

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Dickleburgh Church of England Primary Academy

Address	Harvey Lane, Dickleburgh, Diss. IP21 4NL		
Date of inspection	05 February 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VC. St Benet's Multi Academy Trust
Diocese	Diocese of Norwich	URN	121085

Overall Judgement	Grade
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Good
Additional Judgement	Grade
The impact of collective worship	Good

School context

Dickleburgh is a primary academy with 191 pupils on roll. The academy has a low level of religious and cultural diversity and 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. The school became a founder member of St Benet's Multi Academy Trust in June 2018, since when a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed. A new rector has been appointed following a four-year vacancy.

The school's Christian vision

Living and learning together, celebrating life at its fullest.

The school vision is to develop young people with a spirit of curiosity, respect and resilience, reflected in its Christian values of honesty, friendship, endurance, forgiveness, compassion and thankfulness, which are at the core of everything it does.

Key findings

- The school has a clear set of distinctively Christian values. These are recognised and understood by all members of the school community. They underpin all areas of the curriculum, especially collective worship (CW) and religious education (RE) and have a clear impact upon pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
- Although the school has a detailed and accurate understanding of its strengths and areas needing improvement, formal and regular monitoring of CW by all groups in the community is undeveloped.
- The curriculum is shaped by the school's Christian vision and values. The school has a record of academic excellence and is committed to ensuring that pupils' spiritual development is also given a high profile.
- As a result of the school's Christian values, pupils generally behave very well and relationships between all members of the school community are excellent. Staff wellbeing, induction and training are given a high priority, and this is recognised and appreciated by them.
- The enthusiasm and expertise of the newly-appointed senior management team, and membership of the academy trust, are beginning to make a strong contribution to school improvement.

Areas for development

- To continue to work closely with other church schools to improve RE expertise and share best practice.
- To further improve CW by continuing to develop the roles of pupils, encouraging the involvement of the newly-appointed rector and broadening monitoring to include members of the benefice and diocese.
- To ensure that the newly-established peace garden is used effectively to develop pupils' spirituality and wellbeing.

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 was invited to join St Benet's multi academy trust in June 2018, and in the summer of 2018 a new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed and a new leadership team consisting of the headteacher, deputy, key stage two phase leader and special needs co-ordinator was established. The school reviewed its vision and chose six Christian values to focus upon. The chosen values are rapidly permeating the curriculum. The values are very evident when visiting the school and can be clearly seen in wall displays and on the website. Pupils worked with staff and governors to choose those values which they felt would be the most meaningful to them. The values of compassion and forgiveness that they chose can be clearly seen in the way people relate to each other when things have gone wrong, and the value of honesty which they identified even though it was not on their original shortlist of values to choose from enhances these. Staff and senior pupils nominate pupils for the golden book every week if they see examples of children reflecting the school's Christian values in their day-to-day interactions, and certificates go home to parents. Pupils and parents spoke about how much this public recognition means to them. There are frequent biblical references to the values and vision, and leaders frequently revisit and reinforce them to maintain their high profile.

All members of the school community see themselves as living and learning together. Staff make good use of the best practice groups which the trust has set up to provide opportunities to raise standards by sharing expertise and good practice, especially in RE. There is much evidence both of the school developing and supporting its staff at all levels to be both better teachers and leaders within this and other church schools, and of the high value placed upon staff wellbeing by senior leaders. These have led to a high level of ability and commitment amongst the staff, and a continuity which is noted and appreciated by both governors and parents. Staff gave examples of tangible and valued ways in which the school's leadership has been able to offer them practical support and compassionate care to ensure they have a healthy work-life balance. School leaders see this as a natural manifestation of the school's Christian values impacting all members of the school community. There is a close relationship between the school and its preschool, whose pupils regularly join the main school for worship. Leaders liaise regularly and parents praise the ease of transition. School self-evaluation is thorough and senior leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas in need of development, Regular monitoring and gathering of parent and pupil opinions has begun, but the process of monitoring and formal feedback by the whole school community is not yet embedded.

