

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Harby Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	School Lane, Harby, LE14 4BZ
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	
Overall grade	Good
The impact of collective worship	Good

School's vision
Expanding horizons, exploring potential, embracing faith. "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an extremely strong sense a Christian based community at Harby. Each member of the school family is cared for and nurtured. • Links with the local church are a key strength of this school as a result of exceptional support provided by the local vicar. • The recently reviewed biblical vision is firmly rooted in the school's historic Christian foundation. It is wholeheartedly being lived out by the school family however, it is not yet fully embedded. • Governors are passionately committed to the Christian character of the school. Monitoring and evaluation regularly take place but sometimes lack an identified focus. • There are many rich opportunities for spiritual development allowing pupils to explore spiritual and ethical issues through collective worship and across the curriculum. The curriculum is being remodelled and each subject includes a strand on spirituality.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to embed and raise the profile of the recently reviewed biblical vision so that it is understood by everyone in the Harby school family. • For leaders to define their system of monitoring and evaluation of Christian distinctiveness to ensure a more strategic overview. • To consolidate a school-wide understanding of spirituality in order to impact subject planning within curriculum development.



Inspection findings

There is a profound sense of a Christian family committed to supporting and genuinely caring for each other at this small and inclusive school. A recent review added 'embracing faith' to the school's vision statement but it is not yet firmly embedded. The accompanying verse from Proverbs was chosen by leaders as a result of researching the original trust deeds. This passionate ongoing recognition of the school's historic foundation is ensuring that everyone continues to flourish within a timeless, Christian narrative. When pupils leave this school, they continue to live out the Christian vision and values instilled in them at Harby.

Governors articulate the school's vision and Christian distinctiveness with clarity and understanding. Their commitment is reflected through their SIAMS committee, however, this sometimes lacks a clearly defined focus. Consequently, strategy and development plans do not always replicate ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the school's strong Christian foundation. Leaders have fostered meaningful links with a group of local schools. These relationships, particularly with other Church schools, have created a wealth of mutual support and information sharing for all staff. As a result, they demonstrate a clear understanding of current thinking in church school education.

Each member of the school family is highly regarded as a unique individual allowing everyone to 'expand their horizons.' Innovative, bespoke provision of an alternative curriculum is individualised for pupils with emotional and learning needs. Leaders have made bold decisions to ensure each pupil flourishes as a result of targeted support. The school has an understanding of spiritual development but this sometimes lacks clarity. There are many rich opportunities to promote spirituality and subject leaders are considering this aspect as they develop the curriculum.

Pupils at Harby have high aspirations. They are empowered to 'explore potential' through the implementation of many character strengths alongside six key Christian values. Pupils speak with intelligence and confidence about resilience and feelings although occasionally confuse character values with Christian values. Many members of the school community are involved in a variety of charitable fundraising initiatives creating a sense of unity. Pupils put poignant messages on boats which were sent to the COP26 climate change summit and a recent homework challenge focused on the floods in Bangladesh. All contributing to pupils 'expanding horizons' in their awareness of wider global issues and being courageous advocates for change. This school is a highly valued member of the local community. As a result, belonging to this vibrant Christian family extends beyond the boundaries of the school.

The school community 'embraces faith' and uses the Christian vision to give direction to their lives. There is a deeply embedded emphasis on character development and Christian values. This makes a significant contribution to how this community copes and remains unified in difficult periods. They remain resilient and very supportive in unprecedented times and moments of grief. Each staff member plays a key role in ensuring that the Harby community remains strong.

The headteacher leads by example and powerfully lives out the vision. All are encouraged to 'explore potential' in an atmosphere of Christian love and encouragement. Relationships are open and genuine. Staff speak of feeling 'nourished' and of the headteacher always being there for them. Regular bespoke opportunities provided by high-profile 'ambassadors' from a local well-being charity, focus on self-esteem and diversity. As a result, pupils behave well and demonstrate a mature empathy with those around them. Classroom 'worry boxes' are well utilised ensuring that issues are dealt with early and situations do not escalate into bullying. This strong focus on mental health, enables all to flourish and live well together.

There is a deep, all-encompassing acceptance creating a culture where everyone is free to express their thoughts, questions and feelings. Pupils recognise the importance of 'expanding horizons' and thinking for themselves. Consequently, they ask 'big questions' about life in an environment where they feel safe and secure. All are respected and highly valued. A comprehensive, thoroughly planned relationships and diversity curriculum ensures everyone is welcome. The school also has a developing link with a school in central Leicester giving pupils an experience of life beyond their own very rural locality. Pupils recognise that 'embracing faith' through learning about different religions is preparing them to be good citizens of the world. The RE curriculum is rich and engaging often using art to develop learning. Pupils describe the importance of understanding the core concepts of Christianity and other faiths in a multicultural society. There are currently no plans to visit places of worship, limiting first hand experiences of nearby faith communities.

Everyone is invited to 'embrace faith' through inspirational collective worship at Harby. It is a key part of the day despite not having a school hall. Pupils are aware that sometimes their 'exit' from worship times can be rushed, reflecting awareness that the sense of spirituality is sometimes quickly extinguished. Worship is planned around character strengths and values usually linked to Bible stories giving a clear foundation in line with the school's vision. A key strength of this school is the effective and inspirational support given by the local church community, particularly in collective worship provision. The vicar leads weekly worship encouraging pupils to make prayer requests and ask challenging questions. Older pupils can encounter and critically explore the Christian faith through an after-school club. As a result, some pupils take the next step on their faith journey whilst others can safely articulate that they still have 'big questions.' St. Mary the Virgin Church is used regularly and innovatively to broaden worship opportunities for the school family alongside the village community. The morning after the death of the Queen, the vicar led poignant and reflective worship in school. Everyone expresses how this was a spontaneous and necessary opportunity where they found comfort and emotional support.

Inspired by a deep Christian heritage, Harby's simple, yet biblically focused and relevant vision is empowering and equipping every member of the school family to live the fulness of life which God intends.

Information			
School	Harby Church of England VC Primary School	Inspection date	2 November 2022
URN	120132	VC/VA/ Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Leicester	Pupils on roll	74
Headteacher	Bridget Bye		
Chair of Governors	Caron Bouckley		
Inspector	Joy Hardy	No.	944