

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Hartest Church of England Primary School

Address	The Row Hartest Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP29 4DL		
Date of inspection	27 June 2019	Status of school	Primary academy inspected as VC St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust
Diocese	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	URN	142215

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

Hartest is a primary school with 70 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. The school appointed a new headteacher in January 2017. In June 2017 the school joined the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust. There was a period of instability following the previous headteacher's retirement; stability has been restored under the current leadership.

The school's Christian vision

"Inspiring, nurturing, caring"

This is based on both the parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:12-35) and Jesus as the good shepherd (John 10:11)

Key findings

- The Christian vision reflects the school's local context. Its biblical teaching gives the vision relevance and sustainability, and infuses and shapes the strategic direction of the school.
- Leaders have ensured that the relationship between the school, church and diocese is supportive and sustained, enhancing both the learning of the pupils and the life of the local congregation.
- The school's inclusive ethos allows all pupils to flourish.
- Worship is engaging, inspirational and exciting and enables the school community to reflect on their values, behaviour and attitudes.

Areas for development

- Develop and extend curriculum opportunities in all subject areas to encourage pupils to think beyond their local area and lives to enable them to understand and reflect on the wider world.
- Work with pupils to identify and participate in social action projects to bring about change and develop an understanding of life elsewhere
- Develop the curriculum further by identifying and creating opportunities for spiritual development to ensure spiritual development is actively sought out.

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

Hartest's vision statement "Inspiring, nurturing, caring" is underpinned by a clear theological narrative; the parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:12-1-25) and Jesus as the good shepherd (John 10:11). This was chosen and developed by the school community. It resonates with its rural farming environment. Pupils can confidently give examples from both the Bible and school life to illustrate what the vision means to them. They talk openly about how the vision has helped them to improve their behaviour and how they treat one another. Parents affirm the impact of the vision, commenting that the school 'is inclusive' and 'nurtures its pupils and they in turn nurture one another'.

Policies reflect the vision. The sex and relationships policy, updated in December 2018, has a strong focus on pupils' self-esteem and emotional wellbeing. The behaviour policy is lived out following Christian principles of forgiveness and reconciliation and, as a result, behaviour is very good. Diversity is celebrated. Pupils accept difference and understand that it is a positive thing.

After a period of instability, there has been an improvement in standards. Academic outcomes have significantly improved. Disadvantaged groups perform at a similar level to those nationally. Pupils with additional needs benefit from a good level of adult support. Case studies for individual pupils confirm the impact of the high level of pastoral and emotional care they receive. Parents say that individual and pastoral needs are met. This fits with the school's Christian vision and ethos, where all God's children are given the opportunity to thrive and succeed, regardless of need.

The Church/school partnership is very strong at every level. Church members support the school through governance roles as well as being on the PCC, facilitating excellent links. As part of the Diocesan MAT, Hartest has strong links with other church schools. The headteacher and other leaders benefit from meeting on a regular basis and sharing good practice. The headteacher has addressed school development through a robust and regularly reviewed plan, with RE and collective worship an important part of this. The school maintains close links with the All Saints parish church and special acts of worship are often held there. The school leads the village remembrance service. The vicar is a regular visitor to the school and the school has strong links also with the local 'Open the Book' team, led by members of churches in the Sudbury area. Opportunities are given for pupils to attend family worship at the church and these are actively publicised by the headteacher. Additionally, pupils and their families attend services at the church within the school day for key Christian celebrations. Pupils have been able to increasingly participate in special services, family worship and events organised by the PCC outside of school time. Governor monitoring of church/school links affirm that opportunities for pupils to attend and lead acts of worship in the church are strong.

Pupils have a good awareness of ecological and sustainability issues, being a rural farming community. Pupils are systematically taught to respect the environment. Through sessions in worship and events in the Church's calendar such as harvest, explicit links are made between being environmentally responsible and looking after God's world. This is further reinforced within the school's weekly Forest School sessions. Units in RE work challenge pupils to reflect on the wider world and think globally; the scheme of work evidences that Christianity is taught as a living world faith. Pupils actively support a range of charities through school-led events. Pupils are aware of the needs of others and on occasion, pupils have organised their own fundraising which has been celebrated in school afterwards. As identified in planning the next step is for pupils to look further afield to challenge injustice and make an impact. The school does not currently have a specific link with a school, charity or church abroad to broaden their global outlook.

Collective Worship enables pupils to really understand the school's Christian values. They are able to relate to Bible stories and the life of Jesus and make links with their own behaviour. Pupils say that the themes have helped them change the way they interact with others. Since the last inspection, daily acts of collective worship now take place. The school day starts with this important time of reflection. New collective worship materials have been introduced which have raised the level of engagement in worship to an enthusiastic and joyful level. Worship follows a consistent pattern of gathering, engaging, responding and sending, giving structure and meaning for the pupils. Pupils know responses and collects by heart and this joins the school together in worship. Worship is enjoyable, thought-provoking with a high level of pupil participation. There are daily opportunities for pupils to pray and reflect during worship and within the classrooms. Pupils have the opportunity to read prayers they have written and sing alternative words to well-known worship songs. The introduction of collective worship scrapbooks means pupils can evaluate their worship experience. For example, a 'hymn sandwich' has been introduced to mark the start and end of worship because of the clear joy felt by pupils participating in sung praise.

RE is consistently taught well across the school. As evidenced in RE work, key Christian themes of incarnation,

salvation, mission and resurrection are understood by pupils. The RE Lead has attended network meetings and undertaken joint monitoring with partner MAT schools as well as organising training for the staff which has resulted in improved teaching and assessment across the school. The school now uses an enquiry-based programme of learning (The Emmanuel Project, produced by the diocese) which gives pupils space to reflect and develop spiritually. Pupils frequently work practically, using drama, discussion and debate, and creative activities to explore key themes in RE as well as writing reflections. Removing the barrier of writing for lower attaining pupils has meant all can participate and contribute. The focus on discussion ensures that pupils of differing abilities can contribute their views. Assessments for each unit of work are accurately completed by the RE lead; pupils make good progress. The school does not currently track or evaluate its curriculum opportunities for spiritual development in the same way.

Headteacher	Matthew Coombs
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