

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Elsworth Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

<b>Address</b>	Broad End, Elsworth, Cambridge CB23 4JD		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	05 May 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	VA primary
<b>Diocese</b>	Ely	<b>URN</b>	110830

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
<b>Additional Judgements</b>		
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

#### School context

Elsworth is a primary school with 129 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. Over 50% of the pupils are from outside of the school's catchment area. 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 in line with national averages. The current head teacher has been in post since September 2018 and she is the third head teacher in post since the last SIAMS inspection.

#### The school's Christian vision

Inspiring learning, friendship, compassion and faith is the school's vision which the pupils interpret as 'we work, we play, we care, we pray'. This is theologically linked by recognising Jesus as the great teacher and Adam and Eve as God's stewards who cared for our world.

#### Key findings

- Leaders have developed a vision that reflects the school's context; it is fully inclusive in how it works and celebrates each child as unique in the eyes of God.
- Barriers are removed to ensure every child flourishes by considering the needs of the whole child and supporting them with a rounded development.
- There is a demonstrable culture of aspiration; every child is encouraged to be the best they can be; the person that God created them to be.
- Pupils' pride in their school is exemplified in relationships conducted with respect and compassion; their interactions embrace difference and celebrate diversity.
- Everyone feels valued and respected; those with a faith and those who have no faith are nurtured and warmly welcomed into the school.

#### Areas for development

- Continue to enhance the school's vision so it reflects the all-embracing and non-judgemental ethos it has in being fully inclusive to every child's needs.
- Plan further opportunities to develop pupils' spirituality so they can use this to live out being forgiving and make the school a centre of reconciliation for the community it serves.
- Build on excellent leadership in RE by ensuring that pupils experience depth and rigour in learning about world faiths, reflecting the current good practice in the teaching of Christianity.

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

Elsworth is a school that has reviewed its vision to deepen its theological links with the teachings of the Bible. The new head teacher has brought a fresh pair of eyes into the school and has worked hard to make overt connections to the vision and to develop the work of the school to make it easier to understand. One child said, 'Jesus is our inspiration and we should want to follow in his footsteps'. Pupils of a wide range of needs and backgrounds thrive in the school as a result. The inclusivity of the school's ethos makes it a very special place to be. One parent said how impressed they were with the openness and honesty the school has. A child said, 'I know to succeed I need to use all of our Church school values together; if not I would be soulless and empty'. However the living impact of the vision is not always clearly communicated for children with additional needs. Leaders at all levels are able to articulate how much they have done and are doing to support every pupil; each is seen uniquely and consequently allowed to blossom. As a result of this approach, 50% of the school population are from out of the school's catchment area and choose to make journeys often more than 20 minutes to attend the school. The strong relationships the school has with its community are demonstrated further by the fruitful links it has with the local church, Holy Trinity, and the regular contact it has developed through services and curriculum events. The school also enjoys a strong relationship with the diocese which supports with training and school improvement; regular visits to evaluate the school and offer advice have ensured it has continued to improve since the last inspection and maintained a good Ofsted in spring 2018.

The school has a rich curriculum that makes pupils curious and eager to ask questions; this includes residential visits and themed learning days. It provides a wide range of learning to cater for many talents and interests. Parents trust the staff as they recognise how well they know the pupils. Many parents who have moved their children to this school speak of the difference the school has made because it listens, it serves, and it works in the spirit of humility with every child. As a result pupils are at the centre of all decisions, they live out the vision of friendship and they speak exceptionally positively about their school. They know it is special as a Church school; they embrace diversity and welcome pupils who may find it hard to settle in other contexts. They show compassion in being caring, buddying the youngest and oldest pupils together and seeing mixed aged classes as a benefit to ensure every child is taught at the right level. One parent spoke of the delight she has in knowing her child has friends throughout the school who care and look out for him. This is supported by the good outcomes pupils achieve each year, which are above national benchmarks. There have been no exclusions and attendance is above national expectations. The school has ambitious plans to be a centre of reconciliation in the community it serves. It has not yet developed a spiritual development plan of sufficient robustness to enable this.

The pupils are inspired to be courageous advocates by seeing Jesus as their inspiration; one child said, 'We want to look after our world and inspire others to do the same – like him'. This is seen by the work a group of pupils have undertaken on litter picking and collecting food and resources for a local homeless shelter. They identified what they wanted to do, took action and then evaluated the outcomes. They make courageous choices with the support of the school and their families. Living well together is seen further in the 'Help our School' days, where families come and work on projects in the school grounds. Pupils also are keen to explain that they understand the charities and work they undertake for many global organisations. They take pride in the choices they make and advocate making a difference. This is celebrated in 'Inspiration Days' that the school regularly undertakes – parents enjoy these days as opportunities to work alongside their children and help them flourish.

Staff feel valued in the school and governors take time to ensure well-being is strong. They have recently appointed a well-being governor to monitor this. Likewise they have monitored behaviour in the school after a change of policy to reflect the Christian values the school lives by. Governor monitoring reports highlight how pupils are respectful of one another and supportive. This has been enabled further by the work the school has undertaken using the Stonewall resources and a project on respecting difference led by the new head teacher. One child said, 'We are all special to God' recognising the confidence the school has given them to be who they are.

Collective worship is embedded in the school day. Staff and pupils look forward to it and actively participate. It is transformational and nourishing to the spirit of each member of the school community. Prayer is invitational and the school confidently experiments in many ways in how this is undertaken. Pupils take an active role, a

development point from the last inspection. They set up the worship space, organise music, write prayers and act out biblical stories. The worship leader has worked closely with the local church to ensure many aspects are replicated, including responses, so pupils feel comfortable when visiting Holy Trinity, the local church for services. Song is an important part of worship; one child said, 'When we sing we think about the Bible's teachings and it allows us to be closer to God'. Pupils evaluate worship daily and have a strong voice within the governing body to ensure the impact is monitored and actions are considered. Themes for worship tie into the schools vision, these are planned carefully to make sure they are properly explored. A good example was the story of Jonah and compassion was considered in the context of was God a compassionate god?



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

RE is exceptionally well led by a specialist theologian who brings expertise in shaping planning for learning across the school. Engagement with staff to raise consistency of expectations has had significant impact in relation to pupil outcomes. This is monitored effectively by governors who regularly take aspects of RE to check out through lesson visits, pupil interviews, work scrutiny and meetings with the subject lead. The teaching of Christianity is a strength and this has real depth and rigour to it. This is not yet the case in the teaching of other world faiths. Action has begun to address how this can be improved, but there has been insufficient time to assess the impact. The school works within local RE networks to moderate assessed work and to share best practice which has been useful and plans are in place to utilise the outcomes of this work to ensure that assessment and tracking remains robust and accurate. RE meets the statutory requirements set out in the Statement for Entitlement of RE.

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