

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Escrick Church of England Primary School

Address	Carr Lane, Escrick, York, YO19 6JQ		
Date of inspection	22 March 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Diocese	York	URN	121532

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

School context

Escrick is a primary school with 140 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and 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 has recently returned from adoption leave during which time the assistant headteacher was acting headteacher.

The school's Christian vision

Our vision is to strive to create well-rounded individuals who are compassionate to all, are inspired to achieve their full potential and who understand that we are all valued equally as a unique creation made in the image of God. We promote our CORE purpose and aims, underpinned by Christian Values, to achieve this vision.

Key findings

- All members of the school community feel valued, and flourish, because the school embodies a vision which is clearly based on biblical teaching.
- Pupils enjoy learning and many make higher than expected levels of progress because they are consistently appreciated as individuals 'made in God's image'
- Pupils spiritual development is advanced through a curriculum which promotes an understanding of inclusion and diverse lifestyles.
- Pupils make sophisticated links between Bible stories, school values and their own choices because collective worship is consistently planned to support the school's Christian vision and values.
- Religious education is rigorously monitored to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is at least good so that pupil progress is consistent with other subjects.

Areas for development

- Introduce more rigorous and systematic evaluation of the school's distinctiveness as a Church school to support the school's journey towards excellence.
- Increase pupils' use of biblical texts so that they give stronger theological explanations for Christian beliefs and practices.
- Expand leadership opportunities for pupils so that they become courageous advocates for change in the community and globally.
- Ensure that global links consistently develop pupils' understanding and appreciation of spiritual, moral, social and cultural strengths in communities different from their own.

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

School leaders have developed a Christian vision based on biblical teachings from Genesis and the Psalms. They emphasise that every member of the school community is valued as being created and known by God. This vision is consistently applied in policy and practice and is central to the school's development plans. A 'church and community group' led by governors regularly monitors the school's Christian distinctiveness. However, the governing body is not sufficiently rigorous in church school evaluation. The school works closely with neighbouring schools and the Diocese to share training opportunities for staff and governors. The headteacher shares her passion for an inclusive Christian vision for education through the South York multi academy trust and the Selby cluster. She mentors colleagues in neighbouring church schools and is supporting two members of staff as they prepare for church school leadership.

The school's vision and core values of service, thankfulness, forgiveness, justice and endurance pervade all aspects of school life. The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to consider ethical issues around diversity, inclusion and the environment. Their learning has challenged their thinking about equality and inspired them to support York foodbank. Spiritual development is embedded into this curriculum and pupils respond confidently and thoughtfully. Their compassionate response to learning about children in Kenya prompted them to raise money to help them. However, their appreciation of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural strengths of this community is limited. Pupils are developing a sense of social justice. Challenging the treatment of Rosa Parks one rationalised, 'You have to be kind on top of tolerant, you have to treat other people the way you expect to be treated'.

Staff feel valued and morale is high, their teaching is creative and engaging. Pupils enjoy school and levels of absence are well below national average. Teachers now challenge more able pupils to reach greater depth in their learning, ensuring that they all reach their full potential. Pupils make good progress and by Key Stage 2 performance in national tests is consistently above national average. More pupils than average reach greater depth. Many families choose the school because of its inclusive and nurturing Christian ethos. The school works very closely with families so that provision for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is personalised. Goals are carefully set, success is celebrated and pupils meet their personal development targets.

The school's Christian vision leads to consistently positive relationships and excellent behaviour. One pupil explained, 'Everyone is important because everyone is made in the image of God'. Adults scaffold the application of justice and forgiveness so that pupils learn to resolve their own difficulties independently. Pupils are aspirational and quick to support each other, one said, 'We want to reach our potential, we get on together to make that happen'. Older pupils are positive role models and support younger pupils through buddying, as playground leaders and as sports ambassadors. However, pupils lack the leadership skills to be courageous advocates for local, national and global change.

Pupils learn about dignity and respect for different lifestyles through carefully structured personal, social and health education. They respect themselves and others because of the school's consistent reference to everyone being unique and made in God's image. The wellbeing of all members of the school community is central to the inclusive ethos. Effective training means that staff are confident in identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils. Their needs are carefully assessed and support is regularly monitored and evaluated. As a result of knowledgeable intervention, in collaboration with families and other agencies, pupils begin to flourish.

Pupils' appreciation and understanding of the school's values is strengthened by highly effective collective worship. School and church leaders plan worship together so that it reflects Anglican tradition through a consistent structure and the use of simple responses. Older pupils are engaged in this process and confidently lead aspects of worship. Planning is thorough and carefully mapped so that Christian values are consistently linked to biblical teachings. Consequently, pupils can make sophisticated links between Bible stories and school values. Leaders plan for progression and spiritual development so that pupils explore responses and share ideas confidently, continuing discussions into the playground. Pupils from faith backgrounds other than Christianity feel included because they are given time to reflect and can pray in their own way. Pupils access reflection areas in their classrooms and the wider environment. They appreciate times when they can be calm and 'take time to think'. Pupils talk about their own experiences of God confidently because collective worship is rooted in Christian belief and practice. One pupil said, 'God is a feeling inside, an emotion'. Pupils describe the school's values as being the core inside them, helping them to make right choices. They appreciate that, just as they are made in God's image, everyone else is too. This is the foundation of their positive attitudes to diversity and difference.

Links between school and church are robust. Pupils regularly attend church and understand the significance of major festivals and celebrations. Because pupils contribute to Sunday worship and Messy Church they can explain the Holy Trinity and the importance of the Eucharist. Church and school have a mutually beneficial relationship which brings all ages together through worship and community events.

Religious education (RE) has a very high profile in the school. The headteacher is supporting an enthusiastic RE subject leader as she embeds good practice in RE teaching. The RE leader regularly attends Diocesan and cluster training so that she is confident in monitoring and evaluating RE. Work scrutiny has led to improved levels of feedback so that pupils are beginning to understand how to make progress in RE. This is tracked regularly and pupils are making progress in line with other subjects. The RE leader is modelling the use of Understanding Christianity in preparation for implementation, alongside the new North Yorkshire RE syllabus, in September. Analysis of Biblical texts is not yet fully developed and this is limiting pupils' deeper understanding of Christian beliefs and practices. Teachers use a wide range of activities to develop pupils' knowledge and engage their interest. They encourage curiosity and plan lessons so that pupils apply their knowledge to new situations. This was seen in the way year 6 pupils made links between the teachings of Jesus and human rights. RE makes a significant contribution to pupils understanding of diverse cultures and beliefs because they learn about major world faiths. Pupils from faith traditions other than Christianity are affirmed because they help their peers learn about what they believe and do.

Headteacher	Emma Miller
Inspector's name and number	Geraldine Cooper 696