

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Horndon-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School			
Address	Hillcrest Road, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, SS17 8LR		
Date of inspection	25 June 2019	Status of school	Academy – Primary - Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust
Diocese	Chelmsford	URN	115093

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

School context

Horndon-on-the-Hill is a primary school with 254 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number from other ethnic groups. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below the national averages. The school has longstanding links with its parish church. The interim head of school was appointed in January 2019 and the school became part of the Osborne Trust in April 2019.

The school's Christian vision

'We are all part of God's family. Through trying our best in all that we do, we find a sense of belonging.'
1 Cor. 12.27 'All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.'

Key findings

- The interim head of school has given significant priority to the development of the Christian vision and its distinctiveness as a Church School. The new vision has been established which fits the context of the school and is beginning to shape policies and development. Whilst the vision is theologically underpinned, it is not fully embedded or effectively monitored.
- The members of the school community have a clear sense of belonging and this runs as a thread through the life of the school and is seen in the quality of the relationships at all levels.
- The school enjoys, and benefits from, strong and supportive relationships with their local church and village community. Likewise, the links with its Trust are beginning to impact positively on practice.
- Collective worship and religious education (RE) are given high priority in school life.

Areas for development

- Ensure that the new Christian vision is embedded across all policies and practice so that all members of the school community know and understand it and its theological underpinning.
- Develop a rigorous system to measure the impact of the Christian vision to ensure the current rate of progress is sustained.
- Ensure the religious education (RE) curriculum provides greater opportunities for the critical engagement of biblical text and the exploration of other world faiths.
- Provide additional opportunities for pupils to explore how their vision of being God's family challenges them to think globally about life and develop a greater understanding of issues of deprivation, disadvantage and exploitation of the natural world.

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 vision 'We are all part of God's family. Through trying our best in all that we do, we find a sense of belonging' has recently been established. School leaders, working alongside the local governing body, have taken significant steps to develop this new vision. Their decision to seek input from the diocesan adviser is indicative of their commitment. Consultation with stakeholders has resulted in a vision which best 'fits the school' and 'comes from the heart' of who they believe they are. Whilst the vision is theologically underpinned, the extent to which this is known and articulated is less evident. The vision and associated values are beginning to shape policies and school development planning. Monitoring visits by the governing body are in place but there is no ongoing rigorous system in place to measure and evaluate the impact of this vision. The school enjoys a supportive relationship with the local parish and village. The school have become part of the Osborne Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) which leaders describe as a positive 'working partnership', allowing the Christian distinctiveness to be maintained. RE and collective worship have a high profile and new staff are supported well in their understanding of what it means to work in a Church school through diocesan training.

A broad and balanced curriculum is in place where all pupils, including the most vulnerable, experience a stimulating and safe learning environment. A strong sense of belonging and nurture is reflected in progress which is mostly in line with national averages in recent years. The school, in line with its vision of 'trying our best', are addressing the dip in progress in 2018. The current Year 6 pupils are now on track to secure progress which is at least close to the national average. Spiritual development is nurtured through the promotion of a culture of curiosity and a sense of 'awe and wonder.' Fridays provide key moments to be reflective and pupils are encouraged to explore spiritual and ethical issues such as 'why can't we see God?' The prayer garden is a particularly popular space which is used regularly for reflection and quiet prayer.

Pupils are challenged to play an active role in their learning and to make positive choices. 'Ask 3 before me' encourages them to seek help from others before the teacher. Classroom 'working walls' provide sources of help and are invaluable for pupils who have missed lessons. Pupils commented that it is 'ok to fail'. Perseverance and resilience shown by some Year 6 pupils was noted by external moderators who were impressed by their ability to edit their writing. The curriculum provides many opportunities to ask 'big questions' and pupils respond well. The question, 'was it about trying or winning?' in the aftermath of Sports Day, provides evidence of their creative use. The school is committed in its charitable activities and pupils are involved in raising money for local and international charities. The school's awareness of disadvantage and deprivation, more globally, is however, underdeveloped overall.

The vision of belonging as a family runs as a thread throughout the school and is most evident in the quality of all relationships and in their welcome of others. A positive relationship with parents and staff 'working together' is reflected in the 'open-door policy' and in the way problems are resolved swiftly. Behaviour is very good and pupils are polite and courteous. Expectations are high and an innovative 'fix-it' sheet affords opportunities for pupils to hear the views of others, develop a sense of empathy, and experience reconciliation. There is a positive upturn in attendance which is rooted in their vision of togetherness. Wellbeing and mental health are taken seriously. A change to marking policy was driven by concerns for staff wellbeing and further staff support is available through the Trust. Year 6 safeguarding ambassadors and the school's use of counselling and a neurological, linguistic programme for children, provide good evidence of the importance of pupil wellbeing.

The school's personal social and health education (PSHE) programme and the sex and relationship education (SRE) curriculum are age appropriate and reflect the school vision of a family that belongs to one another. Each child is valued, and this is strikingly seen in the mosaic of pupil faces in the school entrance. Effective measures challenge prejudicial behaviour, as reflected in the low incidence of bullying behaviour. Parent surveys reveal a safe school and pupils speak of a place where people are not 'judged by how they look.' Opportunities to engage with the local elderly community, together with parent-led 'diversity days' reflect a school that seeks to develop respect and celebrate difference. The decision to develop a link to a Kenyan school provides evidence of their desire to develop this further.

Collective worship invites all to reflect upon life's spiritual dimension and pupils described this as coming together 'like a family.' Worship is supported by the local parish and opportunities to experience church worship develops their appreciation of the wider Anglican tradition. Collective worship is inclusive and invitational where pupils and adults grow spiritually through music, reflection, and story. Pupils encounter the teachings of Jesus through biblical texts and understand God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with one pupil speaking of, 'God in all three of these things'. Pupils are involved in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship primarily through the Worship our Way (WOW) group. Effective planning and evaluation are in place which informs future worship provision. Prayer is a natural and valued part of school with opportunities in worship and in class to pray and to write prayers. The pupils take pride in their Prayer Garden and this is a welcome sanctuary for all.

Curriculum planning for RE is effective and the RE lead has taken opportunities to share good practice locally. Monitoring is in place to ensure assessment is effective. There are some limited opportunities for pupils to engage with biblical text. Big questions, such as 'what can we learn from sacred books?', stimulate ideas and encourage reflection. Pupils have a good level of understanding of Christianity as a living world faith. Pupils have a respectful understanding of other religions as evidenced in one class which was exploring the reason why Muslims should give to charity. Opportunities to engage with other world faiths through specific contacts is underdeveloped. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are fully met.

Head of school	Debbie Bradley
Inspector's name and number	Adrian McConnaughie 956