

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Lawrence's Church of England Primary Academy			
Address	Heslington Road, York. YO10 5BW		
Date of inspection	28 February 2020	Status of school	Academy, part of the Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust (MAT) inspected as voluntary aided.
Diocese	York	URN	143863

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
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

St Lawrence's is a primary school with 187 pupils on roll and 17 in the nursery. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. The school was placed in special measures in 2016 and joined the Pathfinder MAT. In January 2020 Ofsted judged the school to be requiring improvement. Nevertheless, it was judged to be good in three out of the five areas inspected. The headteacher has been in post since 2017.

The school's Christian vision

As I have loved you, so you must love one another (John 13:34)

Caring, Considerate, Courageous.

Our children are loved and cared for. They understand and welcome others as they are understood and welcomed. They know that we believe they can achieve anything. We are growing the future to be Caring, Considerate and Courageous.

Key findings

- The dedicated leaders are transforming the school. St Lawrence's embodies its inspirational Christian vision to be caring, considerate and courageous. It welcomes and supports pupils of all backgrounds and abilities, thus helping them to flourish. Further development of the whole curriculum has begun.
- During a time of change and significant challenges, leaders have focused on high expectations and have raised aspirations for all. The school continues to work on improving attendance.
- Pastoral care and wellbeing in this Christian family community is tailored to the individual needs of pupils, staff and parents. Everyone is 'loved and cared for'.
- Collective worship is invitational, inclusive and inspiring with pupil ambassadors planning and leading prayer and worship. Relationships with the church and diocese are strong.
- RE is led well. Effective teaching means that pupil progress in RE is in line with other core subjects.

Areas for development

- Fully embed the revised innovative curriculum so that the vision continues to drive the school forward as a church school.
- Extend pupils' opportunities to take on roles as courageous advocates both locally and globally in order to promote greater engagement in social action.
- Further develop assessment in RE through planned moderation. Ensure that pupils can articulate how they make progress in RE and what their next steps are to enhance their learning journeys.

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

St Lawrence's is an inspirational school where everyone is welcomed. This is especially important with twelve different languages and seven religions represented in the school. Dedicated leadership ensures that everyone is 'loved and cared for'. The vision's biblical rooting is understood and consistently explained by governors, staff, parents and children through concrete examples. The remit to be 'caring, considerate and courageous' infuses everything. The school, in the view of staff, has 'changed lives completely'. Since 2016 it has been on a challenging journey. Joining a MAT with a strong moral purpose ensures that the vision is not only maintained but also supported. Weekly heads' meetings create a mutually beneficial partnership where expertise can be shared. The MAT also provides career pathways for all staff and opportunities to refine their practice. New staff feel 'so supported'. The school's governing body committee has a significant role in monitoring the school as a church school and ensures that school improvement is strategic. Leadership is recognised by parents as 'caring' and pupils believe this is 'a good place to be'.

Pupils are given skills for life through continued improvements in teaching and learning. Their outcomes in English and mathematics have improved considerably. Each child is treated as unique and individual plans to support learning, attendance and wellbeing are meticulous and effective. Pupils know that through the living out of the vision teachers believe in them. This is seen through 'check-ins' with pupils and a consistent approach. The new curriculum, driven by 'big ideas', is in its early stages but is already supporting the rounded development of pupils. Spiritual development is strong through collective worship, RE and opportunities to reflect. Pupils enjoy using the 'I know, I think and I wonder' statements to explore spiritual and ethical issues. The headteacher models servant leadership and 'never lets a child fail'. All extra-curricular activities are free and open to everyone. Pupils who experience success outside the classroom are celebrated as the 'believe and achieve' children on a termly newsletter. There is a strong culture of raising aspirations, further supported by the University of York 'Green Apples' scheme.

Relationships are very supportive across the school. Policies closely reflect the school's Christian vision. The behaviour policy has restorative justice and forgiveness at its heart and pupils can explain clearly how they are treated fairly. Staff are 'forensic' in solving problems and parents recognise that 'any issues are always dealt with and straight away'. Pupils know that each day is a new start and that staff 'support us and help us'. There is a significant staff presence on the playground before and after school which enables parents to raise concerns before they become more serious. The school made the bold decision to employ a Pastoral Care Officer who ensures that there is immediate and experienced support for pupils, parents and staff. As a skilled professional she anticipates problems and sources appropriate support for all from translating letters to liaising with outside agencies. Attendance is a specific challenge and bespoke support is given to improve this.

In this hospitable community difference is seen as an asset by leaders, staff, pupils and governors. They are well-practised in welcoming new families. A member of the school council stated, 'We are an open school and we give people dignity'. In living out the vision the school strives to ensure that everyone is 'understood and welcomed'. Pupils can talk knowledgeably about the need to 'give people time to settle', but how at St Lawrence's 'there is always someone to talk to'. They also recognise that some children need a special timetable to help them to succeed.

There is some understanding of social action. The school supports national charity events, Christmas shoeboxes and has sent books to Africa. The Year 5 children undertook the Archbishop of York's Award which included community litter picking. Currently the school is fundraising to sponsor a child and relates this to the vision and values. However, pupils do not fully understand ways in which to challenge injustice to enable them to become courageous advocates for change in their local, national and global communities.

Worship is invitational, inspiring and inclusive. Prayer and reflection are a natural and valued part of the school day. Pupils identify the benefits of lunch time prayers, 'made up' prayers and time for reflection. Themes for collective worship are extended to class reflection areas and are a reference point for behaviour and attitudes. As a result everyone is immersed in the vision and associated values. The school has skilled pupil ambassadors

who plan, lead and evaluate worship. They also help to organise and lead regular prayer space days and services in the church. Daily acts of worship are based on detailed planning and recommended resources. The pupils have a clear understanding of liturgy and an Anglican greeting is used to open worship. They can explain the Trinity. Pupils are less able to discuss other traditions in the worldwide Anglican church. They can apply sound knowledge of Bible teaching to their own lives. The church is well represented by foundation governors and the chair of governors is closely involved in school. They have been committed supporters of the school's development. Church members have led worship and 'Open the Book' sessions. Yoyo, a York Christian charity, has a significant impact on pupils' appreciation of Christian teaching.

RE is led well. Working closely with the Diocese, planning has been streamlined and this impacts on pupils' opportunities to apply enquiry and analytical skills. The Understanding Christianity resource is used effectively so that pupils are developing a deeper knowledge of Christian concepts like salvation. Pupils benefit from learning through drama, art and discussion. They show understanding of a range of religions including Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Driven by the school's vision, teachers also strive to include information from the rich resource of religions represented in school. Detailed reflection books for each class not only display the RE curriculum, but also showcase children's thoughts and learning. These are complemented by RE books which are beginning to show each pupil's learning journey. Assessment has been reviewed and systems are in line with other core subjects. Effective formal monitoring of RE takes place and information is reported to the governing body committee. Leaders are clear about strengths of the subject and how to improve through action planning.

Caring, consideration and courage are the hallmarks of this school. The vision to 'love one another' as Jesus loved us is lived out daily.



The effectiveness of RE is Good.

The quality of RE teaching is good. This was verified during the inspection through observation, work and planning analysis and pupil voice. Pupils learn through a variety of styles including good questioning and opportunities to explore their own views and the opinions of others. Moderation across the MAT is planned to support the refining of assessment. Pupils are beginning to use learning logs effectively to support them in explaining how they can make progress in RE.

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