

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Alpington and Bergh Apton Church of England Voluntary Aided School</b>			
Address	Wheel Road, Alpington, Norwich, NR14 7NH		
Date of inspection	21 November 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary
Diocese	Norwich	URN	<b>121147</b>

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
	<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

### School context

Alpington and Bergh Apton CE VA Primary School is a primary school with 135 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. Due to oversubscription, an additional class was created in 2016 leading to the alteration of the school building and strategic staff redeployment. The longstanding headteacher will leave her post at the end of the autumn term.

### The school's Christian vision

Let Every Light Shine (Matthew 5 :16)

Our lights shine when we: Love one another, have faith in God and take action

We want every adult and child to use their unique talents and gifts to thrive, serve the common good and thereby glorify God. Through faith, love and action all members of our community can flourish and have life in all its fullness.

### Key findings

- Under the strong and highly supportive lead of the headteacher, working closely with enthusiastic and motivated staff, the Christian vision infuses every area of school life. Vision underpins and inspires curriculum planning, character development, recruitment, induction, relationships and the exemplary behaviour of pupils.
- Pupils, staff and families flourish here: they receive individual care and are supported in their academic and personal growth, their mental health, wellbeing and spiritual development.
- The application of the vision is dynamic and active; staff and pupils believe that they are advocates for change as they practically express their core values with meaningful impact in the local community, internationally and in other diocesan schools.
- Collective worship is creative and engaging, it is planned in close partnership with the local church. The opportunities for prayer and reflection are embedded, multiple and varied.
- Pupils are confident when engaging in religious and philosophical discussions, they demonstrate very good subject knowledge and high attainment. Effective assessment in religious education is in place however, pupil ownership of their progress is not yet consistent across all groups.

### Areas for development

- Further develop assessment in RE so that pupils across the school are able to gauge their individual progress and attainment, thereby understanding their next steps in learning and, for the more able, challenging them beyond their already very high standards.

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

Leaders have ensured that the school's vision holistically infuses every area of school life. Consequently, pupils are enabled, through the understanding of faith and the demonstration of love, to take action in their attitudes learning, relationships, the wider community and the world. A highly innovative governors' ethos committee is in place to protect the unique vision which, as a result, remains sustainable and effective. The committee ensures that rigorous and challenging monitoring of all outcomes, including the effectiveness of collective worship, RE and personal development, takes place. Recruitment, induction and selection procedures are driven by the vision. Governors described how the recruitment processes for the next headteacher were implemented with the school's Christian distinctiveness and values at their heart. Senior leaders, with support from the staff team, are wholeheartedly committed and well equipped to lead the vision thus maintaining the school's Christian distinctiveness through any changes in personnel. Leaders have engaged very well with the recommendations of the last inspection and facilitated lasting change. School and diocese have a strong and reciprocally supportive relationship. The headteacher talks warmly of the support of the diocese in building projects and training, and the diocese utilises school staff expertise in training events and headteacher mentorship. A parent praised the school's attitude to admissions when dealing with a pupil who had special educational needs. The school, she said, had been clear that they could manage the pupil's needs, and that they had done that 'one hundred percent'. The pupil, she continued, has 'flourished' in this setting.

Academic standards in the school are exceptionally high. Pupils are given the wisdom, knowledge and skills to achieve in life. A letter from the Secretary of State for Education in 2018 states, 'your school is in the top 1% of primary schools in England for attainment in mathematics.' Disadvantaged pupils currently mainly achieve in line with their peers; where this is not the case, barriers to learning are tackled through support. Pupils are highly articulate and encouraged to question and discuss ethical and spiritual issues. They are enthusiastic about learning and they are given the space to hold differing opinions without judgement.

The culture of the school is aspirational: pupils are able meet role models who inspire future career choices. The curriculum is designed so that there is room to explore big questions. Consequently, pupils frequently reflect and consider deep ethical and spiritual issues such as, 'Why is it important to rest?' and 'How do we know that Jesus is a king among men?' Pupils are articulate advocates for change; a recent eco week had significant impact. One pupil pointed out the numbers of people starving in the world and explained how school donations to the local foodbank helped to meet that need. Another talked about how they were now more conscious of plastic waste and litter and had changed their behaviours. Still another explained how a school sleepover had raised awareness of homelessness. All see action as the outworking of faith and love. More than one parent reported of instances where their children were motivated to buy food items for homeless people and of the positive transformative effect that this has had on those receiving the gifts.

Behaviour is exemplary; pupils are exceptionally courteous, respectful and caring. There have been no exclusions from the school for the last ten years. All in the school community take responsibility for the harmonious atmosphere. Pupil play leaders not only encourage and nurture younger children on the playground but also, in the first instance, mediate between those who have had a disagreement and suggest how reconciliation can come about. They encourage forgiveness and restitution in line with policy. This innovation allows a 'grass roots up' approach to preparing children for life. Pupils take the lead in challenging prejudicial behaviour. One parent described an incident when on a public bus, her child stepped in and challenged another child regarding the way they were talking to a third party This was attributed to the outworking of the vision. Another parent talked of the way that the school staff went 'above and beyond' all expectations as they supported a former pupil with mental health issues and supported the referral process. Many members of staff and parents also made heartfelt comments about the compassionate support given by school staff to those experiencing bereavement, stress and trauma. One commented, 'I am so grateful for prayer. It is such a comfort and help.' Other staff were enthusiastic about the investment in their professional development at both newly qualified and prospective church school leadership level.

Collective worship is a significant strength of the school. It is collaboratively planned and is delivered by pupils, staff and Church partners. Pupils greet all participants as they enter the hall so that all feel welcome. The language used is invitational, the music contemplative, the singing enthusiastic. Worship is creative and inspiring. There is use of moving personal testimony and reflection demonstrating the impact of faith on pupils. In answering a question about the purpose of collective worship, one pupil commented, 'I didn't believe, but now I do, collective worship makes me build up (my faith) a little bit more and a little bit more.' Children talk enthusiastically about the Open the Book team from the local Church who lead worship fortnightly. The highly

effective RE lead has developed a variety of indoor and outdoor reflective spaces which are used for stillness and contemplation. The Prayer Bear and prayer dinosaurs- such as Triprayeratops- are allowed to be taken home by the children so that they and their families can also record prayers. Interactive displays such as glass beads for counting blessings are available for those who wish to use them. Children are able to evaluate collective worship and a template to do this is available to all on the collective worship table.

Pupil engagement in RE lessons is very high. Teachers encourage collaborative learning and open discussion; consequently, pupils are confident and highly engaged. Rich discussion was observed particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupil subject knowledge is good and the curriculum offers them a chance to study a range of beliefs and philosophies. RE days have enabled the children to explore specific issues such as the Holy Trinity and courageous advocacy. Teachers regularly assess pupils against age related expectations; however, pupil self-assessment and understanding of next steps in RE skills is not consistently evidenced across the school. Pupils' ownership of their progress via target setting, next-step marking and self-assessment skills is not consistent across all groups.



**The effectiveness of RE is Excellent**

Leaders monitor the effectiveness of RE routinely and are incisive in their challenge whilst supporting the school. The innovative 'Dig Deep Day' enables governors to have a full picture of teaching, learning and subject leader action planning. According to the school's system of assessment, pupil attainment in RE is generally equivalent to the high attainment in other core subjects and for those pupils who have SEND, it is equal to or higher than general standards.

Headteacher	Teresa Osborne
Inspector's name and number	Jane Trampnow 954