

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

John Henry Newman Academy			
Address	Grange Road, Littlemore, Oxford, OX4 4LS		
Date of inspection	22 May 2019	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA. Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust. (ODST)
Diocese	Oxford	URN	138774

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	Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

John Henry Newman is a primary school with 338 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Many 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 is above national averages. The current headteacher was appointed to her substantive post in September 2018.

The school's Christian vision

Have the courage to
let your light shine (*Matthew 5:16*)
in our community to celebrate our successes and differences and to love and respect those around us.
Love, Courage, Celebration and Community

Key findings

- The school provides an exceptionally caring environment that ensures that everyone's wellbeing is a priority and encourages everyone to let their light shine. Very good pastoral care is consistently given by a dedicated team of staff and is highly valued by families.
- Raised aspirations focus on each pupil as a unique individual. Bespoke interventions ensure the academic and personal needs of all are met, so all members of the school community, adults and pupils, flourish. However, the provision for spiritual development has not yet been evaluated.
- The school's Christian vision is lived out in the strength of relationships within the school and in its proactive commitment to the wider community. Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the school's vision and values that drives decision making.
- Collective worship is inclusive, engaging, vibrant and relevant. It nourishes the spiritual lives of pupils. They are growing in their knowledge of Christian teaching and tradition as well as their confidence to lead worship.
- Religious education (RE) has a high status. Teaching is good and pupils learn effectively about Christianity and a range of world faiths. However, their awareness of Christianity as a global faith is less well developed.

Areas for development

- Set up systems to monitor, map and evaluate spiritual development across the curriculum so it effectively supports the school's ongoing journey of development.
- Explore and develop global partnerships so pupils have a wider understanding of Christianity throughout 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 passion to 'let their light shine', powerfully sustains John Henry Newman Academy's journey of development and improvement. Following a time of significant change, all have embraced the school's Bible based Christian vision which drives strategic decisions and is integral to all school life. The Christian ethos is underpinned by the Christian values of love, courage, celebration and community and invests heavily in staff, parents and pupils. Within this loving and nurturing community, all are welcomed and cherished and so flourish. This is because strong leadership engenders a sense of belonging and family, enabling all to grow together. The recent award of the Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of Excellence and the Family Champion Quality Standard (gold) testifies to the school's exceptionally high level of care for all members of its community. This is highly valued by families, including those who are vulnerable or hard to reach. Parents confirm that school staff are 'always prepared to go the extra mile for the children and all of us'.

The governors' commitment to appoint specialist staff for emotional wellbeing and for family outreach and support is enabling pupils to grow in confidence and self-esteem. This reaches well beyond their academic achievement, so all thrive. Mindfulness, yoga and stillness are offered as different approaches to living well together. Staff training and professional development are effectively supported by the diocese, the school's leaders and the ODST. The school is very effective as a member of the academy trust. It is outward facing, opening the doors to sharing best practice, reflecting the school's determination to support and reach out to all. Supportive induction and training programmes ensure staff rapidly acquire necessary skills. Future leaders of church schools are supported through diocesan partnerships. A robust monitoring cycle by leaders and managers informs church school improvement well. All areas from the previous inspection have been thoroughly addressed.

Each individual is seen through God's eyes and valued for what they bring, so all can grow together in mind, body and spirit. Pupils are helped to believe in themselves and become committed to learning. As a result, attendance is good for all, including the most vulnerable, because they value the school and feel safe and supported there. Leaders recognise high aspiration and character development as integral foundations in fulfilling the deeply embedded vision for all to shine. Bold decisions have been taken for the inclusion of some vulnerable pupils that enable them to flourish. This has almost eliminated exclusions. Current data shows an improving trend with all pupils making good progress from their starting points. Significant support for disadvantaged or vulnerable pupils, with targeted interventions, enables all to flourish. Pupils discuss learning from their mistakes with commendable maturity, one pupil adding, 'At this school the teachers never give up on you.'

