

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Harbertonford Church of England Primary School			
Address	Old Road, Harbertonford, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 7TA		
Date of inspection	12 February 2019	Status of school	VA primary within The Link Academy Trust
Diocese	Exeter Diocese	URN	142707

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
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

Harbertonford school is a primary school with attached nursery. It has 110 pupils on roll, 22 of whom attend the linked nursery. The school has a very 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 in line with national averages. The school joined the Link Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in 2016, and the current headteacher has been in post since April 2016.

The school's Christian vision

'Live, Learn, Flourish'

Associated values of trust, forgiveness, respect, friendship (belonging), compassion and responsibility.

'Planted in the house of the Lord, they shall flourish in the courts of our God'. (Psalm 92 v13). 'Live life in all its fullness'. (John 10 v 10)

Key findings

- In accordance with its Christian vision, this school is nurturing, caring and has a strongly inclusive, family ethos. The vision and associated values are embedded in the life of the school, although currently knowledge of the biblical underpinning of the vision by staff is less well developed.
- Relationships with the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) are good. It is very supportive of the Christian ethos of the school. Partnership working is strong. The local church, parents and the diocese all support the school, thus enabling pupils to flourish.
- Religious Education (RE) is well planned and carefully monitored meaning that children develop good biblical knowledge and understanding of key Christian beliefs and world religions.
- Collective worship is an area of strength. Pupils have varied opportunities to reflect on the school vision and how they can apply this to their daily lives.
- Leaders are committed to ensuring the school's Christian distinctiveness. They provide strong direction. However, the role of the local board of governors in monitoring this area of the school's work is less effective.

Areas for development

- Ensure that the theological underpinning of the vision is widely shared and understood so that the whole school community is inspired by it.
- Define the role of the local board of governors more precisely, in order to ensure they maintain a tight focus on monitoring the school's Christian distinctiveness and the impact of its vision.
- Ensure pupils are fully aware of the variety of types of worship in the worldwide Anglican Church so that they can further appreciate diversity, and the different ways that Christians live and pray.

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 vision 'Live, Learn, Flourish' has been recently reviewed by the school. It is inspired by biblical teaching which is well understood by leaders but is only beginning to be understood by teachers and pupils. The vision clearly shapes school policies and development plans. The associated values with their linked Bible stories are known and understood by pupils and staff. These were chosen by the whole school community and thus closely reflect the local context. Leaders are strongly committed to ensuring that children achieve well academically, and develop spiritually. This shared Christian vision creates a caring, nurturing ethos in the school, and exerts a strong influence on a curriculum that addresses the needs of 'the whole child' and allows all pupils to flourish. The MAT board is supportive of the school as a Church of England school, and through its monitoring, ensures the impact of the vision is lived out. By offering quality training and support, the leadership of the MAT helps the school to provide RE which is continuously improving and creative, and collective worship which is reflective. The local governing board has undergone recent changes, and currently its monitoring and evaluating of the Christian ethos is less well defined. RE and collective worship are given a high priority at the school. Pupils recognise the importance of quietness and reflection during the school day to help them stay calm, live well as a community and learn effectively. The school works closely with other Church of England schools in the MAT to train staff, share expertise and promote Christian distinctiveness. The recommendations from the previous SIAMS inspection have been addressed.

The school's Christian vision has resulted in a curriculum which is exciting, broad and balanced and enables pupils to use and recognise their individual talents. 'Big questions' related to the school values, visits including residential, and visitors play a key part in this. Pupils enjoy their learning and develop their curiosity by discussing, debating and asking questions in class. Through this, they are able to explore and articulate spiritual questions. They say spirituality is about 'thinking about and helping yourself and others around you'. This understanding helps them to build positive relationships with staff and each other. Leaders have made bold decisions about including the '5 star' promise of a range of activities pupils will have access to whilst at the school. Because of this, as well as helping them to achieve academically, the moral and spiritual development of the pupils is good. There have been very positive improvements in whole school achievement in the last 3 years. Pupils are now achieving in line with, or better than, other similar schools nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and vulnerable pupils perform well due to the good help they receive from the support staff at the school. The learning support hub run by the MAT enables this small school to access expert assistance, for example in helping to manage pupils' anxiety. The emphasis on the Christian values of trust, responsibility and compassion means that pupils' mental health is supported well, allowing them to flourish.

Pupils are confident, aspirational and are very clear about ways they apply the school's Christian values to their lives to improve behaviour and learning. Pupils are offered variety of opportunities to learn about those whose lives are different from their own, and this results in them choosing to support various charities, for example Comic Relief. In this way pupils think about issues beyond themselves including more global concerns. The beautiful setting of the school and its grounds encourages pupil's sense of awe and wonder, and helps them to consider environmental issues. The forest school activities and the creation of quiet, reflective areas outside enable pupils to think about how issues can be addressed through social action projects, some of which are initiated by them, for example toilet twinning.

Pupils understand and reflect on the Bible stories that underpin the school's vision and values. This helps them to behave well, and to be respectful to one another and to adults. Sanctions are fair, and the behaviour policy reflects Jesus' teaching about forgiveness and reconciliation. Pupils and staff are listened to, and their views are taken into account in school decision making. The headteacher is visible and approachable, and parents appreciate the caring and nurturing way in which staff deal promptly with any concerns they may have.

Pupils feel safe at this school. Those with physical or learning difficulties are welcomed and respected, which allows them to flourish. The school is highly inclusive. Good teaching in RE helps pupils show a respectful understanding of difference and diversity in this small village school. Pupils enjoyed the recent whole school learning about the celebration of Divali. However, making pupils aware of ways in which different Anglican communities live and worship is less well developed.

Prayer is a natural part of the school day, and pupils value the opportunities offered by reflection areas in classrooms and the school hall to pray, think or just to be quiet. They identify reflection or prayer as helpful when they are going through hard times, or as a way to support their friends, saying 'prayer can happen anywhere'. Daily, formal collective worship is varied, incorporating enthusiastic singing, simple liturgy, stories, discussion, activities and quiet reflection. The school vision and values are at the heart of collective worship, with Bible stories and prayers focussed on the values, and pupils actively discussing how these affect their own lives. Pupils lead, take part in, and respond well to the worship with those pupils on the ethos group having a role in evaluation. Those of different faiths or beliefs join in with integrity. Worship is invitational and inclusive and enables the school community to embed and grow its vision and values, helping staff and pupils to 'live, learn and flourish'. The close partnership that the school has with the local church and its minister means that fortnightly worship there is enjoyed by the pupils, and parents, thus the school vision is able to impact the wider community.

RE is well planned by the subject leader, and teachers feel supported by this. Key staff regularly attend diocesan training. The statutory entitlement for RE is met, and pupils enjoy the subject. They demonstrate good understanding of key theological terms in Christianity and world religions. Pupils are confident to ask and answer questions in RE, developing their views and thriving as independent learners. This deepens their spiritual and moral understanding. Formal assessment in RE is less well developed as it has only recently been put in place, but is already improving progression and challenge in RE lessons.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Teaching and learning in RE is good. There is clear support from the Link Academy RE hub leader. Insightful and detailed monitoring and feedback by the specialist teacher at the hub is ensuring there is constant improvement in the subject. Pupils achieve well in the subject, in line with key stage expectations and their achievement in the other core subjects.

Headteacher	Elizabeth Lethbridge
Inspector's name and number	Judith Larrington (Marcia Headon QA Assessor)