

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Michael and All Angels Church of England Primary			
Address	Brookside, Rearsby, Leicestershire LE7 4YB		
Date of inspection	09 May 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as voluntary aided.
Diocese	Leicester	URN	138902

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 Michael and All Angels is a primary school with 97 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. Over recent years there has been an increase in the numbers of vulnerable pupils on roll. The headteacher has been at the school since January 2009. The school is a member of the Syston and Thurmaston Educational Partnership (STEP).

The school's Christian vision

Psalm 147:4 God counts the stars and calls them all by name.

The aim of our church school is to develop the full potential of each child, spiritually, socially and academically in a safe, inclusive environment which is grounded within the ethos of the Christian faith.

Key findings

- The school's Christian vision, firmly rooted in theology, is promoted and celebrated throughout the school environment. However, it is not as explicitly promoted across the wider school community.
- The headteacher clearly lives out the school's Christian vision and his committed leadership is successful in driving the development of St Michael and All Angels as a church school. Widening opportunities for leaders, at all levels, to develop their knowledge and understanding of church school leadership is needed to strengthen their capacity to sustain the school's Christian character'.
- The school's vision that everyone counts has a very positive impact on the whole community through both its wellbeing and global citizenship work. This results in supportive relationships and a strong culture of care for individuals and the world around them.
- Pupils find comfort in prayer. They value experiences provided by the school to explore and write prayers. However, pupils have fewer opportunities to independently engage in personal reflection and prayer in their own lives.
- Religious education (RE) is regarded as a core subject and is instrumental in creating a safe space for pupils to share their views. It facilitates the development of the school's inclusive, respectful ethos.

Areas for development

- Embed the school's Christian vision so that it is explicitly understood by all members of the wider community, enabling them to see its impact.
- Widen opportunities for church school leadership at all levels to ensure the sustainability of the school's Christian character.
- Continue to develop the use of prayer spaces so that pupils deepen their understanding of the purpose of prayer and have the opportunity to use prayer and reflection in their own lives.

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

On visiting St Michael and All Angels it is quickly apparent that everybody matters and is valued as an individual. Pupils proudly point to the silver stars on their jumpers and explain, 'We wear a star to remind us that we are special and unique in our own way.' They understand that they are loved and cared for, and in turn show consideration and respect to difference and diversity. Parents say that staff are approachable and know their children well and this they relate to their understanding of the biblical verse of the school's Christian vision. Staff overwhelmingly talk about the personal support they receive and appreciate the investment in them that enables them to grow. Leaders put in place highly effective provision to support the positive mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff through training opportunities, counselling and mindfulness. It is evident that leaders have a clear understanding of the distinctively Christian nature of the school's vision and that their articulation of it creates a safe, secure and nurturing environment. Consequently, relationships across the school community are positive and pupils demonstrate excellent behaviour centred on forgiveness and reconciliation.

The school's desire to develop the 'full potential of every child' underpins decision making and results in the creation of policies and practices that support all pupils, including the most vulnerable. This is exemplified by the provision of a homework club, a nurture room and access to a therapy dog, all of which ensure that the curriculum is inclusive to all. As a result, the academic, emotional and social needs of all pupils are met and standards of progress are in line with national trends.

Leaders are committed to embedding and promoting the school's Christian vision, recognising that this will ensure the growth and sustainability of the Christian character of the school. They readily provide practical illustrations of how the school's vision is enabling pupils to flourish. This is reflected in the school's environment that celebrates its Christian character. However, leaders acknowledge that the school's Christian vision is not as explicitly promoted to the wider school community.

The headteacher's committed leadership is pivotal in the development of this church school. He leads both collective worship and RE and this ensures that priority is given to both areas. He is instrumental in developing partnerships with other networks of schools to share and develop good practice and has recently become a member of the Diocesan Board of Education. His awareness of current church school thinking drives staff professional development. As a result, teachers have a secure knowledge of key documents such as *Valuing All God's Children* and have been effectively supported to implement *Understanding Christianity* into the RE curriculum. There is a high level of respect for the work and impact of the headteacher on the school. However, leaders at all levels have had fewer opportunities to develop as church school leaders in order that the Christian character is sustainable.

All areas from the previous inspection have been addressed. Governors regularly visit the school, know the school well and have a thorough knowledge of improvement work. In line with the school's Christian vision, the views of pupils and stakeholders matter. Leaders listen and respond to the opinions of pupils via monthly House meetings. This secures improvements such as increased opportunities for pupils to engage in drama during collective worship and additional provision to utilise computing in RE lessons. The establishment of a governor Ethos Committee and a systematic approach to monitoring allows governors to respond rapidly to needs and quickly effect change. This has brought about positive benefits for pupils in a short space of time. For example, pupils' awareness of the importance of communion in Christian worship is growing because of the focused support provided by the vicar. In addition, pupils are gaining a better knowledge of the church through the improving partnership work with the local church. This is helping pupils to develop a good appreciation of liturgical and Anglican traditions.

Pupils are proud of their charitable and global citizenship work and talk enthusiastically about their social actions, such as toilet twinning and support for a local food bank. They understand that other people are important and unique and show an awareness for disadvantage and deprivation. Opportunities within the curriculum, as well as work to achieve Christian Aid's Global Neighbours accreditation, enable pupils to respond passionately to environmental concerns such as plastic pollution. Thus, pupils have a real sense that they can make a difference to the world.

Collective worship is invitational and inclusive, valued by all as an important time to come together, to be calm and to reflect. Pupils and staff are encouraged to live out the school's vision and values and consider key Christian beliefs through the use of inspirational themes. Biblical teachings underpin daily worship and as a result, pupils can relate their good biblical knowledge to their own lives. Pupils are actively involved in worship. They set up the hall and prepare the worship table with a cloth, Bible and a three wick candle that reminds them of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God. Worship is led by a variety of leaders including staff, the local vicar, representatives from the SOAR Christian charity and pupils from Years 5 and 6. Work by the school to develop prayer spaces is supporting the spiritual development of pupils by making prayer more accessible. As a consequence, pupils have an understanding of different ways to pray and appreciate opportunities to write prayers during whole school prayer days. Pupils are expressive in the comfort they get from prayer. However, at present, there is less provision for pupils to personally engage in prayer and reflection.

Senior leaders ensure that RE has a high status, investing time, training and resources into the subject. Regular monitoring indicates that this has a positive impact on teaching and learning, strengthening pupils' understanding of Christianity and world religions. Assessment rigorously informs staff to meet the needs of all groups of learners. Pupils enjoy RE because learning challenges their thinking and utilises a range of strategies including drama, art, cooking, visits and special focus days. They see the relevance of learning about different religions and cultures so that they can get on in today's world and value how RE helps them to make positive choices. Pupils confidently answer 'big questions' and feel safe to share their own views through the shared culture of respect and an appreciation of how to disagree respectfully. It is clear that the school has created an ethos of inclusivity where everyone 'counts' and this is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Regular monitoring provides leaders with an accurate picture of the quality of RE teaching and this allows them to correctly identify strengths and areas for further development. As a consequence, all pupils are challenged and supported by good quality teaching that effectively enables them to explore religious beliefs, ideas and practice. Thus pupils are acquiring a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a living faith. Accurate assessment procedures are ensuring good standards of attainment and all pupils, including those with individual needs, make good progress. This is reflected in the quality of work in pupils' books, indicating that all pupils flourish academically in RE.

Headteacher	Neil Bardsley
Inspector's name and number	Carol Price 869