

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Higham on the Hill Church of England Primary School			
Address	Main Street, Higham on the Hill, Warwickshire. CV13 6AJ		
Date of inspection	30 January 2020	Status of school	Primary Academy in Diocese of Leicester Academies Trust inspected as voluntary controlled.
Diocese	Leicester	URN	141468

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 Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Higham on the Hill is a primary school with 92 pupils on roll. 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. There is currently an interim headteacher in post and a new executive head will lead the school from the beginning of February 2020.

The school's Christian vision

Through God's love and Jesus' teachings, we will enable our whole school community to flourish by developing knowledge, skills and understanding; nurturing positive attitudes to the future and recognising the difference we can make to the lives of others.

Growing Faith, Challenging Minds, Discovering Talents

"Set children off the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6

Key Findings

- This is an inclusive school where everyone is valued and cared for but it is currently experiencing a period of instability in leadership. The Christian character of the school has been maintained during this time of transition.
- Leaders are monitoring and evaluating the Christian character of the school but this lacks cohesion and rigour.
- There is a wealth of Christian traditions and communities linked to the school but their potential support is underused in developing the spiritual lives of the school family.
- Pupils are confident in planning and leading collective worship but have had few opportunities to lead more creative worship and social and ethical projects.
- Pupils are excited by the imaginative and inspirational teaching in RE.

Areas for development

- For governors to develop a more strategic monitoring and evaluation framework in order to improve the effectiveness of Higham on the Hill as a Church school.
- To develop a clear definition and secure understanding of spiritual development.
- To strengthen links with local Christian communities to enrich the spiritual lives of the school family.
- To further develop the leadership role of pupils to enhance worship opportunities and to challenge injustice and inequality, both locally and globally.

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 strapline of 'Growing Faith, Challenging Minds, Discovering Talents' has been in place for a number of years but the overarching Christian vision for the school was renewed a year ago. All members of the school family had the opportunity to contribute to the selection of the Bible verse from Proverbs. This now expresses, and clarifies, a long existing vision for the school and clearly defines its Christian character. The interim headteacher and staff have ensured that the Christian ethos has been maintained during this time of transition but the prominence and understanding of links to the Bible verse have had insufficient time to become embedded. Despite this, the school is clearly giving pupils aspiration for themselves both now and in the future. The school is part of the Diocese of Leicester Academies Trust (DLAT) and this strong partnership, which has included provision of an interim headteacher, has contributed to the Christian character being supported and sustained during a turbulent period at Higham on the Hill. It is also evident that despite its prominence within the Multi Academy Trust (MAT), the school's vision is distinctively its own. Christian character is mentioned in action plans but does not currently have its own strand in the school development plan. There is evidence to demonstrate that governors are monitoring and evaluating but this lacks a strategic and focussed approach. The recommendations from the previous SIAMS inspection have been addressed.

The school is currently carrying out a curriculum review to ensure challenging learning opportunities are provided for pupils. Pupils are keen to question and respond creatively, making progress in line with national averages. Staff have a very secure knowledge of individual pupils and any gaps in their knowledge. Parents articulate that each child is known by everyone and of them being 'extremely nurtured'. Vulnerable pupils are well supported and all members of the school family speak passionately of ways in how they have been assisted and cared for in periods of difficulty. Members of the school community are able to verbalise their own definition and experience of spirituality but this lacks a coherent approach and clear definition. Pupils avidly enjoy attending the after-school JAM (Jesus and Me) club which is contributing to their spiritual development in creative and innovative ways.

There are twelve Christian values which are focused on through a rolling programme over two years. Clear links are made to character development through the implementation of the Route to Resilience programme. Pupils could clearly articulate how 'Growing Faith, Challenging Minds, Discovering Talents' applied to their own lives. There are high levels of respect, and cultural diversity is embraced and celebrated. One pupil attributed such values to the school's Christian foundation stating, 'Because of all God's done for us, it's the least we can do.' Playground Pals and Sports Ambassadors contribute to good levels of behaviour during free play and actions at home are credited to the Christian ethos in school. The school has achieved the Beyond Bullying award and pupils are adamant that bullying does not happen at their school. The use of a 'worry box' in each classroom is a strength and pupils articulate how the use of these, ensure their wellbeing is confidentially and sensitively addressed by school staff. The very youngest children in school recently challenged the school community to raise money for those affected by the Australian bush fires demonstrating that everyone's voice is heard at Higham on the Hill. Whilst the school has just achieved the bronze 'Global Neighbours' award, global links are underdeveloped therefore restricting possibilities for pupils to challenge injustice and inequality.

The school family meets daily for collective worship at the end of the school day and pupils speak of this time causing them to reflect and think before they go home. Worship is invitational and is not compulsory or forced. Themes for collective worship are planned using a diversity of themes incorporating Anglican traditions and liturgy. Three candles are lit at the start of each act of worship encouraging pupils to focus on the trinitarian nature of God. Pupils are beginning to learn about the Eucharist and there are plans to develop this further. Prayer is encouraged and one pupil described the opportunity to pray as being 'like a weight lifted off your shoulders'. Whilst key elements of worship are present daily in these times of gathering, pupils have limited opportunities to think deeply and reflect. It is commendable that so many of the staff team lead worship but the opportunity to grow spiritually is restricted by the absence of a cohesive school approach and a clear and secure understanding of spirituality. The vicar leads worship twice a term and there is monthly session by the 'Open the Book' team. Other local church communities support the school in ad hoc ways but this richness of support is underused. Pupils already plan and lead elements of Golden Worship on a Friday but

have had few opportunities to lead more creative worship, both in school and other inventive settings. Services celebrating the Christian calendar take place in St. Peter's Church which is accessed by a gate from the school field but it is not used regularly as an alternative venue to inspire daily worship.

Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their RE lessons at Higham on the Hill and they have a real desire to learn about religion to help them understand each other more. They describe the big questions in life as 'those things which nobody knows' and talk of how their RE lessons make links to the school's Christian values. The very youngest children clearly articulated the story of Creation and their learning was supported through very creative and engaging activities. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were actively involved in making snakes and ladders games to secure their understanding on the theme of 'Temptation'. The use of the Understanding Christianity programme contributes to this excitement and involvement. The RE coordinator has planned provision to ensure the school fulfils the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement regarding the proportions of teaching Christianity and other world faiths. Parents expressed a desire for workshops on what is being taught in RE in order to have greater understanding. Staff spoke of pupils visiting a mosque and gurdwara in the past. Pupils have infrequent opportunities to experience life and culture beyond their locality and as yet there is not a regular plan of visits throughout the school to further increase understanding of religion and cultural diversity. RE is comprehensively assessed and is given prominence in line with other core subjects such as English and Maths.

Interim Headteacher	Penny Kluver
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