

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Ireby Church of England Primary School			
Address	Ireby, Wigton, Cumbria. CA7 1DS		
Date of inspection	05 March 2020	Status of school	Voluntary controlled primary
Diocese	Carlisle	URN	112251

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 Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	GOOD

School context

Ireby Church of England School is a primary school with 30 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. 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 is below the national averages. Since the previous SIAMS inspection the school has experienced an unsettled period in terms of staffing and pupil numbers. The permanent appointment of a new headteacher in September 2018 has re-established stability for the school.

The school's Christian vision

'Created to do good.' **Ephesians 2:10**

By instilling our Christian values through our learning and play, we hope that our children develop a deep understanding of themselves and the world. Our children know they are part of our local, national and global community and that, in their own way, they can help to make our world a better place.

Key findings

- The school has made progress from the previous denominational inspection. This is evident in the recent adoption of a new Christian vision which effectively reflects the school's context. Likewise, the new vision enables all pupils to flourish through their understanding that they are 'created to do good'. However, the vision has not been widely shared across the school community
- Compassionate relationships, based on Christian love, have a significant impact on all members of the school community. This ensures a safe and nurturing environment, cherishing every child.
- Many rich and varied curriculum experiences greatly enhance pupils' spiritual development.
- Collective worship provides a calm space for pupils to reflect on the school's Christian values. As a result, Christian values are deeply embedded and impact on the daily lives of the school community.
- A renewed approach to religious education, that embraces the use of 'big questions', is supportive of pupils' spiritual development.

Areas for development

- Embed the school's new Christian vision so that it is fully understood and applied across the school and the wider community.
- Extend the variety of worship experiences to deepen pupils' spiritual development and increase their engagement through routinely planning, leading and evaluating worship.
- Consolidate pupils' understanding of diversity in order to enhance their respect for difference across the wider world.

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

Following considerable consultation, the school developed a new Christian vision that was finalised in December 2019. As a result, pupils aspire to live out the vision's biblical verse of 'created to do good'. The Christian vision is effective in that it embodies the school's approach to teaching and learning, whilst reflecting its ambition for every child. Explaining the vision, the vicar commented, 'It makes you be the people God intended you to be, impacting on the wider world.' However, although the new vision has been introduced to the school community, it is not deeply embedded or fully understood by the wider community.

Seven core Christian values, such as wisdom and hope, underpin the vision. These are widely known and understood. Pupils recognise the benefit and importance of the Christian values in their own lives. One pupil commented, 'If you don't live your values, then they're just words on a wall.' Parents recognise the impact the values have on their children's lives, applying them at home. For example, a parent recounted that their child had suggested that they used hope and perseverance to support them in the kitchen.

Pupils are acutely aware of God's creation and they are eager to protect it. They talked to their teachers about recent news items on plastics in the ocean. As a result, the school adapted its curriculum to support the pupils in equipping them to become effective courageous advocates. Pupils undertook work that included a beach litter pick, a plastics free week and discussions with a local supermarket. This all added to the pupils' understanding of the exploitation of the natural world. Pupils also spoke of activities they had enjoyed during Fairtrade Fortnight, including meeting a producer from Peru at a local schools' event. Likewise, teachers make effective links to current global issues through the everyday curriculum. For example, pupils have undertaken charitable actions around homelessness, both at home and abroad, following work on the novel, 'Street Child'. As a result, pupils are inspired to make a difference. A pupil commented, 'If a problem is super big you can't stop it on your own, but you can do your part, everyone can do their part. If you don't, nothing will change.'

The school supports each child as an individual. Consequently, different groups in the school community are united in comparing the school to 'a big family'. This is lived out in strong, caring relationships. A governor described the pupils as being 'valued and loved'. Pupils understand and experience compassion shown to them by adults across the school. As a result, pupils know they are cherished as individuals. This approach has a positive impact on the mental health and well-being of staff and pupils alike. One pupil compared it to the parable of the good shepherd. 'We are like sheep. The staff are like the good shepherd. They come and find you. This makes us happy. They don't forget about us.' The school's vision inspires forgiveness and reconciliation and the headteacher described it as a powerful tool in enabling pupils to understand boundaries. For example, if a playtime incident arises, the headteacher uses the vision to ask, 'created to be good – how are you getting on with that right now'?

The small size of the school enables staff to know the pupils exceptionally well. Therefore, they respond well to pupils' specific needs, celebrating strengths both within and beyond the curriculum, whilst also providing targeted support. Subsequently, the large majority of pupils achieve their predicted outcomes, regularly scoring above the national average in key tests. The school is particularly committed to pupils enjoying a wide variety of experiences that enrich their learning. The Christian vision encourages the pupils to look outwards. Therefore, numerous educational visits, linked to the curriculum, enhance pupils' understanding of the wider world. As a result, pupils have a well-developed respect for difference. One pupil commented that you should 'treat everyone how you would like to be treated'. A recent connection with a school in Pakistan is supporting pupils' growing understanding of diversity. Although some subject areas allocate a percentage of time for work on cultural difference and diversity, this is not fully embedded across the curriculum.

Collective worship has an important role in the school's daily life. It provides space for pupils to reflect and engage in private prayer. Pupils gave examples of how worship had made them think. One pupil recounted a

story of a child travelling a long distance, over mountains, to obtain a tractor part. The pupil reflected that he used this story to help him persevere in his own life. Worship is highly inclusive, with all pupils accessing the spiritual experience. Participation in worship is invitational and demonstrates leaders' respect for individual beliefs. Worship also enables pupils to share their biblical knowledge and extends their spiritual understanding through probing questions. For example, 'why did Jesus wash the disciples' feet?' and 'why was it nice to have a meal with friends'? Pupils value prayer, saying that God listens to them. As a result, it has a positive impact on their wellbeing. Parents spoke of how prayer helped their children at home. One parent brought a charming example of a prayer book made independently at home by her seven-year-old child. Pupils enjoy participating in the delivery of worship. Following a recent request from the school council, Fridays have been allocated as a day for pupils to lead worship. Likewise, the 'assembly reflection book', started before Christmas, provides some examples of feedback from pupils on worship. However, the reflection book and pupil involvement in planning, leading and evaluating worship are not fully embedded. Worship supports pupils in gaining an awareness of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils enjoy worship being led by different local clergy and Christian visitors. However, pupils only have a limited understanding of different Anglican traditions.

Staff skills and knowledge are grown through targeted professional development. Likewise, preparation for inspection has also deepened both staff and governors' understanding of the school as a church school. Governors work closely with the school and know it well. They routinely monitor standards and understand the impact of very small cohorts. Therefore, governors provide effective challenge through the school's self-evaluation. This ensures continued school improvement through effective strategic planning for future developments. As a result, since the previous denominational inspection, the school has addressed the recommendations made. The school meets its statutory requirements for both RE and collective worship. Implementation of the new vision has had an immediate impact on the life of the school. One staff member commented, 'The vision coming through the children has re-inspired me. The school has come alive again. It's like a lotus blossom.'

Headteacher	Michael John
Inspector's name and number	Jo Williams 863