

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Forest of Galtres Anglican / Methodist Primary Academy

Address	Station Lane, Shipton-by-Beningbrough, York YO30 1AG		
Date of inspection	23 May 2019	Status of school	VC primary academy Hope Learning Trust, York
Diocese / Methodist District	Diocese of York Yorkshire North and East District	URN	143289

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

School context

Forest of Galtres Anglican / Methodist Primary Academy has 163 pupils on roll including 22 in its nursery. 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 (SEND) is in line with national averages. In December 2016, the school converted to academy status and joined the Hope Learning Trust. In 2017 the community pre-school moved onto the academy's site and, from April 2019, came under its governance.

The school's Christian vision

We are '*rooted and grounded in love*', actively working to *encourage the acorns to be the oaks God wants them to be*. We aim to grow our children socially, emotionally and academically within an inclusive and deeply caring school community where everyone can flourish.

Key findings

- A well-established culture of inclusion and well-being, firmly rooted in the school's Christian vision, enables every member of the school community to feel welcomed and valued.
- Senior staff are passionate about the school and lead its dual denominational life with integrity.
- The mutually beneficial relationship between the school and the multi-academy trust (MAT) stems from a shared vision and extends the opportunities for staff and pupils to flourish.
- The school's distinctive Christian vision increasingly informs decision-making and curriculum design but a coherent approach to spiritual development is less clear. Religious education (RE) strengthens pupils' understanding of the biblical basis for the school's vision.
- Invitational, imaginative collective worship and prayer are enhanced by the role of the chaplain although opportunities for pupil leadership are limited.

Areas for development

- Ensure that RE provision is sufficiently challenging and provides opportunities to develop pupils' wider understanding of diversity within and beyond Christianity.
- Further enhance the current provision so that all stakeholders can articulate a coherent approach to spiritual development.
- Develop pupils as leaders as well as participants in collective worship so that opportunities for personal spiritual development are enhanced.

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 Christian vision is well understood and embedded in the life of the school community. The result is a very caring, inclusive and happy school, 'rooted and grounded in love', where pupils and adults aim to live 'for all, for all'. School leaders are passionate about the school's mission of service to others. They see the vision as the bedrock of their planning and strategies and can articulate how it springs from the life and teaching of Jesus.

Membership of the Hope Learning Trust aligns well with the school's vision and strengthens the governance of the school. The MAT plays an important role both in monitoring and developing the Christian foundation of the school. As a result, staff and governors benefit from wider networks and training and reciprocate in helping other schools. Through the commitment of the headteacher and governors, the school has an influential voice in MAT discussions. The commitment of the Anglican and Methodist churches to this joint school is especially seen in their ministers' participation in the local governing body and contribution to chaplaincy. Funding from the Methodist church has enabled the provision of a chaplain who can dedicate time to develop collective worship and offer pastoral care.

The school supports pupils effectively to grow socially, emotionally and academically. The school's vision is beginning to shape wider curriculum planning. For example, it influenced the decision to focus the teaching of some subjects on key overarching questions and enquiry skills. Vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported to make good progress. Moreover, parents appreciate the support given to their children's personal and moral growth and not only to academic development. A parent commented that the school's vision 'gives a perspective on life'. Pupils enjoy a range of sporting, musical and other creative opportunities which enable them to learn according to their individual gifts and potential. Residential visits for older pupils have a memorable impact on personal development. For example, a recent outdoor challenge taught pupils to collaborate successfully as a team. However, there is little shared understanding of what is meant by spiritual development.

RE is valued and pupils enjoy the subject. The school is successfully managing a transitional period, caused by staff change, by forming an RE team with suitable skills and knowledge. RE staff have been well supported through diocesan training and partnership with other schools in the MAT. This enables the moderation of pupils' work and the mutual exchange of ideas. The inclusion of units from *Understanding Christianity* is extending pupils' understanding of key theological concepts. However, the current syllabus does not encourage deep enough study of major world religions or consistent assessment of this area. Pupils have had limited opportunities to visit places of worship other than local churches or to welcome visitors from a diversity of faiths.

The Christian vision is the foundation of respectful and caring relationships throughout the school community. In a discussion concerning difference, a pupil commented that 'what's within someone is what's important'. Another pupil said that 'no-one leaves anyone out'. School leadership is pro-active in nurturing the well-being of staff and pupils. All staff have been trained to support good mental health for pupils. This has enabled staff to intervene early to support pupils and in addition has helped staff themselves. Partnership between the inclusion leader and the SEND co-ordinator in the MAT has strengthened the school's capacity to support vulnerable pupils. The chaplain's contribution to well-being is valued by adults and pupils. A pupil felt joining school was 'like a new life' compared with their previous experience. As a result of these strategies and work with families, attendance at school for all pupils is above average.

Invitational collective worship is central to the life of the school. It is greatly enhanced by the role of the chaplain. Much of pupils' understanding of the school's vision and values springs from their experience of collective worship. The senior staff give careful consideration to the school's joint Methodist and Anglican foundation and lead its dual denominational life with integrity. The collective worship programme is shaped by the church's year and the school's five commitments to care, creativity, courage, collaboration and the Christian faith. The regular use of Bible stories and texts ensures that pupils understand the Christian basis for the school's vision and values. Pupils thoroughly enjoy 'singing the faith'. Worship is also enriched by creative engagement including drama which is supported by school workers from the YoYo Trust. Pupils do not usually undertake the leadership of collective worship. Staff take account of pupils' responses and evaluation although these are generally gathered informally.

The chaplain has devised a wide range of imaginative and engaging activities to deepen pupils' understanding of different kinds of prayer and reflection. For example, the opportunity in passing down a corridor to put coins in a treasure chest encouraged pupils to be thankful. Practical actions at the Easter prayer stations helped pupils to reflect on Jesus' death and resurrection. As a result, pupils use their initiative to write their own prayers and, on occasion, to pray extempore. They use calming strategies learnt in the reflection spaces in each classroom. One

pupil commented, 'If you get sad outside, then you can come in and read a prayer to make you happier'. However, pupils did not appear to have a language to express personal spiritual development. This contrasted with their confidence in expressing their opinions and feelings in other settings.

The school's Christian vision produces a strong emphasis on practical kindness and service to others as well as charitable fundraising. For example, members of the cookery club regularly bake cakes in school for the community café. Pupils participated in providing a Christmas dinner for older people. Raising money for ovens for families in Malawi gave an international focus for giving. Through such activities, pupils gain awareness and understanding of disadvantage. The school's strong links with local groups and projects reflect its firm commitment to being an integral part of the wider community.

Headteacher of school	Allyson Buckton
Inspector's name and number	Eleanor Benson 920