

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Nicholas and St Laurence Church of England Primary School			
Address	Broadway, Weymouth, Dorset, DT3 5DQ		
Date of inspection	12 February 2020	Status of school	Voluntary aided primary
Diocese	Salisbury	URN	113834

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	Requires Improvement
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Requires Improvement
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Requires Improvement

School context

St Nicholas and St Laurence is a primary school with 207 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 above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. The school is situated on a campus which it shares with other local educational establishments. There have been two changes of leader since the last inspection. The current headteacher has been in post since the beginning of the academic year.

The school's Christian vision

We inspire to aspire to life in all its fullness.

"I have come so that they might have life in all its fullness"

John 10:10

Key findings

- A distinctively Christian vision has been developed with the whole school community and this is starting to shape strategic decision making within the school. This is not yet embedded.
- Relationships, based on love, are a strength of the school. All members of the school community talk of the support and care in place to enable all to aspire to achieve their potential.
- Pupils enjoy collective worship as a special time together. They are not able to talk about their own spiritual development and how collective worship helps them.
- Most pupils are positive about religious education (RE) and some take opportunities provided to think deeply. The subject is not consistently planned or taught across the school resulting in a lack of cohesion.

Areas for development

- Fully embed the vision so that it wholly underpins all aspects of school life and is recognised by the whole school community as distinctively Christian.
- Establish a shared understanding of spirituality in order to provide consistent opportunities for pupils' own spiritual development.
- Enhance collective worship to ensure it provides time for meaningful spiritual development which makes a difference to pupils' lives.
- Develop a consistent approach to the teaching of RE to ensure progression across the school. Further develop systems for assessment in the subject to ensure it accurately informs planning and teaching.

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 new headteacher, together with the supportive governing body, rightly identified the need to develop an updated Christian vision for this school which reflects its context. This vision, rooted in scripture, is beginning to shape strategic decision making within the school. It is not yet known by the whole school community or recognised as distinctively Christian. Its impact can therefore not yet be seen in the daily life of the school. The set of associated Christian values are beginning to be understood by pupils. For example, pupils talk about how they show perseverance in their learning. They do not yet understand them as Christian values. The passionate headteacher has a good understanding of the importance of the centrality of the vision. He knows the next steps the school needs to take to bring about improvements in this regard. The school engages with the diocese and benefits from training and other support provided. Staff and pupils enjoy special events and services held at their local churches. The vicar is a well-known and loved member of the school community. Pupils talk about Bible stories he has taught them. Teachers are grateful for his expertise when tackling challenging concepts in RE lessons.

Leaders have put measures in place to raise the academic attainment and progress of pupils and can articulate how this work is driven by the vision. There is a strong desire to bring about improvement which will enable all pupils to flourish academically. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities feel well supported in their learning. The development of pupils' own spirituality is not currently given a sufficiently high priority. There are opportunities for some children to be able to develop a sense of self, others and beyond. For example, pupils in the early years experience awe and wonder on welly walks. However, there is not a shared understanding of spirituality. Opportunities for spiritual growth are not strategically planned resulting in inconsistencies across the school.

Strong relationships, based on the school's central value of love, are a strength of this school. Staff, parents and pupils talk of the high level of support and care provided for each individual regardless of their background. Staff explain that their 'ideas are taken on board' and that 'everyone cares about each other'. There is aspiration for adults as well as pupils and staff are grateful for the training opportunities they receive. The school is wholly inclusive and provides support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) making them feel 'an important part of the school family'. Parents talk of staff who 'always have time to listen' and for whom 'nothing is too much trouble'. The school is currently fostering partnerships with other local educational establishments with whom they share a campus as well as other schools in the locality. This work is being shaped by the vision although relationships are in early stages of development.

The way pupils are encouraged to have high aspirations for themselves and their futures reflects the vision. Many have ideas of the jobs they want to do when they leave school and there is a developing sense that anything is possible. The school is active in its work for the local food bank extending the vision of hope and aspiration beyond the immediate school community. Pupils do not currently have opportunities to plan their own social action and fundraising projects which limits their sense of injustice in the world. Current engagement in the 'connecting classrooms' project is starting to give pupils a developing understanding of global issues.

There is a strategic succession plan in place for leadership of RE. School leaders have rightly identified this as key following a period of turbulence for the school. Pupils' learning in RE is not in line with that in other core curriculum areas. Planning and teaching lack consistency across the school which limits progression. Assessment procedures in place are insufficiently robust to be able to inform teaching and learning. Leaders have plans for how to make improvements to teaching and learning in RE. These are not yet recorded or organised to enable a systematic approach to improvement. Pupils have some knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of world faiths, including Christianity. Some make the most of opportunities provided to think deeply in RE lessons, encouraged through the use of big questions within the 'Understanding Christianity' resource.

Collective worship is a special time for 'everyone to come together', which is enjoyed by most pupils. Staff appreciate time at the end of each day to reflect. Pupils enjoy their responsibilities for setting up for worship although they do not yet have the opportunity to plan and lead worship themselves. Planning for collective worship is aligned with the Christian values and is planned and led by school staff and the vicar. The limited opportunities for pupils to be still, reflect and engage in personal prayer restricts their spiritual development. Pupils can recall stories they have learnt in collective worship although they find it difficult to relate learning to their own lives. The concept of the trinitarian nature of God is revisited annually resulting in most pupils having a good understanding of this.

School leaders have established a detailed monitoring plan to ensure that the effectiveness as a Church school, including RE and collective worship, is routinely evaluated. Limited evaluation activities have been carried out so far meaning it is too soon to see the impact of this work.



The effectiveness of RE Requires Improvement

There are examples of creative RE teaching and learning across the school, including the use of drama and art. This practice is not yet consistent through all year groups. Appropriate levels of support are provided for those children with SEND. Leaders are unable to analyse attainment and progress in RE because there are not robust assessment systems in place.

Headteacher

Wayne Roberts

Inspector's name and number

Anna Willcox 915