

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

Elvington Church of England Primary School			
Address	Dauby Lane, Elvington, York. YO41 4HP		
Date of inspection <sup>5</sup>	05 March 2020	Status of school	Voluntary controlled
Diocese	York	URN	121531

<b>Overall Judgement</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>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgement</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

### School context

Elvington is a primary school with 142 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. There have been significant leadership changes since the last SIAMS (2014) and Ofsted (2018) inspections. The current headteacher took up post in January 2020.

### The school's Christian vision

We are a welcoming, caring and stimulating school. We inspire a love of learning by nurturing potential, fun and happiness. We celebrate our success as we achieve high standards in all aspects of life; allowing children to grow spiritually, morally and socially within a strong Christian ethos.

I have come in order that you may have life – life in all its fullness. John 10:10

### Key findings

- The headteacher, supported by other leaders and the diocese, has passionately driven church school improvement. As a result, pupils and adults have quality opportunities to experience 'life in all its fullness'
- Care and nurture permeate relationships in school and partnerships with the wider community. Pupils feel safe, know they are valued and consequently are able to learn. Academic progress is good.
- The evolving curriculum, shaped by the Christian vision, provides rich learning experiences. Intentional opportunities for spiritual development and exploring diversity are less well developed.
- Governors are committed to the school and the new leadership. Their monitoring of the school as a church school, has, however lacked rigour and planning.
- Invitational, varied opportunities for worship and prayer are planned and evaluated. Opportunities for pupils to lead are recent, but are being enthusiastically embraced. This is leading to growing confidence.

### Areas for development

- Develop monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school as a Church school. This is so leaders and governors can evidence the impact of the vision over time.
- Ensure a coherent approach to spiritual development is woven through the revised curriculum. This will enable pupils to reflect on 'big questions' of life and learning.
- Further develop pupil involvement in the planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship. This will ensure they become leaders in promoting the distinctiveness of the school.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to encounter diversity and difference to enable them to be better prepared for life in modern Britain.

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 passionate commitment of the new headteacher, supported by governors and other leaders, has re-energised the school. The distinctive Christian vision has been instrumental to this change. Pupils, staff and parents alike recognise the nurturing, happiness and 'fullness of life' the school offers. The vision is underpinned by well-established Christian values and pupils talk about these with confidence, rooting them in their day to day experiences. One parent wrote 'the school doesn't just talk about values, it lives them', exemplified in the collaborative way the vision was re-imagined and shared. This has brought the school and community together.

The vision is driving curriculum development and extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the range of visits, theme days and classroom learning and how their teachers 'want us to experience everything'. This love of learning, enshrined in the vision, sees memorable experiences within and beyond the classroom. These are infused with art, music, baking and outdoor learning. This rich, varied and stimulating provision enables pupils to reflect on a range of issues, broadening their thinking and views on the world. They have ownership of initiatives such as recycling and recognise their role as courageous advocates in protecting the environment for the good of everyone. They speak up when they see things that aren't right. This allows pupils to understand how their actions transform lives and can affect both the present and the future. The use of 'big questions' in lessons and worship, further explored through reflection areas in classrooms, supports this flourishing in learning. It challenges pupils to think more deeply. However, opportunities for spiritual development are not all always made explicit to pupils in the same way.

Relationships within and beyond the school are firmly rooted in Christian values, ensuring all are given the support, encouragement and opportunity to succeed. As a result, pupils develop a deep love of learning and respect for each other, so instances of bullying are rare and quickly eliminated. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is very good. The headteacher and staff see each pupil as an individual child of God and kind, nurturing relationships instil hope, resilience and perseverance in all. As a result, pupils strive to 'be the very best they can be' and have both purpose and joy in learning. Adults, like pupils, flourish at Elvington. One said 'this is a happy place to work, where we all care about each other'. Consequently, staff, including those at the early stages of new roles, feel confident and supported and have quality professional development opportunities. Knowledgeable governors are committed to supporting the school, but have not monitored and evaluated it consistently as a Church school. They have welcomed and acted upon advice from the diocese to develop their distinctiveness. They recognise that this is an on-going journey, which will enable the impact of the vision to be celebrated by all members of the school community. There is a shared sense of optimism and confidence for the future which in infusing the school's policies and practice.

Mutual respect is evident across the ages. The recent peer-mediator scheme enables pupils to demonstrate forgiveness for one another. Well-established buddy systems bring older and younger pupils together, strengthening the sense of community. Pupils are involved in cross-generational projects including a monthly coffee morning at the church. This showcases mutually beneficial relationships across age groups and lives out the commitment of the school to be at the heart of its village. Pupils' numerous leadership roles, including as school councillors, worship leaders and librarians exemplify how they treat others with dignity and respect and take pride in opportunities to be chosen. One initiative saw the school council, supported by the highly impactful 'Newsday Tuesday' raising awareness and funds following the bush fires in Australia. Pupils link such actions to the school values, including hope and consequently see themselves as agents of change.

A rhythm of prayer infuses the school day, including the Lord's Prayer as 'a tool for life' and draws all aspects of school, family and community together. One pupil commented that 'prayer helps me think about what I can do differently and how God might help us'. The leadership of pupils is adding to the varied diet of collective worship, which is invitational and meets statutory requirements. Christian greetings, enthusiastic singing of newly learned songs and the lighting of a candle all add to worship as a special time for the school community. It supports pupils in articulating the importance of the school's Christian values. The linking to news through the 'Newsday Tuesday' initiative has been inspirational throughout the school and empowered pupils and staff to provide worship with a stronger local, national and global relevance. Parents also speak of the impact of the

initiative at home through the challenging questions being raised. Pupils regularly evaluate aspects of worship but it is not always clear how this has led to changes being made.

Pupils and parents speak positively about the partnership with the parish church. This enhances the village and provides additional opportunities for pupils, including through the Vision On and Yo-Yo Clubs. Pupils, staff and parents say their regular visits to church support their developing understanding of Anglican tradition and major festivals. Both school and church are committed to this mutually beneficial relationship, which is being strengthened further during the current period without a vicar.

The religious education (RE) curriculum is still developing but is well resourced and enthusiastically led. The integration of the Understanding Christianity resources, alongside the locally agreed syllabus and use of big books, celebrates a range of questions and debate. This enables pupils of faith or none to reflect upon beliefs. Pupils are knowledgeable about a range of Bible stories and can talk about them including in modern day contexts such as the Good Samaritan and helping the homeless. Their understanding of religious diversity is underdeveloped. They have very limited opportunities to meet people of different faiths and cultures or see places of worship, beyond the local church, first hand. Assessment systems are beginning to support learning by helping teachers to gauge progress and use the information to inform their planning. Some strong feedback in pupil books and next step extension questions, are enabling older pupils to extend their reasoning further.

At its heart, Elvington is an inclusive, creative school community, summed up in the words of a pupil, who accurately recognised that 'everyone can be themselves at this school'.

Headteacher	Andrew Buttery
Inspector's name and number	Revd Simone Bennett 949