

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Harbottle Church of England First School			
Address	Harbottle, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 7DG		
Date of inspection	29 January 2020	Status of school	Academy inspected as Voluntary Aided Three Rivers Academy Trust
Diocese	Newcastle	URN	145638

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
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

Harbottle Church of England school is a first school with 26 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few 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 at national averages. The headteacher and all the teaching staff are newly appointed since September 2019. The rector has been in the parish for less than one year. The school serves an isolated rural community. It joined Three Rivers Multi Academy Trust in 2018.

The school's Christian vision

Our vision is to shepherd all those who come into contact with our school so that they know the God who lives and cares for them and offers life in all its fullness. We hope that everyone will learn and develop and realise their full potential in every aspect of life, intellectual, physical, spiritual and moral so that they can become whole people able to play a significant part in the wider world.

John 10:10-11.

I have come that men may have life and have it in all its fullness. I am the good shepherd.

Key Findings

- There is a highly developed ethos in this deeply Christian community. It is underpinned by the rapidly developing vision, introduced by the new headteacher.
- Pupils make good progress from starting points. There is a strong commitment to inclusivity, underpinned by the vision.
- The church community ably supports school and pupil led worship is promoted by the school community, particularly in church.
- Since the last inspection all teachers are new to role and the headteacher is new to the post, so many innovative developments are in their early stages.
- Religious Education assessment is now in place and is effective at driving standards. Academy councillors evaluate RE and it is taught by all teachers.

Areas for development

- Develop the role of the academy council so that their evaluation of worship is consistent in quality and extent across all dimensions of schools work.
- Ensure that pupils use the skills they have developed in leading worship in church to lead more effectively in school, so that they grow in confidence in daily worship.

- Provide more time for teachers to observe others in the newly appointed team delivering excellent teaching that promotes the Christian ethos, for the benefit of all pupils.

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

The newly appointed team have rapidly established a new vision which is effective at driving the school forward. The school serves an isolated agricultural community so the analogy with the good shepherd is highly relevant. Leaders at all levels have a deep understanding of the schools context, so the vision is helpful in developing new relationships and is underpinning its next steps. The Academy trust is highly supportive. Their values are in harmony with school's values. The trust are promoting climate awareness among all pupils which is also promoted by Harbottle first school, so all are able to work together for the benefit of pupils. This also ensures continuity for pupils and that their experience is valued after transition.

Standards are good but data has variable relevance due to small cohorts of pupils in each year group. However progress from starting points is good for the vast majority of pupils. Attendance is near the national average but a small number pupils miss weeks of school due to bad weather in the valley. As there are few pupils, this has an effect on data. There are no exclusions and pupils enjoy coming to school. Due to the rural experiences of many families, pupils experience life in all its fullness. Many pupils have first hand experience of all life from its beginning to its end. However, school recognises its own unique diversity and the breadth of experience each child brings. The carefully planned vision ensures that each child is treated as an individual and their unique gifts are cherished. Inclusion is seamless. Pupils with additional needs are included in every activity and community goes above and beyond what might be expected to ensure this happens. Human flourishing is clearly a priority for everyone. The school takes a unique approach to extra-curricular provision. Since many pupils cannot attend clubs due to transport issues, the school ensures that additional experiences are provided during the school day. Dancing, hula hooping and gardening are a few of things provided by school to ensure horizons are broadened and no pupils miss any activity. Pupils were recently taken on a cultural trip to Newcastle to visit China Town and see a pantomime. The local community work together so that every activity is fully funded. They understand the vision of the school and strive to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. The school also runs a community bistro where local adults meet regularly in school to eat with pupils at lunchtime. Where there are isolated adults, food is regularly taken to them from the bistro so they do not miss out.

There exists a complete circle of courageous advocacy by taking steps to improve the lives of others. This is promoted by school leaders. Working selflessly to support each other is a valuable example to the children of the schools vision in action. They understand that life in their community means actively caring for others, often in the absence of some public services. As a result, pupil resilience and self-reliance are strong. Pupils link this to the love of God in action. The local church is an active part of this circle. Spirituality is lived and understood by adults so the children see it in action. Parents talk about how pupils speak of the schools' values and apply them to life outside school, particularly loving and caring in action. Pupils are taught to disagree well and to reconcile quickly. Incidents of name calling are dealt with rapidly and children are encouraged to forgive quickly. Pupils are taught to recognise their emotions and respond with consideration for others. They are able to articulate that they are able to respond differently in challenging situations as a result of good teaching. They know that adults will listen to them. This links to the biblical statement held within the vision where children know that Jesus is the Good shepherd and will care for them.

In collective worship, pupils are engaged and enjoy praising God. Worship is linked to the vision and talks about Jesus as the light of the world and how he shows love for everyone. Contributions from pupils were animated and music was used to thank God. Worship is creatively planned by the head teacher in conjunction with other teachers and with support from the rector. It makes creative links between SMSC and personal social and health education, so it is always responsive to the lives of the pupils. It is evaluated by staff and pupils express their views. Newly appointed staff seek support for worship planning and there is a drive to maintain high quality provision. Pupils plan and lead worship in church and evaluations, though informal, are effective in improving

provision. There are plans in place for the more formal evaluation of worship by the academy council. This is evident in documents seen during the inspection.

The school has incorporated the Understanding Christianity curriculum. Teachers understand that pupils may have limited experience of other faiths and ensure they are included in curriculum planning. They also utilise some pupils' experience of other cultures. There are examples of strong teaching of RE. Examples of creativity in RE are evident in books and teaching, This is evident where mixed year groups are taught together, due to small numbers of pupils.

Families respect the lengths staff go to for their children and the benefits to pupils. Communication is effective and parents are clear that they can speak to staff and their questions will be answered. During consultation about relationships and sex education teaching, a parent came into school to take part in an initiative and felt her views were respected as a result. Complaints are rare. There is strong evidence that the school and church, working in harmony, are pivotal in holding this small community together. They all share similar values and work effectively for the good of the pupils. The rector stated quite succinctly, 'We are lucky to have the school among us.'



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Standards in RE are good and issues from the last inspection have been addressed. Marking is consistent and leads to improved progress. There is a simple but effective assessment system in place that drives higher standards. The innovative curriculum arrangements mean there are clear links with other subjects and the schools vision, thus ensuring that RE is relevant to the everyday lives of pupils.

Headteacher	Nikki Buckley-Feiven
Inspector's name and number	Valerie Hall 859

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