

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hawkchurch Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School			
Address	Hawkchurch, Axminster, Devon, EX13 5XD		
Date of inspection	9 July 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VC. First Federation
Diocese	Salisbury	URN	143187

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

Hawkchurch is a primary school with 47 pupils on roll. There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The school became part of the First Federation Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in September 2017.

The school's Christian vision

Our vision is: Learning together, growing together.

"It's not important who does the planting or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work" (1 Corinthians 3: 7-8)

Key findings

- The vision has inspired a culture of aspiration raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence in their own ability so they overcome barriers and make positive progress.
- The vision promotes a rich sense of being a caring community where all are seen as being special and treated with dignity and respect. Pupils attribute their good behaviour to the well-established Christian values.
- The pupils' ethos team make a significant contribution to worship raising the importance of the school's Christian distinctiveness. However, worship does not always engage pupils.
- A strong partnership with the MAT has enabled the school to make ongoing improvements, strengthening evaluations and introducing new approaches to religious education (RE). At present there are insufficient opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of global communities and deprivation.

Areas for development

- Ensure that collective worship engages all pupils enabling them to contribute in a variety of ways so they can confidently explain the impact worship has for their lives and thinking.
- Review the curriculum in the light of the new vision so there are planned experiences to develop awareness of global communities which deepen pupils' understanding of disadvantage, deprivation and exploitation of the natural world.
- Enable experiences, across the curriculum, which extend pupils' understanding of spirituality in creative ways.

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

Leaders recently reviewed the vision to ensure it is relevant for pupils and reflects the local context. The vision reflects the fact that some pupils have low aspirations and beliefs in their own ability. Pupils make strong links between the vision and growing, which helps them to understand its relevance. Leaders articulate a well-developed overview of the biblical principles underpinning the vision linked to growing. They talk about Christian values developing pupils' 'strong roots' enabling them to flourish. Leaders see their responsibilities as enabling each pupil to achieve their God-given potential. The school's strategic direction is increasingly informed by the vision. Pupils' understanding of the vision is rising, although they are more confident to link actions to Christian values which are well-established.

The partnership with the MAT has enabled the school to make significant progress. Teachers have been inspired to raise the quality of teaching and learning. For example, best practice from other schools is shared about how four age groups are effectively taught in one class. The school's Christian distinctiveness has grown through the work of the pupils' ethos team. Every term the ethos team joins with other MAT schools exploring aspects of worship. They then introduce these into school life. For instance, this led to the creation of reflection spaces which pupils have found calming. Every term the headteacher's evaluation of the work of this church school identifies strengths and areas for development. This has led to the provision for spirituality being improved. The MAT places a strong emphasis on staff development providing opportunities for them to take on senior roles in other church schools. The relationship with the diocese is growing with visits contributing to evaluations. The local church is active in daily life, supporting the celebration of festivals and leading Open the Book worship. Members of the church support the ethos team, helping them to raise the quality of collective worship.

The vision has shaped a distinctive culture of being the best you can be. Staff place a strong emphasis on raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence in their own ability. Pupils' successes are celebrated. Staff know pupils well and amend the curriculum so that experiences engage each pupil. Individualised support for pupils is put in place to meet particular needs. Ongoing feedback during lessons enable pupils to understand the next steps in their learning journey. Pupils talk about Christian values, such as perseverance, and how these help them overcome barriers. They understand that errors are opportunities for further learning. Older pupils articulate that staff have transformed their attitudes to learning so they feel they can flourish. The high level of mobility affects standards. However, pupils consistently make at least good progress from their starting points. The progress of vulnerable pupils is similar to those of their peers. Pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 is at least in-line with national averages; progress and attainment are rising. The provision for spirituality has been enriched. An agreed understanding of spirituality is established following training. The introduction of philosophical and theological big questions has engaged pupils. Other approaches, such as mindfulness, help pupils to reflect on new ideas and consider their relevance. However, these experiences do not build upon one another. Neither are pupils able to respond to these in creative ways.

The vision is reflected in the tangible sense of community established across the school. Relationships are strong, particularly between staff and pupils. Pupils' behaviour is good and the majority attribute this to Christian values. They give numerous examples of where values influence them. Pupils understand that forgiveness is important and know how to make amends for inappropriate actions. Everyone is seen as being unique and special. This is evident in the welcome for pupils joining the school who feel valued, often enabled to make a new start. Pupils' understanding of diversity is well-developed. This is enhanced by culture weeks, visits to places of worship and visitors from other faiths. Pupils show a high degree of respect and tolerance for one another. The use of sentence starters, such as, 'I disagree with you because....' are effective, enabling pupils to disagree well. Leaders have not yet reviewed the curriculum in the light of the new vision. At present there are insufficient opportunities to explore disadvantage, deprivation or exploitation of the natural world. The pupils' ethos team has been inspired to raise awareness of Fairtrade and Doctors Without Borders. However, this has only involved a few pupils and these actions are not yet part of the school's life.

The pupils' ethos team play an increasing role in collective worship. They plan and lead worship and implement ideas from the MAT ethos days. The ethos team create displays which show what Christian values look like in daily life and the difference they make. As a result more pupils are beginning to articulate that worship makes them think

about their actions. The ethos team talk with peers evaluating worship, which has led to leaders bringing different approaches. Pupils enjoy Open the Book worship, recalling stories about Jesus' life and teaching in detail. Pupils have a sound understanding of prayer; many have found this helpful when reflecting on learning or when anxious. Planning progressively deepens pupils' understanding of Christian values. The main Christian festivals are celebrated and pupils can explain their importance for Christians. Pupils have an age appropriate understanding of the trinitarian nature of God. However, in some instances worship does not sufficiently engage pupils. Evaluations are undertaken by school leaders and advisers from the MAT and these have led to a greater use of media.

The introduction of Understanding Christianity resources and an enquiry approach to RE has engaged pupils. Leaders' advanced studies on pupils' thinking in RE has enriched this work. Pupils enjoy sharing their ideas knowing their answers will be valued; they listen to others and refine their opinions. Pupils use speech bubbles to record what difference these ideas mean to them, so they understand the relevance of RE to daily life. A new detailed rolling programme has been created. Pupils have an increasing understanding of key Christian concepts such as salvation, but as yet this is not secure. The vision inspires the exploration of world faiths, so pupils understand their place in the wider world. This allows them to make informed comparisons with their own beliefs. Pupils' knowledge of a variety of religions is good and extends their tolerance and empathy. Assessment strategies are secure and judgements moderated refining their accuracy. Support from experienced practitioners in the MAT supports evaluation and leads to ongoing improvements, such as the introduction of cultural weeks.

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