

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

North Crawley CE School

Address	Church Walk, North Crawley, Newport Pagnell, MK16 9LL		
Date of inspection	26 March 2019	Status of school	VC infant school within the Village Schools Federation (VSF)
Diocese	Oxford	URN	110406

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 Judgement

The impact of collective worship

Grade **Good**

School context

North Crawley is an infant school near Milton Keynes, with 19 pupils on roll. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average. The school is one of 6 small schools which federated in December 2017. Five are church schools. The school was judged to be Good by Ofsted in September 2018. The leadership structure of the federation changed in January 2018 when the headteacher of one of the schools in the federation became executive headteacher of all 6 schools.

The school's Christian vision

'We are one, we are strongest working together in unity'. 1 Corinthians 12:14
The school's values of inspire, nurture, support, partnership, innovative, respect and excellence underpin its work and determination that everyone in the community flourishes in every respect.

Key findings

- The Christian vision is shared by the entire community and completely understood by the pupils so that they know how they should treat one another in order to demonstrate the values.
- Leaders and governors have welcomed the challenge of federating the schools as an empowering opportunity to reach out and support others. They have identified ways to continue their work with the federated schools so that the Christian vision drives further improvements.
- Worship and religious education (RE) develop pupils' spirituality and understanding of the Christian faith.
- Parents have been extremely supportive of the federation because it has strengthened the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

Areas for development

- Broaden pupils' understanding of Christianity so that they understand it as a worldwide faith.
- Encourage pupils to become active global citizens who aspire to make a difference in their world.
- Embed the community's understanding of the theological roots of the vision and the ways in which the federated schools are stronger by 'working together in unity'.

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 executive headteacher has established very close collaboration between each of the schools in the federation, drawing on the skills of all staff to embed a shared vision firmly rooted in the Bible. Governors have prioritised this partnership and articulate the vision of 'working together in unity' extremely well. Policies and procedures, which are consistent across the federation, are firmly based on this Christian vision. For example, the new behaviour policy allows children to reflect and consider which value they have failed to display without judgement, and how they should make amends. Leaders and governors are determined that all pupils, irrespective of their starting points or particular needs, are nurtured and able to flourish, making good progress and achieving well. The executive headteacher has identified key areas for development and together with governors she is driving the school's rapid progress towards them. She draws on the skills of staff in all the schools to share their expertise. For example, the RE and worship leader of one school works across all of the schools to develop the skills of staff in delivering RE and leading worship. Leaders and governors have worked closely with the diocese in establishing the federation and continue to draw on this external support. The recommendations of the last inspection have been met and strengthening the Christian distinctiveness of the school so that everyone is 'working together in unity' remains the highest priority.

Worship is highly engaging for pupils and they take an active role in planning and leading it. Pupils also evaluate worship so that leaders know that pupils understand it and that it helps them to grow in spirituality. Worship reinforces pupils' understanding of the biblical context of each value and helps them to live by these values, making the right choices. It is invitational and led by several leaders as well as the incumbent. Pupils learn about stories from the Bible, the main events in the life of Christ and the church's calendar. Music, candles, reflection and prayer are used effectively so that pupils can think how to live out the messages of worship in their own lives. Every pupil, adult and visitor is given a 'thinking stone' to help them to focus their thoughts. They are encouraged to structure their reflections by using the 'teaspoon' prayer, giving thanks to God, saying sorry and please. Pupils also offer spontaneous prayers. Pupils talk of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit because it is explained to them in a way that they can understand. Adults also feel uplifted by worship and everyone regards it as a focal point of the day. Pupils enjoy attending services in the parish church at special times in the church year and these are also well attended by parents. Parents are very confident in the executive headteacher and feel she and the federation have given the school 'a new lease of life'. The incumbent is a regular visitor in the school and is well known to pupils and their families. Pupils make visits to local places of worship so that they begin to understand some of the different traditions within Christianity, and the practices of those of other faiths. For example, by visiting a church of a different denomination pupils realised that not all churches are like their parish church, yet many things, such as symbols, are similar.

RE is inspiring and teachers plan practical activities which help pupils to remember their learning. For example, to understand the significance of Palm Sunday pupils made palm leaves and acted cheering on the roadside as Jesus entered Jerusalem. The RE curriculum reflects the Church of England Statement of

Entitlement. Pupils' understanding of the Christian values is reinforced through RE. For example, they understand the need to respect one another's views and to support one another through difficulties, thus living out the vision. Staff are extremely well supported by the RE leader who is based at another school but devotes time to monitor lessons regularly and provide advice and good resources. Teachers also develop their skills in teaching RE through diocesan training. Best practice in teaching RE is shared across the federation and staff collaborate well. For example, teachers have introduced a questioning approach which allows pupils to think more deeply and reflect on one another's opinions. Teachers assess pupils' understanding so that they can plan activities which challenge them further and support them in making good progress. RE develops pupils' understanding of Christianity as well as the beliefs and practices of people of other faiths. Pupils say it is important for them to know what everyone thinks 'so that we all get on with one another'. However, they have less understanding of Christianity as a worldwide faith, and what Christians across the world hold in common. Pupils understand that some 'big' questions have no answers and their differing views are respected and valued.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and enthuses all pupils well so that they make good progress in all areas, reaching and often exceeding the levels expected for their age. Lessons provide pupils with many opportunities for reflection and develop their spirituality. Staff plan these experiences well, for example, in forest school sessions pupils learn to appreciate God's world and to care for their environment. They develop their resilience and sense of wellbeing during this time. The curriculum and other activities also develop pupils' social, moral and cultural understanding and their determination to persevere in difficult situations. All adults nurture the pupils extremely well and pupils always feel safe and well cared for. Leaders have introduced new resources which are more appropriate for less able pupils and can see that these are already having an impact on their achievement. Leaders prioritise the wellbeing and personal development of staff and pupils so that everyone can be 'the best that they can be'. Pupils are encouraged when they show the values, for example, by receiving or placing a token in the kindness jar.

Pupils understand their Christian duty to help those less fortunate and they raise money for many charities. They care for the local environment, for example, by helping to clean the church, and they are involved in village events. They have a voice and know that they can make a difference in the world. For example, they talk about their responsibility for protecting God's creation and ways to reduce pollution. There are excellent relationships between adults and pupils so that pupils feel highly valued as individuals and as children of God. Should a pupil have any difficulty this is identified swiftly, and steps are taken to provide the support needed. Staff often draw on expertise from the partner schools and make good use of external advice where appropriate. Pupils and families of all faiths and those of no faith feel completely included and involved in the school community. The school's policies, which are reviewed regularly, promote complete acceptance and respect for everyone in society. As one pupil said, 'different views are good'. This prepares pupils well for establishing healthy relationships in later life. However, pupils' understanding of being part of a global community with shared aims and aspirations is less well developed.

Executive headteacher	Marie-Claire Parsons
Inspector's name and number	Gill Walley 644