

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

North Nibley Church of England VA Primary School

Address	The Street, North Nibley, Dursley, Gloucestershire, GL11 6DL		
Date of inspection	20 June 2019	Status of school	VA primary
Diocese / Methodist District	Gloucester	URN	115695

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

North Nibley is a primary school with 112 pupils on roll, organised in 4 mixed age classes. It serves a mixed community in a rural setting. 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The headteacher along with the majority of teachers were in post at the time of the previous inspection. The school is part of a local cluster group known as the Tyndale cluster.

The school's Christian vision

Our Vision is to inspire and celebrate learning, achievement, faith and fun.

Ours is a school that works in partnership with the community to enable and equip each child to "live life to the full" (The Gospel of John, Chapter 10 Verse 10), reflecting the Christian values of our foundation.

Key findings

- The school's cohesive and embedded Christian vision is integral to all aspects of school life. It positively influences decision-making, policies and practice at all levels.
- Virtuous pastoral care in this Christian community is genuinely supportive of all pupils and adults and their mental health and wellbeing. Staff tirelessly support one another, the pupils and their families.
- RE and Collective Worship are given high priority and effectively support the school's Christian vision and values, which in turn impact the pupils' lives both in school and beyond.
- The school has created an inclusive, nurturing environment which allows all pupils to flourish. This complements its vision, which is to be a community that prepares pupils to live a full life.
- All pupils experience significant curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. As a result pupils are confident, aspirational and happy.

Areas for development

- Deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity as a worldwide living faith and its part in their own cultural heritage.
- Increase pupils' encounters with different faiths in order to broaden their experience of diversity.
- Establish a whole school understanding of spiritual development so that pupils are enabled to articulate their own spiritual awareness.

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

North Nibley is a loving, caring and deeply supportive community. All stakeholders have a deep commitment to inclusion and welcome all as 'God's children'.

Rooted in a clear theological Christian narrative, the school's vision, together with its associated values, promotes life in all its fullness and is lived out passionately by all. Leaders and governors have established an effective Church school evaluation process. Through regular monitoring visits, governors have a very clear idea of school performance, achievement and the way in which the vision is being lived out. All aspects of the school improvement plan, decision making and policies are driven by the shared Christian vision. The wording of the vision is in a format that can be readily remembered by the whole community. Fondly referred to by the pupils as 'LAFF' (Learning, Achievement, Faith and Fun), the pupils can clearly articulate what the vision means and how it is impacting on their life both at school and beyond. One pupil referred to an analogy of a cup of rain water commenting that, 'the rain comes, so eventually the cup overflows and the water spreads. The cup overflows with joy. When we live our life to the full we are also filled with joy.'

Pupils enjoy all that the school offers. The broad and rich curriculum is enhanced by numerous opportunities for leadership, curricular and extracurricular activities. These develop pupils' confidence and ability to live 'life to the full'. Vulnerable pupils, and those with special needs are very well supported. Leaders ensure that financial and human resources are used effectively so that all pupils can flourish and achieve. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and standards of attainment are generally in line with national expectations. Where standards are not as high, as in writing, staff are committed to working together to achieve more. At present, there isn't a common understanding of the concept of spirituality. This means that times when spirituality might be developed, tend to be 'in the moment' rather than planned for. Consequently, planning does not foster a progressive understanding of how spirituality can be built on as the children mature.

Pupils are aware of global issues and they are knowledgeable about and actively pray for people who are in much less fortunate circumstances. Fundraising for several charities encourages compassion, generosity and an understanding of the need to act where there are inequalities in the world. Pupils are aware of the need to protect our environment, describing ways they can personally make a difference, such as reducing the use of plastic and re-cycling. A strong sense of justice and fairness prevails in their concern for world problems, such as pollution. One pupil commented 'we talk about what's wrong with the world'. Pupils and adults are keen to make a meaningful difference beyond their local context as global agents of change.

Relationships at all levels of the school are strong. These arise from the caring and heartfelt leadership of the headteacher and are modelled by a close-knit, inclusive staff team. Both adults and pupils feel listened to. One pupil told me 'teachers are good at listening, we know we can go to adults if we need to'. The staff are well supported professionally and personally, including in their emotional and mental health. Governors believe they have a strong duty of care towards the staff. As a result, adults are treated with dignity, care and respect in a working environment where wellbeing is given a great priority. For example, governors employed an extra administrator to support the headteacher's workload and have also been reviewing the homework policy alongside staff in order to reduce the amount of marking. Excellent behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils flourish personally and socially.

Working in partnership with the community is key to the vision at North Nibley. There are mutually beneficial partnerships with the local church community, for example the Open the Book team. The associate priest regularly leads worship and supports with RE. He recently supported staff and pupils at the school with a deeply sad and sensitive matter. Support from the parents is strong, recently a large number of families helped the school with a big clean-up day. Pupils enjoy Monday club where they go out on a regular basis to the local village hall to serve lunch to local residents.

Collective worship is central to the daily life of the school and is joyous, engaging and thought-provoking.

Planning is based around the vision and values, Jesus' teachings and biblical stories. This strengthens pupils' understanding of the vision's relevance to their own lives. Pupils plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship regularly. The evaluations inform planning of future worship, particularly key stage worship. Pupils articulate God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as one, showing an understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God. Pupils' understanding of the Eucharist, however, is less developed. Pupils and adults value the opportunity that collective worship provides for daily reflection.

Pupils say that the school vision and values raise their aspirations in relation to their learning in RE. They are motivated to achieve high standards in lessons as they know that 'what we achieve will help us to live life to the full'. All planning and teaching is driven by learn, achieve, faith and fun which is well articulated by pupils. The RE lead undertakes diocesan training and supports staff by delivering in-house professional development. Other major world faiths are studied, developing understanding and respect for diversity, difference and living well together. However, pupils have not had many opportunities to visit places of worship of different faiths. Pupils enjoy lessons from the "Understanding Christianity" resource. The RE lead reports that progression in the subject is clearer, deeper learning is taking place and there is a better use of religious vocabulary. Pupils do not currently have an understanding of Christianity as a worldwide living faith and its part in their own cultural heritage.

Pupils enjoy welcoming new friends into the school. They say the 'buddy system' works well, supporting them when they were new. Both pupils and parents explain that you do not lose friends, but continue to make new friends, describing how they keep in touch with pupils who have left. The practical impact of the vision can be seen in the school's relationship with families. Parents are very supportive of the school's vision and ethos and say that their children are happy at the school and enjoy learning. They explained that teachers 'go the extra mile' to support their children's learning. They whole-heartedly support the nurturing environment the school provides, commenting that the staff are welcoming, accessible, kind and caring. They believe the school's vision and values prepare children to be a 'good human being'.

North Nibley is a community where all stakeholders work tirelessly to ensure that every pupil has the best possible chance to 'live life to the full' both at school and beyond.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

RE is well led so that teaching and learning are carefully monitored, bringing about improvements in standards. Teaching is consistently good, enabling all pupils to flourish. The majority of pupils are reaching the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for RE. The use of the 'Understanding Christianity' resource is resulting in pupils with a deepening understanding of Christianity and an increased use of religious vocabulary. Appropriate assessment practices shape learning opportunities to the needs of the pupils. However, some of the recording of tasks in books is not as well-crafted, therefore pupils are not always able to fully demonstrate their capability. The RE lead has recognised this and has made plans to address it. Marking strategies are becoming more effective in deepening pupils' learning, as questions are beginning to be used to enable pupils to reflect on past lessons. Monitoring is effective, therefore leaders, together with governors, have an accurate picture of the quality and standards being achieved.

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