

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Academy

Address	Hazel Grove, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 9DA			
Date of inspection	22/ 11/ 2018	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA	
Diocese	Coventry	URN	142021	

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	Good

School context

St Michael's is a primary school with 430 pupils on roll. The school has a very low level of religious and cultural diversity and very few 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 (SEND) is above national averages. The religious background of the majority of pupils is Christian. The school became part of the Diocese of Coventry Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in July 2015.

The school's Christian vision

We foster a vision of 'working together to succeed' built around the poem 'Footprints in the Sand' by Mary Stevenson. All members of our school family, through their actions, provide our children and families with nurturing care to enable them to flourish. Deuteronomy 1:31: ... the Lord your God carried you as a father carries his son.

Key findings

- The effective leadership of the headteacher, strongly supported by other leaders, and their shared Christian vision, sustains and emphasises the characteristics of the school as a distinctive, Church school.
 - Relationships and partnerships, within the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and with other link schools, nurture and support each individual member of the school family, as unique children of God, enabling them to flourish and succeed.
 - The vibrant and exciting curriculum, shaped by the clear Christian vision, offers learning experiences, scaffolded to support individuals, through the 'Learning Values' framework.
 - The agreed Christian values, effectively support the Christian vision. They are clear and influential, generating excellent behaviour, amongst all groups.
 - Collective worship and religious education (RE) are strongly led and effectively planned. Guided by the school's Christian vision, they offer experiences that challenge and shape the life choices of adults and pupils who care and want to make a difference in their community.
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- Strengthen the spiritual life of the school family by building a shared understanding of spirituality that consistently reflects the Christian vision.
 - Engage all governors in developing the spiritual life and Christian distinctiveness of the school, ensuring planning and delivery for spiritual development is strengthened and celebrated.

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 vision is clear and shared by all the school family. Leaders effectively use the idea of God carrying individuals in times of trouble, to shape strong, caring relationships. Systems for valuing all pupils as children of God are inclusive and offer nurturing support. As a result, pupils flourish and grow in confidence. The explicit links with biblical teaching effectively reinforce the school's Christian foundation. In collective worship pupils and staff reflect and discuss Christian teaching, highlighted by the school's vision and associated values. They explore and broaden their understanding of a Christian value each half term. As a result, pupils are able to relate the focus value, to the school's vision and to their everyday choices. 'If we see someone is upset we try to be kind and help them. That's being compassionate.' Pupils regularly display these Christian values, through their relationships. In addition, teachers ensure equal rights for all to access learning by providing effective support so that all pupils learn well. They lead by example, 'It's alright to make mistakes, but learning from them is important.' This effectively builds confident learners. Leaders have worked diligently to sustain the school's Christian distinctiveness in the absence of a regular minister at the parish church. There have also been foundation governor vacancies. Through this period, the headteacher has continued to lead effectively. He has successfully formed partnerships with other local churches. Consequently, visits celebrating Christian festivals such as Easter have taken place, uniting the school and community in worship. Support from the Diocese has been effective in building greater subject knowledge in RE.

The school serves a community facing many difficult challenges. Leaders and staff, live out the vision of loving care, actively engaging with individuals. They know their pupils and families well and develop compassionate, supportive partnerships, as an expression of their vision. Parents explain, 'The school extends grace to us. They don't label our children, but provide individual response to need'. Parents enjoy worship and the parental workshops the school offers. These strengthen relationships, as parents actively engage with the school's Christian vision and values.

The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of extra-curricular clubs that help pupils develop as responsible and compassionate individuals. Examples illustrating this are the 'Brilliant Club Project', exploring the impact of 'Fair Trade' and the school council choosing charities to support.

Teachers share their skills and success in mathematics, with a group of schools through the 'Maths Hub'. This fosters mutually beneficial partnerships to raise standards in teaching and learning. They also exchange visits with teachers from Shanghai, where the approaches, in mathematics originated. Continuous professional development (CPD) is a key part of their vision to work together to succeed. By building skills in their staff they are more able to assess and provide targeted support. This makes a positive difference to learning outcomes.

