enjoy exploring different viewpoints and feel safe to express their own opinions. In their turn, members of the parish value the association with school, keeping abreast of school life through regular reports, attending school services and praying for the school community. In addition, a well-established link with the YoYo Trust in York enhances collective worship and deepens opportunities for spiritual growth for pupils and adults.

The centrality of worship in the school community is reflected in the thoughtful provision of prayer spaces indoors and outdoors. A pupil singled out the gazebo in the playground as a favourite place to be quiet, relax and pray. Pupils value personal prayer. One pupil described praying and experiencing God's forgiveness after doing something wrong. Another talked of God answering prayer for a sibling. In the upstairs worship room, the limitations of a small space have been turned to advantage to draw pupils and adults together in reflection, worship and prayer. Collective worship is invitational, offering space to respond thoughtfully. Creative activities encourage pupils' spiritual and moral development. For example, meeting World War 2 veterans led pupils to undertake a new memorial garden and to make individual ceramic poppies to be placed in nearby churches and in school. As a result, pupils are proud of what they have created and value friendship with the veterans, which helps them to understand concepts such as sacrifice.

Daily collective worship, based on biblical teaching, ensures that the church's year is appreciated. Pupils take part in leading worship, for example, through acting out stories. With the help of school workers from the YoYo

Trust, pupils act in Easter and Christmas dramas, which make a powerful impact on the congregation. However, they do not use their initiative in planning and leading worship independently. Although they are invited to reflect on collective worship, their evaluation is informal and unplanned.

Religious Education (RE) is seen as a core subject and well taught by enthusiastic staff who receive regular advice and training. The recent introduction of an exercise book for each pupil facilitates assessment and progress is seen to match that in English. RE provides pupils with a good theological understanding of the Christian faith and a sound knowledge of Biblical teaching. However, RE does not give pupils enough understanding or direct experience of world faiths. Nor is there much introduction to the worldwide church. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy RE and it encourages them to ask searching questions and to evaluate a variety of views.

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