Pupils' academic and personal development is successfully met within a broad, balanced and creative curriculum which reflects its Christian vision in action. Pupils are very good at encouraging one another, finding sustaining strengths in living life to the full and letting their light shine out. This is confirmed by parents who testify to the progress their children make because the school's vision allows them to grow academically and personally. Good use of the school's extensive grounds, including the reflection area and forest school, enriches the spiritual journeys of all. The rich curriculum promotes an inclusive approach to spirituality. However, spiritual development is not formally monitored or evaluated at the present time.

Pupils are keen to engage in social action and articulate their concern for world problems, such as pollution. Drawing upon the school's Christian values and driven by their concern for community, they actively make a difference as eco champions in their school. For instance, they voted against having salad pots included in their summer lunch menu in order to avoid the use of plastic. Caring for their environment motivates pupils, as some said, to 'think about how we can make a difference'. Pupils select local and global charities and raise funds for them, for example by setting up a café, 'because we should love and care for each other and our world'. They look beyond themselves to develop an understanding of disadvantage, deprivation and exploitation of the natural world.

Relationships and behaviour are very good because inclusivity and respect are embedded in the life of the school. This takes place within a community where forgiveness is modelled and good mental health and wellbeing are supported. Good role models ensure a sense of self-worth and a respect for diversity which nurtures positive relationships. There is much acceptance and support for pupils and their families to accommodate any difference in ways of living.

Inclusive and engaging collective worship inspires a sense of joy. Pupils are eager to participate in leading worship and volunteer as members of the prestigious 'worship squad'. These pupils regularly lead thoughtful prayers written by themselves, inviting all to engage in prayer for the wider world. The worship squad, together with the local vicar, evaluate worship and collect views of other pupils that influence future provision. Whilst worship is varied in its approach each day, it has a strong focus on biblical teaching that promotes the school's Christian values and Anglican tradition. Muslim pupils thoughtfully discuss their response to the Christian acts of worship they attend every day: 'You listen to the message in the Bible stories,' they explain, 'but then you say your own prayers'. The strong culture of prayer is integral to collective worship and includes the Lord's Prayer, the Grace and the Littlemore prayer. A variety of adults lead worship including school staff, the vicar and other local clergy. Services are held in the church at significant points in the church calendar. Succession planning for pupil led worship is already in place and is engaging younger pupils well as they prepare for the sought-after worship squad role.

RE at John Henry Newman has a high profile and provides a safe place to critically reflect and meaningfully explore beliefs. Through following a well-structured curriculum, pupils develop a good knowledge of Christian beliefs and traditions. Older pupils confidently explain their understanding of the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, saying, 'God created Jesus and came to the world as Jesus. The Holy Spirit is joined to God and Jesus like the third side of a triangle'. Pupils also develop an informed and respectful understanding of a diverse range of religions within their RE lessons. The knowledge and insights of Muslim pupils are very effectively used to help their classmates to understand practices and traditions in Islam, such as Ramadan. One pupil said, 'People believe different things, we need to know that that's ok, so that we are respectful to everyone'. Pupils say they enjoy RE and affirm that it is important in a Church school; it helps them to live out their vision, and to let their light shine.

John Henry Newman aspires to be an excellent church school. In living out its Christian vision it is already a beacon for inclusion in the local community.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. The monitoring and assessment of RE was an action point in the last inspection, and this is now well-embedded and progress is clearly recorded. The system demonstrates that progress in RE is often even better than in other subjects. The school is enabling all groups of pupils to flourish academically in RE. This is the result of regular observation and monitoring by the subject leader supported by the vicar. Pupils give a thoughtful account of Christianity and are growing in their understanding of different beliefs, reflecting on what they, others, and the world sees. However, their understanding of Christianity as a world-wide, multi-cultural faith is not as well developed.

Headteacher	Katie Screaton
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