Leaders create consistent policies and practice, emphasising the importance of the Christian vision and values. Despite this, opportunities are missed to enhance the spiritual life of the school family. This is because there is no shared understanding of spirituality as it uniquely relates to St Michael's. They use the school's vision and associated values to offer hope, build character and shape pupils' individual expectations. They have made bold decisions that have impacted positively on pupils' learning and illustrate the school's Christian vision in action. These include reorganisation of the school day, un-streamed teaching and movement around classrooms to prepare them for secondary school. Leaders and teachers conscientiously monitor and assess all pupils' learning, ensuring progress is made. Targeted interventions contribute well to the success for SEND and other vulnerable individuals. Partnerships between the Children's Centre and Nursery and Early Years offer good support. Consequently, standards for all groups are in line with, or above national expectations.

Behaviour is excellent. Pupils foster strong relationships with other children and adults. Friendships are warm and respectful. 'We help each other if we are struggling in lessons. Our teachers are there if we are troubled. Values encourage us to not fall out and to make up.' This illustrates forgiveness and reconciliation in action. Adults and pupils, following vision guidance, create a strong sense of belonging, providing a stable foundation from which to flourish. Professional support successfully addresses the issue of attendance. By targeting regular absentees they are bringing attendance in line with national average.

School leaders have developed an inclusive school, 'Where all are valued as unique children of God'. The curriculum successfully fosters respect and celebrates positive attitudes. Partnerships exist between the school, other countries globally and schools with more diverse cultures, across the MAT. These links effectively broaden the pupils' understanding of a range of cultures. RE and worship additionally succeed in extending pupils' knowledge of the religions of Britain and the world.

Collective worship is central, calming, uniting all members of the school community at the start of the day.

Worship invites pupils and staff to acknowledge God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Stories from the Bible and other sources, exemplify how people should treat others the way they like to be treated. Therefore, successfully helping pupils and adults to apply these experiences in their own lives. Music, prayer, reflection and many Christian traditions broaden pupils' understanding of Christian beliefs and practices. As a result, pupils and adults engage well with worship and share their enjoyment. Prayers are also said respectfully at lunchtime and at the end of each day. Classroom reflection areas offer a range of artefacts to positively extend worship experiences. All staff lead worship. Singing is inspirational, effectively creating an atmosphere of joyful praise. Regular evaluation, by the worship leader, asking pupils to share their views, ensures worship addresses needs. Consequently, worship is effectively supporting the school's Christian vision and values.

RE is strongly led and effectively delivered by all teachers. The vision and values guide planning and underpin provision, consistently ensuring quality. A wide range of resources enrich the curriculum. Pupils capably investigate questions such as, 'Where is Jesus in Christmas?' They cooperate well to share their thinking and broaden their understanding of religions across the world. Consequently, pupils say they enjoy finding out about God, religion and the world. School leaders, particularly the RE leader, in the absence of foundation governors, drive the importance of RE, carefully monitoring quality. Governors have questioned pupils about their views of RE, but not of late. This recent lack of rigour is diminishing their impact in driving the school's spiritual development, through RE.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is consistently good. All teachers plan together in year groups and ensure learning experiences are challenging and creative. Consequently, pupils enjoy RE and are developing a clear understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Building teaching skills and expertise in RE, through effecting training and professional development, ensures teachers are more able to monitor, assess and provide targeted support. The headteacher and RE/worship leader recently benefited from a diocesan course, called Understanding Christianity. This explored the 'Big Story' of the Old and New Testaments. On return, this has been successfully shared with staff, parents and pupils and is already having a positive impact on teaching and learning. Termly assessments confirm pupils' responses to the curriculum in RE are in line with other core subjects.

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