

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

West Raynham Church of England Academy

Address	7 Hollow Lane West Raynham Fakenham NR21 7HH		
Date of inspection	27 February 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA- The Unity Federation of Church of England and Community Academies within Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust
Diocese	Norwich	URN	141932

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

West Raynham is a very small primary school with 34 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage; very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion considered to be disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are both above national averages. Since the last inspection the school has joined the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) and is part of a federation of three church schools and one community school. A housing development that feeds into the school has been turbulent and this has affected the school's population; there has been a recent reduction in numbers of pupils with over 50% mobility in some year groups. The school was inspected by Ofsted in November 2018 and continues to be good.

The school's Christian vision

We are 4 small schools where big things happen; We celebrate the hidden treasure that we can nurture with joy and hope in every child. We foster independence, develop courage and resilience and shape our children to be life-long learners so that they may; Have faith, flourish and fly high.

Key findings

- The school's vision has a clear theological underpinning which been developed across its federation and is shared with all four schools and reflects their local context. The vision is embraced by the leadership of the school and it drives school improvement.
- The school has an outward-looking pioneer spirit, led by the executive headteacher, which enables it to search for new opportunities and continually develop best practice.
- Religious education teaching is a model of excellence with careful assessment and monitoring, enabling children to ask and explore the big questions of life.
- A diverse range of pupils' needs are supported by a caring and nurturing ethos allowing them to flourish and overcome barriers.

Areas for development

- Ensure the vision statement is embraced and understood by the whole community so that everyone can appreciate the difference the school's ethos makes to the lives of the pupils.
- Reach out to all areas of the school population to build a strong, united, church school-led community.

**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's vision 'Have faith, flourish and fly high' recognises that every child has a hidden treasure that can be nurtured. The school provides individual academic, social and emotional support for each pupil in its care. The vision of the academy is shaped by biblical teaching and drives the decisions made by leaders to ensure pupils have the best opportunities, the best learning and achieve the best outcomes they can, irrespective of background or situation. The focus is on helping the pupils to aspire and flourish beyond their current contexts. The vision considers the spiritual wellbeing of everyone in the community. Adults work beyond the academy and look outwards with their vision and bring back new ideas to develop the school. The school has established links with the local church as well as at diocesan and national level. The academy grows future leaders and benefits from supporting them and working with other aspiring leaders.

The curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant to the needs of pupils. Despite being a small academy, it provides a wide range of enriching experiences to engage pupils in their learning and develop spiritual development. The school's work on Global Neighbours has provided a framework to enable pupils to explore global issues. It allows pupils to be connected beyond the isolated rural community the school sits in. The school's approach to teaching through 'big questions' helps pupils to explore and articulate spiritual and ethical issues. Pupils are beginning to develop a global understanding to big issues such as poverty and the reduction of natural resources. Some of this work is embedded at a local level where the school works with a local food bank and they are now developing this further to a global level. Pupils recognise that they can take action to help others beyond school in their local environment. The pupils are involved in social action work such as visits to an older people's luncheon club and support of national charities. They are developing a compassionate understanding of how to deal with some national issues and how their own efforts can contribute to a bigger momentum for change.

The strong and rewarding relationships between pupils and adults provide a base for fulfilling the vision. Pupils feel safe and supported in school and find staff open and approachable. Vulnerable pupils are fully included and thrive from the support they are given. Adults working alongside this group ensure they can use their growing spiritual literacy to express themselves in a safe and supportive way as well as making academic progress. Pupils are invited to reflect on their behaviour, speak to God on a daily basis through prayer and recognise it is okay to have faith or not. Pupils with particular needs such as anxiety have appropriate arrangements in place to support them coming to school regularly and reducing their stress. Mental health is a priority as is wellbeing and they are an important part of the culture of the school and the projects and support offered to pupils enables them to flourish as the vision suggests. The school works above and beyond for the often disjointed community it serves. Positive role models and a culture of celebrating difference allows pupils to feel safe and open. Pupils are accepting of one another. The vulnerable and those considered disadvantaged are given equal opportunities to take part in the fullness of the life of the school both academically and socially. The broad range of learning experiences and opportunities provided by the school help pupils to develop a widening understanding of diversity and to recognise that this is a good thing. Sex and relationship education is delivered by the executive headteacher and senior leaders and it promotes the importance of self-worth, belief and ownership of choices. The school has an open-door policy supported by parent forums which allow any concerns to be discussed informally. These are effective for some but less so for the harder to reach areas of the community as these parents do not travel to come in to the school often.

Worship plays a central role in the school. It is carefully and considerably planned. Governors and pupils play a part in the monitoring and evaluation of worship. The school through collective worship provides a biblical link to the motivation to aspire to be the best they can be and to celebrate achievements in others. The executive head teacher is a committed and practising Christian who leads and manages worship with good knowledge and the understanding of the importance of spiritual nourishment. Worship is varied but focuses on key Christian teaching from the Bible and life of Jesus. It is led by teachers, the local incumbent, visitors and pupils. A range of Christian values are worked into a cohesive rolling programme of worship linked to Christian festivals and important days in the church calendar. The format of worship ties it to the Trinitarian nature of worship and the language of worship. It allows pupils to reflect, to question and to develop a deeper understanding. It also gives pupils the security of a familiar pattern which they find comforting. The pupils hold worship in the parish church every month as well as special services for harvest, remembrance, Christmas and Pentecost. Worship based around interactive and creative responses engages pupils in different ways with the teachings of Jesus. These all contribute to the richness of the worship the pupils participate in. Prayer is an important part of daily life of the school and pupils pray together at lunchtime and home time. Prayer allows pupils to continue to grow spiritually.

Religious education (RE) has a high profile in the school and is resourced well in terms of training and staff development. Varied learning opportunities enable pupils to develop their emotional and spiritual literacy. Through the RE programme pupils develop enquiry skills to formulate responses to theologically challenging questions. Educational visits and visitors as well as creative approaches to each unit of work enable the pupils to appreciate the diversity of the society they live in and to engage, enquire and grow their understanding of faith. The RE leaders work with the diocese to support other schools and academies to develop RE on a regular basis. They hold a wide range of experience and are well informed and use the latest thinking. Not only do they share best practice but also gain by sharing ideas with others and adding to the current practice of the school. RE leads work closely with the RE advisor on local and national projects which keep practice fresh; therefore, teaching reflects contemporary ideas and concepts in RE.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

RE is a core subject in the school and is given appropriate time and resources to reflect this. Teaching is regularly monitored which is a key factor in the steady improvements made. Currently the school is improving its already good practice through embedding the relatively new RE age-related expectations and using bench marks developed by the diocese for Year 2 and Year 6 exemplar work. REQM Gold mark was obtained in 2016 reflecting the high quality of learning undertaken. Teaching is consistently good or better. RE portfolios capture the life and rhythm of the RE teaching and learning in each class as well as including a wide range of responses by the pupils. Pupils contribute to monitoring. They feel listened to and their views are acted on. RE provides opportunities in the school for deeper thinking, asking the big questions of life and associating this to personal belief and knowledge.

Executive Headteacher	Christopher Allen
Inspector's name and number	Anna Reeder 659