

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hethersett Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	22 Queen's Road, Hethersett, Norwich, NR9 3DB
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
Hethersett VC Primary School empowers its children and their families to flourish and grow. Creativity, compassion, responsibility, the love of learning to gain knowledge and wisdom combined with our Christian values shape our inclusive education. Together we are stronger, respecting ourselves and others to create a successful and healthy future. Keep your roots deep in him, build your lives on him, and become stronger in your faith as you were taught. And be filled with thankfulness. Colossians 2:7
Key findings
• The vision is lived out through the strategic and operational activities of the school. As a result, adults, pupils and their families flourish. However, the significance of the Christian vision as the motivation for actions and decisions is not explicitly recognised. • Work on diversity and difference is a strength of the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in a modern, complex society. • Religious education (RE) is exemplary. In line with the vision, it contributes to pupils' love of learning. The high quality of work produced by pupils is further evidenced by the achievement of a gold RE Mark. • Collective worship is a special time of the day for staff and pupils. It is inclusive and inspires action. However, its impact on the spiritual life of the school is not consistently monitored and evaluated. This means opportunities for greater pupil involvement are missed. • In line with the vision, the curriculum is inclusive and planned so that pupils have opportunities to take part in a wide range of creative experiences. They develop a love of learning as a result. Although character development is explicitly fostered, spiritual development is not intentionally planned for.

Areas for development

- Develop systems to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's distinctive Christian vision. This is so that its impact on the flourishing of pupils and adults is recognised. Also ensure that links between the vision and actions taken by leaders at all levels including governors are explicitly acknowledged and celebrated.
- Embed monitoring of collective worship so its impact the school's spiritual life is fully appreciated, and subsequent evaluations used as drivers for positive change.
- Enhance pupils' spiritual development by ensuring that intentionally planned opportunities are explicit across the curriculum, including in collective worship. Also that spontaneous moments are recognised and celebrated through a shared understanding of spirituality.

Inspection findings

The vision to enable all to 'flourish and grow' is at the heart of the school's purpose. Based on core Christian values, it has sustained and encouraged the school community through a period of rapid change. Staff, governors and pupils are proud to be part of the school community. Seeking to live out the vision, staff model servant leadership towards one another, to pupils and their families. Demonstrating that 'together we are stronger', they live well together, working for the common good. Parents appreciate the kindness shown to them and their children. They know the school is a point of contact for help, support and advice. The colourful logo of people coming together in strength to form a tree is symbolic. Widely used, it is a reminder that the work of the school is rooted in its Christian values and vision. The values, and their supporting statements, are well known to pupils and adults. Parents say their importance is discussed at home and attribute their children's positive behaviour to them. The biblical basis for the vision and associated values is not widely recognised, however. Consequently, opportunities for the school to understand and celebrate the vision as the inspiration for its activities as a Church school are missed.

Collective worship is an important part of the school's life. Adults and pupils look forward to spending time together to hear and reflect on Bible stories. Those of all faiths and none are comfortable in attending. Led by clergy, staff and other visitors, pupils gain an appreciation that Christians worship in different ways. Each act of collective worship ends with a 'take away'. This inspires pupils and adults to 'do things differently' for the benefit of others. This sense of responsibility towards each other is celebrated through the presentation of awards to those who demonstrate the values to each other. Pupils enjoy planning and delivering collective worship. Many volunteer to be part of the collective worship group which meets to plan worship at least twice a term. Following a 'briefing' with adults, they work independently to choose Bible stories and songs to share with the school community. They take pride in undertaking independent research to find items which illustrate their theme. These special acts of worship are looked forward to and are well received, demonstrating pupils' skills in 'getting their message across.' Pupils also support staff in worship by reading stories or prayers and in undertaking some organisational aspects. They would welcome more opportunities to be regularly and routinely involved, however. Some monitoring of collective worship takes place. However, this is not always evaluated, allowing the impact to be measured or ideas for change to be taken into account.

Governors are actively involved with school life. They base their actions on what is in the 'best interests of' pupils. However, they do not always recognise and link this principle to the Christian vision statements. Although strategic and financial decisions are made in line with it, this is not always recognised and recorded. Governors undertake monitoring for school improvement. However, this does not include for the effectiveness of the vision. Staff value that leaders, including governors, know them as individuals and appreciate their work. They are encouraged to develop and flourish through training opportunities.

The vision is at the heart an inclusive curriculum. It is designed to enable pupils develop a lifelong love of learning and create a 'successful and healthy future'. Pupils access their studies in creative ways so they can become confident learners with high aspirations. Effective interventions are provided to support those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), are vulnerable or are experiencing additional challenges. Further expertise is brought in from external organisations when needed. The wellbeing of adults and pupils is given high priority. As well as curriculum coverage, termly wellbeing days provide strategies, such as mindfulness, to use in maintaining good mental health. Staff appreciate that leaders are accessible and supportive of them. Pupils have access to a wide

range of extra-curricular activities. This enables them to develop their talents in diverse ways, equipping them with confidence in their own abilities. Trips and visits provide further enrichment opportunities and 'awe and wonder moments'. Although spiritual development takes place, it is not consistently planned for across the curriculum. As a result, opportunities for pupils to develop their spirituality are missed. A shared understanding of spirituality is available in policy but not embedded in practice.

In order that pupils live the vision, to 'respect ourselves and others,' character education is widely promoted. Through pupil voice, changes such as a reduction of packaging in school packed lunches has been achieved. Examples of courageous advocacy include, lending the school minibus to take supplies to Ukraine, fundraising for the petrol needed and donating food to the local food bank. These provide opportunities for the school family to be agents for positive change at local, national and international level. This is recognised and appreciated by the wider community.

Mindful to prepare pupils for life in a complex world, leaders seek out ways to explore diversity in all its forms. This is a strength of the school, resulting in accreditation through the national award, Global Neighbours. By engaging with the programme, pupils develop their thinking and practice as world citizens. Collaborating on a project highlighting diversity with Norwich Community Sports Foundation, their awareness of different ways of living and being has been raised. They understand difference, challenge inequalities and afford dignity and respect to all as a result. Based on Hethersett's positive experiences, the project is being promoted to other schools across the Diocese of Norwich. The school and its leaders are well thought of by the diocese, with whom it has mutually beneficial links.

RE is exemplary. The school was awarded a gold RE Mark, noting its excellence, and continues to be engaged in 'cutting edge' research at national level. The curriculum is designed to promote higher level thinking skills, enabling pupils to evolve their own worldviews alongside their knowledge and understanding of religions and beliefs. They confidently discuss differences and similarities between world religions and beliefs, using complex ideas to support their opinions. Pupils thoroughly enjoy RE. This has had an impact far beyond their time at the school. The high school to which many transfer, has had to increase its provision for RE. This is as a result of pupils from Hethersett continuing to study it to exam level. This demonstrates the outworking of the vision for pupils' to develop a lifelong love of learning.

Information			
School	Hethersett Church of England VC Primary School	Inspection date	6 March 2023
URN	121042	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Norwich	Pupils on roll	269
Headteacher	Matthew Parslow-Williams		
Chair of Governors	Amy Hanton		
Inspector	Rachel Beeson	No.	952