



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Kelsale Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Address Carlton Road, Kelsale, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 2NP

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

Together we believe, we learn, laugh and shine.

We are an inclusive school; everyone is welcome as Jesus welcomed all. Everyone is made in the image of God and has value and worth. We learn how to be awesome, inspired by our curriculum. We believe God knows us and is with us wherever we go, we feel safe and confident. We are proud to celebrate our achievements and always persevere.

Key findings

- This is a Christian community that watches over one another in love with unforced yet intentional actions that lead to a togetherness built on respect. A culture of being safe in God's presence is rooted in every child being able to celebrate their uniqueness and shine like the brightness of the heavens, as stated in Daniel 12:3, the biblical verse the school's vision is based upon.
- The pupils and their families encounter transformational work by the school to change their lives for the better, especially children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school seeks to do whatever it takes to ensure everyone flourishes.
- This school is fully inclusive, demonstrated by the deeply loving culture of compassion and an acceptance that transcends the tolerance shown to all. Difference and diversity are celebrated in collective worship.
- Spirituality is securely understood. It is weaved throughout the curriculum and ethos of the school. However, there is work to be done to support older children utilising reflection and exploring how God can help shape their life's journey in all of its fullness.
- Collective worship is at the centre of this church school, however due to disruption from the pandemic pupil involvement in leading and monitoring worship has not been able to be maintained.
- Religious Education (RE) is taught in a meaningful way, making RE real and alive, through a study of religion and other worldviews.

Areas for development

- Provide wider opportunities for pupils to express their compassion for justice and equality, so they can understand their social action at a national and/or global level.
- Maximise occasions for older pupils to reflect, contemplate and grow in their spiritual development so they can flourish in the fulness of life.
- Develop more systematic and structured opportunities for pupils to plan, lead and evaluate the impact of collective worship as the school continues to recover from the disruption of the pandemic.
- Develop systems to moderate progress in knowledge and skills of pupils in RE.

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

Kelsale is a caring community, built on a culture and Christian ethos of feeling safe enough to take risks and challenge themselves, as a result pupils feel valued. Leaders speak of a togetherness built out of respect for every child's uniqueness. This is seen in how parents/carers view the school, particularly those with children who have additional needs. One spoke of the school placing its arms around them when they first arrived and guiding them from their darkest and most challenging times into the light and love of the school community. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities thrive. Strong and fruitful relationships with external agencies, such as the Special Education Service, ensure that the school provides a good education for all pupils. The new vicar enables the school to fulfill its relationship with different community groups, including working with local charities such as the IP17 Project, which brings a strong sense of moral responsibility to the work of every pupil.

Leaders, including governors, have a strong sense of how the school's Christian vision drives its work. Governors monitor the impact of this vision and receive regular reports from the dedicated head teacher. She is a role model of compassion, warmth and love for the school who enables her staff to bring joy and laughter to every pupil. This has not been easy to sustain during the disruption of the pandemic, but the actions and hard work of the staff ensured the school remained a strong community in the lockdowns. Families recognise the additional support offered through doorstep meetings, online events and regular contact had a positive impact on them and made them feel included. New families to the school talk of the Christian welcome they received before their children started and how ways were found to induct them despite lockdown restrictions. Similarly, the work of the Year 6 staff to ensure children had a supportive transition to secondary school and a leavers' church service meant pupils left fulfilled by their connection to the school. Pupils are nurtured in their spiritual development through reflection, invitations to prayer and through open discussion in lessons. Younger pupils feel less inhibited in these discussions on spirituality compared to older pupils who are more self-conscious.

Togetherness is a cohesive thread of the school, seen in its rich curriculum, from Wake and Shake with the whole school community each morning to celebration worships every Friday. Pupils are excited by the educational visits and topics that bring their learning alive, a good example was a visit to Sutton Hoo as part of the Year 5 topic on Anglo Saxons. This topic was linked to law and order and the concept was then studied in RE through what the Qur'an reveals about Allah and his guidance to Muslims. Leaders of the school form a cohesive team that each has strengths to support and build different relationships with the school community, actively bringing everyone together. This has meant Kesale is very popular. However, coping with rapid change has not been easy, thanks to the support of the diocese the school has been able to grow and maintain its Christian distinctiveness. Leaders return to the vision of the school when making all decisions, enabling every child and adult to flourish. The vicar, a foundation governor, has helped the school find the words to explain the Christian vision to parents/carers and the local community.

Collective worship is the centre of the school day. Pupils sing with happiness and enjoy coming together for this special time. Every child is invited to pray, have time for reflection and stillness. Those who take part speak of how they unite with God and feel his presence. Biblical teachings are remembered and impact on how children behave with one another. The head teacher and her staff have worked hard in lockdowns to maintain worship for the whole school, this was difficult at times. Since returning in September the school has really valued holding daily whole school worship once again. It now needs to involve pupils, as it did before the pandemic, in regular planning leading and monitoring of collective worship.

The school community values returning to the parish church for services. The Harvest Festival here allowed the children to share their courageous advocacy work in the local community. Pupils collected food for the local IP17 foodbank and explored the injustice of people in God's world not having the basic essentials to live. The school works with several local charities and is proud of this. However, pupils are less aware of national or global campaigns that tackle injustice or inequality and do not yet engage with these. Well-being and mental health of others as well as themselves is another key component of this service. Through the local NHS, mental health support has been utilised by the school and the ParentHub hosts such services to provide much needed support in this rural community.

RE is led with passion and is used as a meaningful way for pupils to be prepared for life in the wider world. A range of big questions within Christianity provides good breadth of knowledge and understanding of concepts, such as "Why

are the gospels such good news for Christians?” Christianity is used to compare with other religions of the world. Pupils have a curriculum that supports progress in their learning and approaches RE by exploring what people believe, what questions do their beliefs raise and how do their beliefs shape their lives. Whilst RE knowledge and skills are tracked by the school it is not fully clear how children’s progress in learning is moderated. Governors monitor the provision of RE and robustly hold the RE lead to account, this ensures RE has a high profile in the school. Parents/carers recognise how RE enables their children to have a balanced view of the multi-religious, multi-cultural world they live in.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	15 October 2021	URN	124735
Date of previous inspection	4 March 2015		
School status	Voluntary Controlled	NOR	164
Name of MAT/Federation	Not applicable		
Diocese / Methodist District	St Edmundsbury and Ipswich		
Headteacher	Clare McMeekin		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)	The diocese has supported and listened to the school in its journey to become one form entry from September 2021.		
Inspector’s name	Christopher J Allen	No.	847