The school's vision has a considerable and very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Attendance is well above average. Pupils naturally behave very well because they understand and accept the values of honesty, friendship, forgiveness and compassion. There have been no exclusions. As a result of pupils' acceptance of the school's values, they demonstrate exemplary learning behaviours and teaching time is rarely disrupted by challenging behaviour. The school has a broad and balanced curriculum which is shaped by its Christian vision and values. This can be seen around the school where many displays, whatever their subject focus, include prayers or biblical references. All pupils are treated as individuals and given every opportunity to fulfil their potential. Both achievement and progress in all areas are at least in line with national averages and sometimes exceed these. The school has a successful record of enabling pupils to overcome barriers through targeted intervention, notably the deployment of dedicated and skilled teaching assistants. The progress data for such pupil groups is not significantly different to that of other groups. Effective strategic planning addresses any instances of weaker progress in specific groups. Training, careful deployment of staff and support from local Church schools ensure that teaching is consistently good. The school was asked to join the trust when it was set up last year specifically because it was an outstanding school in the eyes of Ofsted and had excellent outcomes for all abilities.

The school's chosen values are having a substantial and growing effect upon pupils' spiritual development. A peace garden has been constructed using money raised from local charitable groups and individuals, and pupils are looking forward to being able to use it to sit quietly, to enjoy the natural environment there, to reflect or to pray. A wooden sign has been constructed to remind those using the garden of the school's Christian values while they are in there. Pupils have a good understanding of the place and purpose of both corporate and personal prayer. As well as regularly saying their school prayer, the pupils say Grace before eating, and regularly contribute their own prayers to CW.

The chosen value of compassion has a particularly high profile. Pupils regularly support those who are less fortunate than themselves, both in the local area (e.g. the local food bank organised by the church), and further afield. An example of this was working with Elizabeth's Legacy of Hope, a local charity which works with Heal to raise money for prosthetics for children in India. There is a local link that drives this enthusiasm. The school has begun to develop penfriends amongst the children it supports in India.

Opportunities are built into the curriculum, and especially in RE, for pupils to explore their own and a range of opinions and beliefs. The school treats all members of its community with dignity and respect. Big questions are asked in all areas of the curriculum, and opportunities are identified to look at similarities and to foster a genuine respect for different cultures and approaches. A teacher had contacted all the denominations represented in the local town and asked them how baptism was celebrated by them. Pupils looked for similarities and differences, and the teacher ably identified the key thinking behind them. Since conversion to the new academy pupils have not visited places of worship other than the local Anglican church. Representatives of other Christian denominations do not currently lead worship. Arrangements are in place to do both before the end of this year. The trust schools are looking together at how to make good use of Norwich Cathedral as a resource for RE.

Collective worship is inclusive and relevant to all pupils. It is inspirational and reflective and has an appropriate focus upon the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Parents enthusiastically support the opportunities they have to join the school in worshipping in the local church. Older pupils act as assembly ambassadors, supporting younger classes and helping teachers to reinforce the school's Christian values. The ambassadors' impact appears to be considerable and is one the school is keen to develop. The system for monitoring and developing CW is in its early stages. Pupils have a termly opportunity to provide feedback and they have completed their review of worship from last term. The CW governor attends worship regularly and has begun to keep a record of what she sees to be most effective. This is kept by the CW coordinator in order to inform future evaluation and improvements. These initiatives are viewed positively by senior leaders, but there is insufficient evidence available to measure their impact. Other members of the school and church community do not yet have many opportunities to regularly monitor worship or contribute their views. Older pupils have begun to plan and lead CW themselves, but this is only just beginning and so its impact cannot yet be judged. Church involvement has had a major impact upon pupils' understanding of Anglican tradition and their good biblical literacy. Pupils visit the church for worship and to enhance their RE. Local church elders have a long history of running Open the Book sessions and Bible study at the school. Pupils have less understanding of the multicultural heritage of their faith. During the long vacancy, the school was not able to have the regular participation of a member of the clergy in delivering and planning CW. Parents enjoy the opportunity to join termly shared worship in the village church.

Monitoring by senior staff shows that standards in RE are in line with other core subjects and external moderation suggests that they exceed those in most schools. Pupils have reasonable knowledge of the traditions and terminology associated with the Anglican church. They have a good understanding of baptism and the Holy Trinity, but not of the Eucharist. The school's vision: to develop young people with a spirit of curiosity, respect and resilience, can be seen in their RE. Pupils regularly consider big questions and the beliefs and traditions to be found in their own and other cultures and communities. Resourcing and training demonstrate the high value placed by school leaders on this subject. The RE coordinator regularly supports CW in another church school and attends RE best practice groups within the trust. Statutory obligations are met, and teaching is in line with the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

Headteacher of school	Moira Croskell
Inspector's name and number	Stephen Green 809