

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Weston St Mary Church of England Primary School			
Address	Small Drove, Weston, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE12 6HU		
Date of inspection	19 November 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as a voluntary controlled school.
Diocese	Lincoln	URN	140998

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	Excellent
Additional Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent

School context

Weston St Mary is a primary school with 39 pupils on roll. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Many 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 also above national averages. The school joined the Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (LAAT) in February 2014 and was partnered with another church school in June 2017. The executive headteacher has led three LAAT schools since April 2019. The head of school has been substantive in post since September 2017.

The school's Christian vision

'Inspire believe achieve'

'At our school we serve our diverse community and the common good, providing children with the highest standard of education, within a Christian context. Inspired by the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25 – 37) we believe that we are all children of God, deserving equality of opportunity and achievement'

But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded. 2 Chronicles 15:7

I can do all things through him who strengthens me: Philippians 4:13

Key findings

- The school has undertaken a journey of rapid improvement. This has had a transformational effect on pupils, their families and the wider community.
- Through working with other schools, the diocese and MAT, the school has inspired others to 'do all things' by sharing innovative practice.
- Policies and practice embody the vision in providing hope and aspiration to the school community and beyond.
- Pupils' knowledge of Christianity and world faiths is excellent.
- Whole school collective worship is a strength because it influences the lives of pupils and staff.

Areas for development

- Sustain best practice already in place so that the school can develop its role as a resource for the diocese and trust.
- Continue to develop collective worship so that best practice is secure in all areas including class worship.
- Embed the new assessment system in RE so that pupils are clear about their next steps in learning and can make even greater progress.

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 is excellent because of the transformational impact it has had on pupils, their families and the wider community. Three years ago, pupil numbers had dwindled following an adverse Ofsted inspection. It is now a thriving school which was graded 'good' by Ofsted in June 2019. This rapid improvement is due to the leadership structure set up in partnership with another church school. The two schools now work together as one, sharing the same values and vision. The executive head and head of school are inspirational in their relentless pursuit of excellence and challenge any barrier to pupils achieving their best. They have used the vision to underpin positive changes and as a source of encouragement. The school vision sits under that of the Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (LAAT), which together with the diocese have provided support and challenge for church school distinctiveness and school improvement. Governors at all levels know the school well and are actively involved with its progress. Leaders are supported by an enthusiastic staff team who share their passion to provide the highest standard of education possible within a Christian setting. Each is prepared to go 'beyond the extra mile' and there are many examples of their care and nurture for pupils and their families. Staff love working at the school and are proud of what has been achieved in a short space of time. The transition has not been without significant challenges, however. These have been met with an exceptionally positive attitude. Difficult decisions have been made including around finance and staffing with respect for those affected. Staff model hope and aspiration in 'tough times' so that pupils understand they can build resilience and achieve anything they wish.

The school is outward facing and views engaging with other schools as the outworking of the vision. Leaders have been sharing the school's experience and model of leadership through the trust and the Church of England rural and isolated schools' group. Parents are delighted with the ways in which their children are helped to learn. Numbers on roll are increasing because, as one parent put it, 'word is out that the school is going places and people want to be part of it'.

No opportunity to promote the Christian vision and link it to school life is missed. Displays are designed to excite curiosity, inspire and challenge. One on Remembrance Day for example, contained thought provoking questions, links with the vision, Bible verses, pupils' work and information about World War One. Most information is presented in the several languages spoken by pupils, so all have equal chance to benefit from it. Pupils use the displays as a source of learning and will spontaneously spend time praying, reflecting and discussing the content.

The advantages of having small numbers of pupils are exploited to the full. Driven by the Christian vision, leaders deliver equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. This enables pupils to flourish. The broad curriculum is adapted to individual interests and needs. Pupils' worth and confidence as learners is built up so that they can reach their potential. Achievements, however small, are celebrated at every opportunity. As a result, outcomes are rapidly improving. Pupils want to come to school so attendance has improved. Many pupils have come from other settings and/or have additional needs. Because of the school's nurturing approach, negative experiences are being overcome. Access to outdoor learning activities enables all pupils to develop practical skills as well as fostering characteristics such as resilience. Pupils gain confidence as learners through achieving in den building or outdoor cooking.

Leaders are creative and develop the strengths of individual staff members for the common good. Staff work flexibly across all three schools so that expertise can be shared. As a solution to staffing issues, support staff were invited to train as teachers. Mindful of recruitment difficulties, leaders 'talent spot' current staff and provide them with opportunities for professional development. Most vacancies are filled internally as a result of this innovative approach. Staff flourish and know that they too can 'do all things.'

Pupils from each school in the partnership are regarded and treated as part of the same family. This opens up greater opportunities for shared activities such as trips and visits and joint sports teams. Leaders are mindful of the difficulties of rural living, such as a lack of transport, and create opportunities to expose pupils to rich, new experiences of the world. Funding streams are accessed so that all can participate. Pupils appreciate these links

to the extent that the school parliament requested that the school's uniform be changed to match that of the then partnership school, and the vision and value statement become the same.

The relationship with the church is strong and of mutual benefit. Clergy are integral to collective worship and provide a pastoral role to staff, pupils and their families. Because of their involvement with the church through the school, a parent has organised 'Messy Church' sessions which have increased the number of children attending.

Pupils enjoy RE. Spiritual development is threaded through the RE and the wider curriculum and pupils know the purpose of prayer. Their knowledge, understanding and skills are excellent. They accurately re-tell stories from the Bible and world faiths in an engaging manner. The importance of understanding other beliefs is clear to them. The school is actively involved in the local hub of schools and is leading innovations in RE including the introduction of pilot assessment scheme for RE. The use of an online platform enables them to debate 'big questions' with pupils in schools with different contexts. They have great respect for the views of others and consider they are fortunate to have different cultures in their schools. Collective worship completely reflects this. It is reverential and joyful. It is invitational in allowing pupils to explore their own convictions without fear of criticism from their peers. A pupil who does not believe in God had their views affirmed by others, for example. A reflection on the Holy Trinity as a 'strong, sturdy triangle' inspired pupils to continue to reflect through the day. Collective worship is thoroughly evaluated to ensure it is continually meeting the ongoing needs of pupils.

Pupils are proud of the many responsibilities they hold in the school. They know that they, like the good Samaritan, make a positive difference in the lives of others. Green Ambassadors have recently stopped display work from being laminated, for example, to cut down on the use of plastics and are regularly involved in litter picking in the village.

Executive headteacher	Alison Flack
Head of school	Rachael Walker
Inspector's name and number	Rachel Beeson 952