

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Scissett Church of England Academy			
Address	Wakefield Road, Scissett, Huddersfield, HD8 9HR		
Date of inspection	04/02/2019	Status of school	Learning Accord Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) inspected as Voluntary Aided
Diocese	Leeds	URN	I43232

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	Excellent

School context

Scissett Church of England is a first school with pupils up to Year 5. There are 182 pupils on roll. The academy has very low levels 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 average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national average. The school became an academy in March 2017. The executive headteacher is chief executive officer of the Learning Accord MAT.

The school's Christian vision

The vision is rooted in 'Excellence for the whole child' (Genesis 1:27). Each individual is respected and diversity of background is welcomed and highly valued. Christian values, ideas and beliefs are promoted through spiritual development, alongside tolerance, understanding and respect for other religions and ways of life.

Key findings

- A deeply embedded Christian vision underpins the ethos of support for the needs of the community, providing exceptional assistance for all individuals including vulnerable pupils.
- The executive headteacher inspires others through her strong Christian leadership, which ensures that the vision and climate of the academy enriches and challenges all as unique children of God.
- Pupils make excellent progress in RE. Highly effective use of assessment informs planning and rigorous monitoring supports a high standard of teaching and learning. This excellent practice in RE supports other schools in the diocese. RE develops positive attitudes to diversity.
- All pupils experience significant curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that contribute positively to their spiritual, moral and cultural development. As a result, pupils are confident, aspirational and enjoy their learning. They learn to respect different views and disagree well.
- Collective worship is central to the daily life of the school. Worship inspires and challenges pupils. Pupils' attitudes are extremely positive. They engage well, answering questions and participating in role-plays.

Areas for development

- To support pupils in more confidently explaining explicitly Christian reasons for challenging injustice and living by Christian values. This is so that pupils are able to explain how these are rooted in the Bible.
- To equip children of all ages to take more responsibility for leadership of collective worship. This is so that they gain more understanding of the importance of worship and important elements of worship.

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

Passionate, inspirational leadership ensures that the academy's vision is lived out strategically and operationally. The belief that each child is valued and special because they are made "in God's image" underpins all the academy does. Relationships within and beyond the academy are firmly rooted in Christian values, ensuring all are given the support, encouragement and opportunity to succeed. As a result pupils develop a deep love of learning and respect for our world and all people. Commitment to continuous improvement is demonstrated by the academy's role as a designated National Support School and National Teaching School. It provides initial teacher training and effectively supports other schools with continuing professional development. Staff morale is extremely high. Staff feel valued and respected and their wellbeing is considered at all levels of decision-making. All staff benefit from targeted professional development opportunities. This supports middle leaders and the development of future church school leaders very well. Leaders have secured high quality leadership of RE and as a result make a substantial contribution to the Christian distinctiveness and performance, actively leading innovation in the academy and beyond.

Senior leaders and governors have established an effective self-evaluation process. Governors are rigorous when monitoring the effectiveness of the academy as a church academy. This results in the vision being lived out very successfully. The new RE assessment system, developed by the RE co-ordinator in partnership with the local church schools network is highly effective. This excellent practice is now being shared with the diocese and other diocesan schools. It supports the progress of all pupils, tracking individual needs, and ensuring all succeed. All aspects are driven by the shared Christian vision.

The vision upholds the value of all as children of God. Consequently this inclusive environment ensures pupils enjoy and are excited by all the academy offers. They are enthused by the creative curriculum which is enhanced by outdoor learning and the Christian Charity group, Hand to Mouth Ministries. This group explores spiritual themes linked to innovative RE lessons. As a result children express their spiritual ideas freely through art, drama and discussing difficult issues, building emotional resilience. However pupils are less confident in explaining explicitly Christian reasons for challenging injustice and living by Christian values. They do not readily explain how the values are underpinned by Bible passages and the teachings of Jesus. All pupils are extremely well supported. One parent, whose child was new to school, felt that coming to the academy had given their child another chance. 'They make us feel that we are all God's children and really value us'. The vision shapes the academy's Christian inclusivity. All staff are unwavering in their belief that all pupils can succeed. Governors ensure that resources are used effectively to support pupils who are awaiting an educational, health and care plan, enabling them to flourish. The vision makes sure the academic rigour and focused support is provided for all. Pupils make extremely good progress from their starting points. Standards of attainment and progress are above national averages. Disadvantaged pupils achieve high standards because leaders are successful in eliminating barriers to learning. The vision for seeing each child as special, because they are made in God's image, is expressed through a range of innovative approaches to learning. Consequently pupils enjoy coming to the academy, leading to above national attendance.

Spiritual development is a key part of learning across the curriculum. Reflection on Christian values makes a sound contribution to spiritual development. Pupils are confident, articulate and reflective learners who are eager to share their ideas in a non-judgemental atmosphere. They discuss issues related to discrimination and challenge stereotypes by promoting positive perceptions of themselves and celebrating diversity. The academy ensures dignity for all pupils, creating a truly inclusive environment.

The whole school family demonstrates Christian compassion and concern for justice in local, national and global settings. They support a number of charities and pupils' involvement leads to a deeper understanding of poverty, disadvantage and deprivation. Examples are supporting the 'Water For Life' appeal and to raise money for a World Vision child's education. Parents report that the vision has led to their children really engaging in social action and understanding that they are all stewards of the world.

Themes studied in RE and collective worship are also explored across the curriculum. As a result pupils have repeated opportunities to raise questions and deepen their thinking. The classroom reflection and prayer corners give pupils space to 'ask God questions' and to help pupils to gain an understanding of prayer. The

innovative RE scheme of work deepens pupils' understanding of faith, allowing them to consider the meaning of belief and the way in which it is reflected in diverse cultures and ways of life.

Collective worship is memorable. It leads pupils and adults to develop their personal spirituality. It is planned and rooted in the Bible. It embraces Christian values, effectively sharing the academy's vision. Collective worship invites pupils and adults to worship in a range of situations and to grow in their understanding. By lighting candles and saying the Lord's Prayer, all pupils are enabled to grow spiritually through the experiences of prayer, stillness and reflection. Pupils respond to opportunities to pray. They confidently write their own prayers and regularly do so. A Year 5 pupil said 'it helps you get rid of the bad stuff'. Clergy, school staff, school council and different year groups lead worship that pupils enjoy, helping them to understand the breadth of the Christian tradition. The academy provides opportunities for classes to lead worship and School Council also occasionally lead worship. The worship group and staff secure the quality of worship and ensure it expresses the academy's vision by evaluating the comments of all to further inform community worship planning. However, when pupils lead worship there is often significant adult input to their planning. Pupils understanding of the process of planning worship and the way in which they take leadership responsibility for worship are areas for further development.

All members of this vibrant Christian learning community live out the school's vision and values on a daily basis. This is transforming the lives of pupils and adults, enabling all to succeed.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Consistently outstanding challenge and support of pupils' exploration of religious belief and practices inspires pupils' understanding and engagement. This is possible because of the exceptional guidance provided by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic executive headteacher and subject co-ordinator. Using the diocesan recommended syllabus and Understanding Christianity, teachers make learning creative and exciting. Pupils respond by working hard. As a result they make excellent progress in RE. Pupils show immense pride in their learning and understanding. They use religious vocabulary with confidence and with an impressive level of accuracy. The highly effective, systems for assessment were developed by the academy in partnership with the local church schools network. These ensure that all pupils, including vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs, flourish academically. The subject co-ordinator shares the academy's excellent practice with RE subject leaders in local church schools and the Learning Accord Academy MAT.

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