

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Nettleham Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Address	Mill Hill Nettleham Lincolnshire LN2 2PE		
Date of inspection	9 July 2019	Status of school	VA Junior
Diocese	Lincoln	URN	120626

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

School context

Nettleham Church of England is a junior school with 242 pupils. The school has an average level of religious and cultural diversity and few pupils speak English as an additional language although there are 20 different home languages represented in the school. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is also in line with national averages. There is an established leadership team including the head teacher who has been in post for 15 years.

The school's Christian vision

'As a Christian school we believe that every member of our community should feel wonderful, amazing, loved, valued and unique, because God made us that way. We encourage all our children to achieve the highest possible standards and develop skills to be lifelong learners. Our school values are:
TRUST – HUMILITY – THANKFULNESS - KOINONIA – FRIENDSHIP – ENDURANCE

Key findings

- The broad, rich and inclusive curriculum which promotes the Christian vision of the school enables all pupils to engage in learning.
- RE is excellent. Pupils develop a high level of skills, knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths as a result of a creative curriculum.
- Pupils' involvement in many aspects of school life is impressive although pupils are not yet fully involved in planning and delivering collective worship.
- Pupils are theologically and ethically aware. They are less able to articulate and express their spiritual awareness.

Areas for development

- Develop a shared understanding of spirituality so that the spiritual development of adults and pupils can be articulated and reflected across the curriculum.
- Enable pupils to routinely take a greater part in collective worship, including planning, delivering and monitoring.

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

Nettleham Church of England Aided Junior School is unequivocal in its stance as a church school. It is inclusive and welcoming. The vision is underpinned by biblically based values including British values. Staff work hard to ensure that the 'visual identity' of the school reflects the Christian distinctiveness it represents. Hence there are many physical examples of the vision and values such as the cross made of lockers. These prompt pupils, parents and staff of their relevance to daily life. Staff model and live out the values. All are encouraged to view them and measure themselves against the actions of Jesus – what would, or did Jesus do in any given situation. Pupils use this yardstick to reflect on their choices. For example, one said 'It makes me want to change my behaviour from bad to good.' Examples of the values are recognised and praised. Special awards are given by governors to pupils who display them.

School leaders, including governors, are passionate about aligning the vision to action. As a result, they have made bold, strategic and financial decisions which reflect the needs of the school. These include additional provision for pupils with emotional needs. Policies do not always directly reference the vision and values, however.

There are many notable examples of pupils positively contributing to the life of the school. The behaviour when lining up is exemplary, for example, because of the leadership of pupil line monitors. Pupils also run clubs including an Arabic club run by Arabic speakers which had a powerful impact on pupil and parent perceptions.

The headteacher provides a strong lead on Christian distinctiveness. He seeks to 'normalise' principles such as Christian giving. Monthly giving to the local foodbank prompted a pupil to comment that this was not enough. Pupil voice was listened to and resulted in a 'reverse advent calendar' so that more could be given to 'those who need it most'. Courageous advocacy was also demonstrated in letters asking for sponsorship to educate a child overseas through Action Aid.

Christian stewardship is a strength. Pupils were so inspired by a day on sustainability that they insisted changes were made to school practice. As a result, plastic usage has been reduced and composting introduced. Most impressively, a poly tunnel has been established to grow food. One said, 'God gave us a wonderful world and we want to save it.'

The curriculum has been designed to meet the needs of all pupils. Staff work hard at building self-esteem so that pupils become confident learners. One said, 'We don't expect the child to fit into the school, we do an amazing amount to ensure the school fits around the child.' As result, attainment is at least in line with national expectations. Progress is also in line for most pupil groups including some SEND pupils. The school actively pursues external opportunities, such as the Young Journalist programme, which further enrich the curriculum. As a result, all pupils, including those with SEND, have further chances and activities to become good at something and 'to shine'.

Relationships at all levels are strong. Koinonia is a key value and all understand the importance of living well together. Links with the diocese are strong and staff have been asked to use their skills to support other schools. They have also worked on the development of the new Lincolnshire agreed syllabus. Staff feel valued. Governors have undertaken surveys on workload and taken action as a result. Because there is an open-door policy, parents have confidence in the head teacher and his staff. They feel able to come in with any issues so that problems are dealt with promptly. Parents are supportive of the school and believe that the Christian ethos makes a difference. They praise the nurturing their children receive.

Partnerships with the local churches are crucial to the life of the school. Links with other denominations mean that pupils benefit from a range of worship styles. Local clergy offer pastoral and prayer support to the school community which is appreciated.

Pupils and staff look forward to collective worship. It is invitational and inclusive. Those who are not Christian are comfortable in attending. It is valued as a time to be together to 'learn about God and pray'. Worship through song is impressive. The IsingPop songs are powerful in presenting Christian concepts and pupils sing them enthusiastically. Although there is a Special Assembly Squad, other pupils do not always play a part in delivering or planning and monitoring it. They enjoy writing prayers which are used at church services and other times and would like to do this more routinely. Pupils enjoy hearing Bible stories. They are able to say how they are relevant to them. For example, a pupil talked about Joseph's roller coaster life as helping them persevere.

Prayer and reflection are an integral part of collective worship. There is less evidence of their use at other times. There are beautiful areas of the school grounds which are given over as quiet areas which have been created by pupils and include a pergola decorated with inspirational quotes by former pupils. Although these areas are appreciated, some pupils are not sure of their purpose. Consequently, they are not as well used as they could be.

The spiral RE curriculum uses a combination of the Lincolnshire agreed syllabus, the Understanding Christianity resources and the schools own planning. RE is led and taught by specialist teachers who receive additional training. They support other staff so that the quality of RE is consistently high across the school. The school holds a Gold RE Quality Mark. The curriculum is exceptionally relevant, creative and exciting and includes music, drama and art. Work is consistently excellent as a result. Pupils who find other areas of the curriculum challenging, often thrive. Pupils enjoy the variety of activities and are proud of the high quality RE displays around the school. Work on story telling using stained glass windows enables pupils to explore God as Father Son and Holy Spirit and apply Bible verses to their daily lives. They confidently discuss theological concepts such as holiness and divinity. A growth mindset approach is used to develop higher level thinking skills and enable pupils to share differing opinions in a safe space. Visits to places of worship of different faiths supports learning about diversity and difference. Pupils are clear that all faiths are of equal value. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are exceptional. Spiritual development is less so, however. The school has not yet developed a shared understanding of spirituality. This means that pupils have not yet developed a language to express their spiritual experiences. They confidently articulate theological and ethical issues but are less able to do so for spiritual ones.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

RE is rigorously and regularly monitored by leaders including governors. Teaching is never less than good and as a result, work is consistently excellent. RE is taught by specialists who receive additional and ongoing training. The school assesses RE robustly against expected standards. Pupils make at least expected progress, including those with SEND because the curriculum enables them to access learning through music, art and drama. Higher achieving pupils are provided with additional challenges. Statutory requirements are met.

Headteacher	David Gibbons
Inspector's name and number	Rachel Beeson 952