

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Chollerton Church of England Aided First School

Address	Station Road, Barrasford, Northumberland NE48 4AH		
Date of inspection	19 June 2019	Status of school	VA primary
Diocese	Newcastle	URN	122272

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

Chollerton is a first school with 36 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. All pupils speak English as their first 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 below national averages. In 2018 the school was under threat of closure. Chollerton was judged to be good by Ofsted in November 2018.

The school's Christian vision

Be the best you can be through, challenge, nurture, inspiration, respect, happiness, inclusion in a safe, loving Christian family. Based on the Gospel of Matthew 18: 12-14, the Parable of The Lost Sheep.

Key findings

- Leaders have developed a Christian vision that is deeply embedded in school life and reflects the local farming context.
- The headteacher is passionate about the school, its pupils, staff and parents and is supported by an equally dedicated senior teacher. Their leadership is enabling all pupils and adults to flourish.
- The strong partnership forged with the parish church is mutually beneficial. The pupils are enthused by the activities provided just as much as the volunteers organising them.
- The governing body is strategically working with partners to build capacity within the staff team and to safeguard the future of the school.
- Religious education (RE) and collective worship are seen as important elements of school life, enabling pupils and adults to live well together with dignity and respect.

Areas for development

- Governors to gain a deeper understanding of the SIAMS Schedule so that it can be used as a basis for more formal self-evaluation and strategic planning.
- Explore the ways in which the pupils' spirituality can be further developed in all aspects of school life so that they can reflect on the interconnectedness of life and faith.
- Extend the pupils' understanding of the United Kingdom so that they know more about the diverse nature of society and the contribution made by the North East region.
- Visit the places of worship studied in the RE curriculum so that pupils have experiential learning of a range of places of worship.

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 whole school community was involved in creating the revised vision statement, based on the Parable of the Lost Sheep, reflecting the rural nature of the area. As such, pupils, parents, staff and governors fully understand the vision and articulately express what this means for them. 'This is a very caring school, and it is not just about having words on a piece of paper, it is the way it is modelled everyday by the staff who show Christianity in action, the nurture and the care.' Highly effective relationships are used to promote good progress for all pupils both academically and socially. Results at the end of Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are above the national averages in all aspects as is attendance. Behaviour is excellent as the pupils strive to be the best they can be both in lessons and in school generally. Vulnerable pupils are treated as individuals and flourish with tailored provision within this distinctively Christian school. Leaders understand the impact of their vision and values. A number of governors are very active within school and not only evaluate the ethos, but contribute greatly to the school family. The vision clearly shapes the school's priorities and policies and it threads through all areas of school life including collective worship and RE.

The wider school community are passionate about the future of the school, demonstrated by the successful campaign to save the school from closure. Just as the farmer in the Parable of The Lost Sheep took measures to ensure his flock were protected, the governing body is proactively taking steps to ensure the sustainability of the school. Working in partnership with the Diocese and neighbouring schools, partners are developing joint curriculum provision and considering succession planning. The joint ventures benefit the pupils with planned sporting fixtures, curriculum days and special events such as the Leavers' Service in Newcastle Cathedral. They grow socially from the experiences and enjoy the variety of enrichment activities. The local parishioners, led by the vicar and headteacher, have made a significant difference to the lives of the pupils. Messy Church sessions have widened the opportunities to develop relationships, reflection and spirituality. Parents appreciate the connection with church and enjoy being part of the extended church family. One parishioner immerses the pupils in the natural world, teaching about stewardship through the gardening club. This creates moments of awe and wonder whilst considering God's great bounty through growing food. The pupils are rightly proud of this achievement. They talk animatedly about the value of all God's creatures including insects to pollinate and show their understanding of nurturing the environment.

Hope, aspiration and advocacy are intrinsic to the curriculum provision, particularly in learning about and undertaking charitable deeds. The pupils contribute to a plethora of charities in their desire to make a difference. Nurturing 'happiness' as stated in the vision is not just about having fun and being creative, leaders challenge the pupils to think more deeply. Visitors such as a Paralympics' athlete inspire them with their personal stories of dealing with anxiety and frustrations through faith. This has introduced the pupils to talking about mental health issues resulting in them being more emotionally self aware. The regular 'Relax Kids' sessions encourage the pupils to find an inner calm as does the Forest School activity undertaken in the school grounds. The pupils are at one with nature and take delight in the outdoor provision.

The school's vision is at the heart of collective worship. It brings the community together as a family to be nurtured by God's love and fosters an understanding that all are precious in the eyes of God. A sense of intimacy is created by the pupils and staff who show deep respect for one another, encouraging less confident pupils to spontaneously share their thoughts and prayers. They actively rejoice in their singing and movement and respond enthusiastically to interactive moments. The pupils readily join in with stories from their own experience which helps them to make sense of the worship theme and Bible story. Prayers and greetings are from the Anglican tradition hence pupils are well prepared so they can fully participate in the church services they attend. There are opportunities for parents, families, and governors to share worship time and they speak appreciatively of these occasions and the impact for them and the pupils. The project highlighting forgiveness and reconciliation between the people of Coventry and Dresden is seen as poignant and timely. Pupils and adults are very aware of the value of forgiveness and moving on. The pupils contribute their own thoughts and prayers when leading worship in church. The whole community joins in with the Christingle and Easter celebrations. The headteacher and vicar plan the worship themes for the year based on the church calendar, Bible stories and core Christian values and concepts such as the Holy Trinity. The school has been proactive in monitoring the impact of worship, as a result there is a desire to use the excellent grounds and outdoor education to further enhance the pupils' spiritual development. The introduction of a Holy Communion service is currently under consideration and advice is being taken from schools that currently

include Eucharist in their worship cycle. Worship makes a good contribution to the school's ethos, to the expression of its values and to the development of learners and adults.

RE is well led by the headteacher who attends Diocesan training and cascades this back to other members of staff. The pupils find RE lessons engaging and relish having extended discussions about the themes raised. Pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and are able to talk about Sikhism in some depth, following the visit of a member of the Sikh community. When discussing theological and philosophical ideas they are developing confidence and understanding. Pupils have a limited understanding of the diverse nature of the North East, but can talk about developing countries due to the Diocesan global links. The RE leader works with local schools and attends network meetings where she actively shares in discussions.

Self-evaluation is undertaken by the headteacher and ex-officio officer on an informal basis, they report back to the governing body. Feedback from the pupils has led to changes such as the implementation of 'Messy Church'. Leaders have begun to use guidance from the Church of England to inform self-evaluation however this is not yet embedded and formalised. As a result, the development of the school as a 'Deeply Christian' school is not addressed in strategic planning.

It is clear that the school vision has a very positive impact on all aspects of life at Chollerton, resulting in pupils who are confident, keen to help others and happy in school.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The RE provision is good and reflects the Church of England's statement of entitlement. RE fully expresses the school vision in relation to being the best you can be, as pupils are challenged in lessons and speak with respect about the major world faiths studied. Support from the experienced RE lead and training in using the 'Understanding Christianity' resource has increased staff knowledge and confidence. Monitoring of teaching and learning is undertaken by the RE lead and the ex-officio governor. Teaching is good. The pupils have a broad range of activities to help them become familiar with Bible texts including drama, dance, debates and artwork. The current RE assessment tracker is based on the diocesan model. Pupil progress data is recorded and tracked. Progress for all pupil groups is in line with Diocesan expectations.

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Inspector's name and number	Mary Cook 811