

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Lympstone Church of England VC Primary School			
Address	School Hill, Lympstone, Exmouth EX8 5JY		
Date of inspection	21 May 2019	Status of school	VC primary
Diocese	Exeter	URN	113358

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

School context

Lympstone is a primary school with 161 pupils on roll. The school is close to the Royal Marines Commando camp and approximately a third of children belonging to families at the camp attend the school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. In-year pupil mobility is high. The school received an Ofsted judgement of Requires Improvement in June 2018.

The school's Christian vision

"Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14)

Love, peace, compassion, forgiveness, courage, equality and justice.

Key findings

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a compassionate, supportive school community which embodies what it means to live well together and in which pupils flourish.
- Adults and pupils agree that the language of 1 Corinthians 16, 'Let all that you do be done in love,' captures the vision and describes the school well. This was added recently. School leaders recognise that for pupils to understand this language deeply it will take time.
- The impact of the vision can be seen in the school's passionate support and rich provision for vulnerable groups of pupils.
- Formal systems for monitoring the impact of the vision are effective but not always sustainable. They do not currently involve pupils or parents.
- Leaders have maintained a strong focus on the Christian vision during a challenging period in the life of the school.

Areas for development

- Deepen pupils' understanding of the wording of the vision, 'Let all that you do be done in love' in order to help them explore its potential for even greater flourishing
- Develop manageable and sustainable systems for evaluating how well this Church school is implementing its Christian vision so that all groups in the school community are able to contribute
- Ensure that all governors receive appropriate support and training to allow them to play a full part in monitoring the impact of the school's Christian vision

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

For several years, Lympstone's vision has been understood and lived-out in terms of seven Christian values. The reference from 1 Corinthians 16 was added this year. All groups within the school community agree that it describes the school well. Staff say that, 'It's always been there'. Pupils' understanding of this articulation of the vision is good, but it is not yet as good as their understanding of the associated values.

Lympstone School does everything in love. The school has taken effective action to ensure that standards are now rising and this is happening in most year groups. There is a passionate commitment to enable everyone, particularly the vulnerable, to flourish. This is modelled strongly by the headteacher. The integrity and compassion with which leaders make brave decisions, for example about priorities for funding or time, are rooted in the school's clear Christian vision. Attendance has improved. Because pupils know they are loved, they are confident to try new things without the fear of failure. The use of an individual 'Proud Book' or a 'My Sharing Book' enables pupils with additional needs and pupils with parents on deployment to celebrate and share their progress. Rigorous transition arrangements, personalised for individual pupils, ensure that mobile pupils flourish. As one new parent said, 'Within a day I knew I'd made the right decision.'

The headteacher links her commitment to keeping the curriculum broad and exciting to the vision. Parents comment on the benefits for their children of an afternoon at the local retirement home and a helicopter visit all in the same week as national tests.

Reflecting the school's vision, there is a strong culture of mutual support and of open dialogue where staff learn from one another. One example is of the support provided to new staff when leading worship. Rich, supportive relationships with the church have been in place for some time. Members assist with school worship services in church as well as helping with the weekly Forest School and supporting staff wellbeing.

Close working with the lay reader and the children's worker has ensured that pupils have a good understanding of Anglican faith and worship. Since the previous inspection pupils are now more actively involved in leading class worship. Year 6 lead 'the big services' such as Christmas, Easter and Christingle, and Friday church worship. However, pupils do not currently evaluate worship. Numerous visitors help pupils appreciate the relevance of faith today. Worship planning is Bible-based. The school works hard to develop pupils' understanding of the Trinity in ways which are accessible and memorable for children. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. One particular outcome has been pupils' increased understanding of prayer. There is rich evidence throughout the school of pupils choosing to pray. One parent gave an example of her child bravely telling the class how she had prayed for confidence to speak in the lesson.

Pupils and parents currently have little formal involvement in evaluating Lympstone's effectiveness as a Church school. Governors have some monitoring systems. However, these are not robust.

The school's support for a child in Uganda is effective in developing pupils' global awareness. Year 2 pupils have a deeper awareness of injustice as a result of considering the costs of medicine in some poorer communities. The School Council often takes a lead in fundraising for the many charities which the school supports. Individual pupils are inspired as a result to initiate their own fundraising, for example for ShelterBox or Cancer Research.

Religious education (RE) is important in this school. Teachers share effective practice with local schools through RE hubs and the Learn, Teach, Lead RE initiative. The new RE leader is well supported by the headteacher and by a mentor in another Church school. This has enabled her to lead staff meetings and establish pupil voice in RE. The involvement of visitors, particularly during 'Wow' weeks, is effective in developing pupils' understanding of Christianity as a living world faith. Teachers quite naturally include references to the school's Christian values in their teaching. Largely because of this, pupils' informed discussion about other major faiths and worldviews is consistently respectful. Teachers set high expectations in RE. 'Greater depth' (#GD) targets are set for all pupils. Skilful teaching enables pupils to flourish. Pupils' enthusiasm for RE is linked strongly with their desire to understand others.

A striking feature across many areas of the school is the use of a 'Windows, mirrors and doors' approach to spiritual development. Teachers skilfully include it in RE planning to create safe spaces within lessons for pupils to reflect on their own convictions. In a rich and exciting Early Years lesson the children used their 'mirrors' to help them reflect on the concept of responsibility for creation care. Inspired by its vision, the school supports the character development of all pupils. This can be seen in RE books where teachers' marking shows their concern to develop character alongside understanding. Examples include comments such as 'Is it easy to be compassionate?' In a Year 6 book, the teacher's question, 'Can you spot a door moment here?' prompted the response, 'I wouldn't judge anyone's worldview'.

Strong relationships with the diocese and attendance at diocesan training ensure that leaders are aware of current thinking in Church school education. Many policies are influenced by the school's values. However, the current articulation of the vision is not yet evident in most policies. The school's Christian vision shapes its approach to partnership working within the village and with other schools. The decision to become a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, in a group of both Church schools and community schools, was seen as 'a Christian idea' and driven by a Christian vision.

High quality relationships at all levels thrive because of the compassionate and supportive culture. This links directly to the school's vision. Effective teaching of mediation strategies means that pupils learn to disagree well. Pupils and adults know they will be listened to. Good mental health is a priority in the school and features prominently on the staff training plan. In addition to using THRIVE and the ELSA emotional support programme, the school is piloting the 'We Eat Elephants' mental health programme. The document *Valuing All God's Children* has been used to shape the anti-bullying policy. When asked about bullying, one pupil explained that, 'We don't actually get to that point'. Systems for managing behaviour are effective. Pupils feel safe. School leaders actively seek opportunities for pupils to celebrate difference and diversity, such as their recent participation in the cultural champions scheme. One pupil said, 'It doesn't matter how people are different – that's what makes it fun'.

Headteacher	Emily Mellor
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