

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Sharow Church of England Primary School			
Address	Berrygate Lane, Sharow, Ripon HG4 5BJ		
Date of inspection	27 November 2019	Status of school	Voluntary controlled
Diocese	Leeds	URN	121588

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	Requires Improvement
Additional Judgement	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Sharow is a primary school with 101 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 below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below national averages. The executive headteacher has been in post since January 2019 following a prolonged period of uncertainty about the future leadership of the school and the federation with Skelton Newby Hall Church of England Primary School.

The school's Christian vision

We promise to flourish together. We make our promise, as God made his, and use the symbol of the rainbow to remind us; just like in the story of Noah's Ark in the Bible. (Genesis 9:17)
Our vision is lived out through the values of community, courage, creativity, forgiveness, joy, love and respect.

Key findings

- The school's vision is clearly expressed and simply stated so that all members of the school community engage with it and help each other to flourish.
- Pupils are confident learners who say they enjoy challenge through a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities which promote their holistic development,
- Religious education (RE) has introduced pupils to thinking about difference and they are learning about a range of world religions. However, they do not have a foundation in basic concepts because the subject has not been consistently well taught in the past.
- Collective worship is a strength of the school, but it does not provide pupils with sufficient experience of the diversity of Christian belief and practice.

Areas for development

- Ensure that the governing board has sufficient knowledge and understanding of current practice in Church school education in order to inform structured and robust monitoring and evaluation of the school as a Church school.
- Further develop the RE curriculum to ensure that pupils acquire a deeper understanding of the theological principles and beliefs of Christianity and are provided with a secure foundation for learning about different faiths.
- Provide opportunities for all pupils to develop an understanding of the impact of disadvantage, deprivation and the exploitation of the natural world so they can become agents of change.
- Equip all leaders of collective worship with the knowledge and skills to ensure that pupils understand the similarities and differences in Christian belief and practice across the 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

The appointment of a new executive headteacher has brought stability and impetus to the school after a period of turbulence. Although staff were mutually supportive, morale across the school dropped and pupil progress declined. Governors acknowledge that they did not focus sufficiently on the strategic development of the school as a Church school. The school has now formed a simple but effective vision which pupils describe as 'the special connection that joins us together'. The school relates God's promise in the rainbow to their new start and pupils and adults are growing stronger together.

School leaders are now outward looking. A cluster of village schools are sharing good practice and pooling resources. The school now draws on diocesan support and the governing board is developing a better understanding of what it means to be a Church school. This is at an early stage and governors do not yet have robust systems to effectively evaluate the school. However, they have quickly ensured that RE is now taught systematically across the school. The RE leader is establishing a new scheme of work which is inclusive and teaches about a range of world faiths. Pupils enjoy learning about different faiths saying, 'It teaches us to respect people who do things differently'. However, their understanding is often confused because they do not have a foundation of religious concepts. This extends to their perception of Christianity. They are familiar with a range of Bible stories which they link to their school values and their daily lives. However, their understanding of Christian theology and belief is often confused. Through attending the local RE cluster, the subject leader is now utilising resources and strategies to address these issues.

Collective worship is a high priority in the school and close links with the neighbouring church are mutually beneficial. Pupils are familiar with 'their' church because collective worship takes place there weekly. However, they have little opportunity to engage with, or develop knowledge of different styles of Christian worship. Pupils understand the significance of major festivals because they are celebrated, with their families, in the church. This does not extend to Pentecost, and few pupils have knowledge of the Holy Trinity. However, some talk with great warmth about God, 'floating around us, a sort of feeling'. Pupils make choices based on the principle that, 'God wants us to be good'. This is a consequence of the way that worship is planned consistently to support the school's vision and values through Bible teachings. The pupils' worship committee has a clear role in leading daily worship which they understand as 'connecting with God'. Personal prayer is promoted in worship. Consequently, pupils speak confidently and maturely about prayer as a response to personal problems. The impact of collective worship is evaluated through pupil voice which reveals a strong focus on how worship contributes to positively changing behaviours.

The shared promise to 'flourish together' creates a positive atmosphere for learning. Pupils embrace the school's vision and are eager to 'be the best God wants us to be'. This contributes to their growing resilience as they embrace more challenging learning. Leaders acknowledge that pupil progress has fallen below national expectations and are deploying resources and strategies to reverse this trend. Teachers have planned a curriculum which enhances pupils' spiritual, emotional physical and academic development. As a result, pupils are confident and articulate, exuding a real sense of joy in their learning. This is leading to improved levels of attendance. Effective use of resources across the curriculum promotes pupil wellbeing by encouraging them to talk about their thoughts and emotions. Teaching about disadvantage, deprivation and the exploitation of the natural world is inconsistent, restricting pupils' opportunities to develop courageous advocacy. When pupils do engage with contemporary ethical issues, they articulate their ideas in a respectful manner, showing how they can disagree amicably. Pupils undertake a range of leadership roles in the school and support local charities, including a foodbank. Opportunities to develop stronger leadership skills through community action are not available to older pupils.

Collective worship has a strong impact of pupils' appreciation of forgiveness. One pupil said, 'God loves us and forgives us, so we have to forgive other people.' School policies are based on this principle and strategies of reflection and reconciliation help pupils to rebuild relationships. Pupils develop skills of cooperation and resilience through regular residential experiences and forest school activities. These also contribute to pupils' spiritual development as they engage creatively with nature.

The school is well resourced to help pupils appreciate difference. The importance of valuing all God's children has been a training priority for staff. Consequently, teachers have effectively countered stereotypical attitudes and strengthened the school as an inclusive community. The special needs coordinator works closely with colleagues across the cluster so that pupils benefit from best practice. Early assessment and intervention mean

that pupils with special educational needs receive timely support. This is enhanced by close partnerships with, and between, families and other agencies, leading to enhanced outcomes in learning and behaviour.

All staff are sensitive to the emotions of their pupils who are given time to share their anxieties in order to rekindle their spirits. This extends to the whole school community which aspires to ensure that 'everyone will go home feeling good about themselves'. Although there is no formal policy, the mental and emotional wellbeing of all members of the school is intrinsic to the vision. Pupils and staff feel that they are listened to and this is enhancing their self-esteem. Opportunities to work more closely with their federated school and the wider cluster are strengthening identity and raising aspiration.

The headteacher has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses as a Church school. Although steps have been taken to address many of the school's areas for development these have not had time to become established and their impact is limited. However, the vision that 'We will flourish together' has reinvigorated the school and set it firmly on its journey towards becoming a good Church school.

Become established Executive Headteacher	Jacque Palmer
Inspector's name and number	Geraldine Cooper 696