

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Archbishop Runcie Church of England First School

Vision

Be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love. (1 Corinthians 16:13-14)

Strengths

- Rooted in the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-7) the Christian vision is at the very heart of school life. It undoubtedly drives leaders' priorities and planning and is lived out in everything the school undertakes. As a result, pupils and adults flourish at this school, knowing how to be courageous and strong.
- Inspired by the school's vision, staff welcome and nurture pupils. There is an exceptional sense of a loving, caring school community in which every individual is known. These strong relationships are embedded in unconditional Christian love for one another.
- Through the development of the curriculum, tailored to meet the needs of its community, the school develops its pupils well. Pupils are courageous in their learning and are aspirational for their future.
- Inclusive, inspiring collective worship unifies the school community. Pupils and adults value time given for stillness. This encourages them to grow spiritually. Partnerships with the local churches enhance school life and add to a strong sense of community that permeates the school.
- Religious education (RE) is a strength of the curriculum. The high profile of RE, coupled with skilled subject leadership, ensures that pupils achieve well in lessons.

Development Points

- Embed opportunities for spiritual reflection within all learning. This is so that staff and pupils are further empowered in their spiritual growth.
- Further develop pupils' wider understanding of inequality and injustice. This is so that they can better appreciate the positive impact they can have upon local, national and international communities.
- Embed the recently introduced assessment opportunities within RE. This is so that pupils can understand their progress and know how to improve their learning.



Inspection Findings

Archbishop Runcie Church of England First School is a welcoming and highly inclusive school. Rooted in the Parable of the Lost Sheep, the school's Christian vision is easily understood and articulated by the school community. Underpinned by scripture, Christian love for individuals and the community is the key message. Leaders ensure the vision is at the heart of all activities. This enables a culture in which adults and pupils can flourish and where love is lived out in every aspect of life. Governors and senior leaders are courageous in their decision making. They use the vision effectively as a catalyst for school improvement.

The Christian vision underpins the school learning, supporting pupils to be resilient and determined. The emphasis on love results in a community where adults and pupils work together to achieve the best possible outcomes. The knowledge-rich learning is carefully designed to offer support and value to all pupils. This enables vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to thrive as their learning is tailored to their needs. Pupils enjoy a variety of extra-curricular activities with choir, science and guitar being particularly popular. Along with visits and residential trips, these activities help pupils to live out the vision by encouraging each other in their teamwork. Throughout each day, there are opportunities for spiritual growth. The reflection spaces in classrooms and the reflection gardens are places pupils feel naturally comfortable in. The school has developed its approach and whole school understanding of spirituality. Pupils and adults share the language of 'looking in, out and up' to consider moments of wonder. However, rich and relevant experiences across the learning, to extend pupils' spiritual development, are at the early stage of implementation.

Joyful and engaging collective worship significantly contributes to the spiritual flourishing of the school community. It creates an atmosphere where pupils and adults feel able to join in. Including pupils with SEND and pupils with different beliefs. Collective worship is prioritised each day and evaluations indicate that it is valued by pupils and staff as a time to unite and grow together. The rich provision inspires and nurtures pupils as they experience the meaning of a relationship with God. It effectively allows the school community time to reflect on its Christian vision and values. Moments of reflection and stillness supports personal spiritual flourishing. Creative weaving of biblical texts into worship encourages everyone to understand the vision's roots in Christian teaching. This is enhanced by the links with the local clergy, who lead worship in school each week. Pupils enjoy their visits to All Saints' and St Nicholas' churches to celebrate festivals, such as Harvest and Christmas. Pupils selected as worship council leaders take an active role in planning these services as well as leading collective worship. Consequently, they feel empowered in their contributions. Governor and pupil evaluations and adult and pupil comments indicate that worship empowers individuals in their spiritual flourishing.

This is a school where all are truly loved. Driven by the vision, staff are tireless in their efforts to include and support everyone. Pupils champion the need to 'do everything in love.' This motivates them to care for one another and helps them to make positive choices about how they live. This is obvious during lunchtimes and outdoor play sessions when older pupils actively encourage and guide younger ones. Pupils select practical activities and play together in a harmonious way, living well together. Pupils enjoy attending this school because the adults know and care for them as individuals. They are treated with patience and unfailing respect. As a result, they are inclusive, caring and respectful. Bespoke support for individual development is transformational and is highly appreciated by parents. Treating everyone with Christian love includes staff and families, for whom leaders go above and beyond to support in times of personal need. Good mental health and wellbeing hold a high priority, allowing pupils and staff to flourish, whatever their unique needs. Leaders are committed to supporting pupils with emotional and social needs by providing staff with appropriate mental health and wellbeing training. The caring and vision inspired ethos means that adults and pupils are treated well. This exemplifies the way in which leaders make time for each person.



Taking responsibility and working together is threaded throughout school. Pupils understand how to take responsibility because of the range of opportunities they are given. Groups such as the school council and the green team effectively support this. Pupils understand the concept of justice and how it is lived out. Consequently, values such as compassion and respect frame dialogue when relationships break down. It is also expressed in the regular social action that takes place. Examples include pupils writing letters to the local member of parliament asking for help with the heavy traffic around school and litter picking at the local park. This advocacy work is typically focused locally and nationally, resulting in worldwide perspectives being more limited than other advocacy work.

RE is well led and managed with clear action planning and provision for staff development. As a result, staff are confident in their teaching of RE. The quality of teaching and learning in RE is supported by effective partnerships with the diocese and foundation governors. Pupils enjoy the subject and the enquiry-based approach sparks pupils' inquisitiveness. They think deeply and ask meaningful questions. Learning is broad, sequential and well-balanced. Formal learning in RE is enhanced by debate and educational visits to churches and mosques. Leaders ensure the subject is well resourced and the curriculum is in line with the recommendations of the diocese. This promotes pupils' learning and understanding of Christianity, a range of world religions and worldviews. Pupils' understanding of Christianity as a global, living religion is very strong. The quality of teaching in RE is strong, leading to pupils making progress in their learning. The regular monitoring of RE is robust and thorough. Lesson observations, pupil voice and work scrutiny contribute effectively to this system. Work in RE books is of a high quality and shows that pupils take great pride in their learning. A recently introduced assessment system has been implemented to review pupil achievement at the end of each unit of work. This initiative now needs time to embed.

Information

Address	Christon Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 1US, United Kingdom		
Date	16 September 2024	URN	108495
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	163
Diocese	Newcastle		
Headteacher	Kate Massey		
Chair of Governors	Sarah Pickett		
Inspector	Kirsty Harrison-Brown		