

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Sledmere Church of England Primary School			
Address	Sledmere, Driffield, East Yorkshire, YO25 3XP		
Date of inspection	18 October 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled
Diocese	York	URN	118028

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

Sledmere is a rural primary school with 35 pupils on roll. It has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. Following a period of instability, an executive headteacher took up post in January 2018 and a new leadership structure has been established across the Sledmere and Wetwang Federation. Ofsted judged the school to be Good following its March 2019 inspection.

The school's Christian vision

Learning and growing in the love of God.

Our vision focuses on love, because we know that God loves everyone. 'We know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in them.(1 John 4:16)

Key findings

- Leaders have built upon previous strengths to develop a new vision for the school which is shared by the whole school community and is creating an environment in which pupils and adults flourish.
- Christian values are consistently and thematically addressed through collective worship, religious education (RE) and the wider curriculum so that they are embedded and upheld across the whole school community.
- The school ensures that the curriculum reflects the diversity within its communities. However, pupils' understanding of wider global and ethical issues is embryonic.
- The RE leader has strong subject knowledge and is supporting colleagues who are beginning to teach RE in a stimulating way. Pupils' understanding of Christian concepts is at an early stage.

Areas for development

- Develop effective evaluation by governors to strengthen the school's trajectory towards excellence.
- Enable pupils to become global citizens who debate ethical issues and engage in social action.
- Equip worship leaders to bring the school community to 'the threshold of worship' and so enable it to encounter the divine.
- Introduce monitoring systems in RE so pupils know how to achieve greater depth in their learning.

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 recently appointed executive headteacher has brought a new impetus to the school. His knowledge of, and passion for, distinctively Christian education has re-ignited the whole school community. Together they have established a simple Christian vision of 'Learning and growing in the love of God'. The Biblical teachings which underpin the vision, and the Christian values of respect, perseverance, responsibility, forgiveness, honesty and friendship are explicit. Everyone embraces the fact that they are loved by God and belong to a school family which values them. Consequently, all members of the school flourish. Teachers collaborate to create a curriculum which is challenging and engaging so that pupils are eager to learn. As a result, attendance is high and pupil progress is now in line with national averages. Pupils appreciate the value of perseverance and apply this to their learning so that more are working at greater depth. One pupil explained, 'it is like building on sand or building on rock, rock's harder but perseverance helps you achieve more'.

The governing body ensures that resources across the schools are deployed effectively. The senior leadership structure maintains consistency of provision and ensures that staff and pupils feel secure and supported. Devolved responsibilities and close partnerships with the diocese and local authority ensure that staff develop their teaching and leadership skills. The exemplary knowledge and practice of school leaders has motivated and equipped teaching assistants to become qualified teachers in the school. Governors place a high emphasis on the school's distinctively Christian identity and prioritise this in the school's development plan. They act as strong critical friends and have a realistic appraisal of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As one said, 'We have been on a wonderful journey, but it could be even more wonderful'. A new committee structure has been established with the intention of more effectively evaluating the school's distinctiveness, but systems are not yet sufficiently robust or evaluative.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum reflects the many, hidden, diversities in the wider community. An initiative to support the local foodbank stimulated pupils' thinking about the needs of others. Pupils describe their actions as following Jesus' example. One pupil explained, 'Jesus didn't just help he made a difference'. The school's Christian values complement pupils' learning about British values. As a result, they have a strong sense of justice and fairness which is demonstrated in the way they respond to ethical issues. Because the school fosters the values of honesty and friendship pupils discuss contentious aspects of urban and rural life amicably. Older pupils appreciate the complex ethical issues of food production and are keen advocates of 'farm to fork'. However, their engagement with wider global and contemporary questions is limited.

Staff feel valued and describe themselves as having 'the freedom to flourish'. This motivates them to create a learning environment, including the outdoors, which inspires pupils' curiosity and wonder. Spiritual development is woven into the curriculum so that pupils confidently and imaginatively articulate their understanding of the world around them. Whole school activity days enhance pupils' skills of collaborative and co-operative learning. This fosters a fully inclusive environment in which all pupils feel valued. There is no differentiation between age or gender as pupils play and learn together.

Leaders have quickly established policy and practice consistent with the school's Christian vision and values. High expectations are set in the context of a caring Christian environment in which everyone aspires and thrives. Pupils, following the example of their teachers in helping and supporting each other. They are confident and independent, but know when to ask for help for themselves or their friends. Pupils acknowledge and express forgiveness in their own lives, their relationships with others and in the way that they always have a fresh start. The school is a close community and every pupil and family is known and cared for. Vulnerabilities are quickly identified and pupils are effectively supported by the emotional literacy support assistant. The school works closely with local agencies and supports families in accessing the help that they need. Consequently emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties are quickly and effectively resolved. The nurturing culture, established by school leaders, extends to staff. Leaders maintain and monitor systems which ensure that staff have a healthy work-life balance. Staff are secure in seeking professional and emotional support. Mental and physical well-being is now an established part of the curriculum. Pupils and staff share sessions of mindfulness and physical activity which adds to the sense of calm within the school family.

The school enjoys a strong relationship with the church. The Vicar is a regular and popular visitor, supporting the spiritual development of the school community. Engagement with 'Open the Book' has been inspirational to the pupil worship committee. They enjoy sharing Bible stories in ways that they describe as 'fun but reflective'. There is a real sense of vocation in the way that they see their role as 'not just teaching about God but how he does things.' They set a strong example in the way that they facilitate and contribute to worship. Consequently, worship is inclusive and reverential. The liturgy of the opening responses reinforces pupils' appreciation of the

Trinitarian nature of God. Pupils talk about the Holy Spirit, Jesus and God the Father with confidence and many appreciate the value of prayer. They articulate prayer as 'not just being for our benefit' but seeking God's intervention for the world. Careful planning ensures that pupils appreciate the biblical foundation of the school's values and vision. Opportunities for pupils to respond to worship help them to apply their learning to everyday life and contribute to the positive choices they make. Simple evaluation strategies are in place, but are not yet effective in measuring the impact of worship on pupils' spirituality.

The RE leader has strong subject knowledge which is shared with the local RE hub. She is currently supporting recently qualified teachers who are beginning to feel confident to teach RE in an interesting and stimulating way. Pupils are developing a deeper understanding of complex Christian concepts, but this at an early stage. Learning objectives are clearly set which means that teachers assess pupils' progress accurately. It is in line with their progress in other subjects. However, pupils are not sure how they make progress in RE. Innovative and practical approaches to teaching and learning stimulate pupils' interest so that they are able to make links between faiths. Older pupils make mature links between Jewish and Christian heritage.

Executive headteacher	Peter Richardson
Inspector's name and number	Geraldine Cooper 696