

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Aiskew, Leeming Bar Church of England Primary School			
Address	2 Leeming Lane, Leeming Bar, Northallerton, North Yorkshire. DL7 9AU		
Date of inspection	12 November 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Controlled Primary
Diocese	Leeds	URN	121472

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

Aiskew, Leeming Bar is a primary school with 33 pupils on roll. The school has a higher than average level of cultural diversity and of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. Over the past five years, the school has undergone significant changes in leadership and staffing. Ofsted judged that the school requires improvement in inspections in March 2017 and June 2019. The headteacher took up post in April 2018 and the chair of governors has served since March 2018.

The school's Christian vision

Our vision guides us in all that we hope to be, enabling every member of our school family to grow and flourish into well-developed individuals who are inclusive, independent and inspired learners, equipped with the knowledge, skills and wisdom needed to succeed in life.

"Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong." Ephesians 3:17

Key findings

- The school is a happy, vibrant family, which demonstrates its Christian vision and values in its daily life. Dedicated and visionary leadership is taking the whole school family forward on its journey of school improvement.
- Pupils live out the school's vision and values, developing strong relationships with other members of the school community that lead to very positive behaviour and attitudes to their work.
- Worship is well-planned, with an engaging, varied approach. It is invitational, inclusive, and distinctively Christian.
- Religious education (RE) is given a high status, and it enables all pupils to flourish. RE lessons offer pupils a safe space to reflect on their own views and respect the views of others.

Areas for development

- Continue to improve the school's effectiveness as a Church school by involving the whole school community in a robust and consistent process of self-evaluation, based on the school's vision and values.
- Review provision for spiritual development for all pupils, so that opportunities for spiritual development run through all elements of the curriculum.
- Develop systems to monitor and evaluate collective worship, so that all members of the community are involved and can contribute to the improvement process.

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

Following a time of turbulence, Aiskew, Leeming Bar is a vibrant, happy school in which all are loved and nurtured and so are able to grow and flourish. It has developed a new distinctively Christian and inclusive vision which reflects its unique context, and has also refreshed its longstanding values, rooting them in biblical teaching. These were launched in September 2019. The vision's strapline, 'rooted in love and growing together to become lifelong learners', captures the essence of the journey the school as a family is now on. The tree logo was created by the whole school family as a visual representation of their vision and values. It deepens pupils' understanding, although the vision's biblical roots cannot be clearly articulated by all members of the school family. The headteacher is a strong role model, who provides inspirational and transformative Christian leadership. She is well supported by her senior leaders and the school's cohesive staff team, and all work together to enable the school to improve rapidly. The governing body has recently achieved stability, following long-term issues in recruiting foundation governors. Governors are committed to school improvement. They set priorities which take good account of the distinctive nature of the school as a Church school. They are supporting the school effectively through establishing regular monitoring. In this way they hold the school to account, as well as offering constructive challenge. The school has begun to rewrite key policies and plans so that its new vision and values drive improvement. Governors have monitored Church school practice, but there is no evaluation of the impact of the school's Christian vision and values across all areas. Adults occasionally monitor collective worship, but systematic monitoring and evaluation of worship by members of the school family is under-developed. Governors have made effective partnerships with the diocese and with local churches. These links support the professional development of leaders and staff and enhance pupils' appreciation of the relevance of faith in today's world.

The school's distinctive Christian vision has led curriculum design, so that it now meets the needs of the pupils in their specific context. Planning the curriculum in blocks of time enables pupils to investigate subjects in greater depth. Pupils report that they like the 'rainbow steps to success' within lessons, because they understand what their learning is about. This motivates them to keep going and learn at greater depth. Pupils readily link this approach with the school's value of perseverance. Parents are clear about the impact of this new approach. They report that their children now have 'huge enthusiasm' for coming to school to learn, and for what they have achieved each day. The progress of pupils has fluctuated considerably in previous years, and the new strategies for teaching and learning have not yet led to improved results in national tests. The school's use of 'Building Learning Power' approaches has led to greater challenge in lessons. Pupils are beginning to ask 'big questions', which enable them to explore their own spirituality. Opportunities for spiritual development are not, however, embedded in all elements of the curriculum.

Part of the positive learning culture, rooted in the new distinctive vision and values, is that pupils become more able to think beyond themselves and understand the needs of others. The impact of the school's vision and values is seen in pupils' commitment to make a difference in response to disadvantage and deprivation. Through the first-hand experiences of a staff member and a governor, pupils have gained an understanding of the lives of pupils who attend Fayef International School in Ghana. They have responded by raising funds through a variety of activities over time to support the wellbeing and learning of Ghanaian children through health and education programmes.

The headteacher and her staff have prioritised the growing together of the school family. This is particularly significant, given the depth and variety of need within the local community. Pupils conduct themselves extremely well and play together cooperatively during social time. They develop strong relationships, and listen well to one another and to adults. They can articulate how this behaviour stems from their understanding of the school's vision and values. Individual needs are also well catered for, as seen in the provision made for pupils who felt unable to play outside with others. Parents and staff members talk about how well the school nurtures the wellbeing of all members of the school family. Parents feel listened to, and staff respond appropriately to any concerns they raise. Staff morale is high, with very low rates of absence. However, the school's current behaviour policy does not fully reflect its distinctive vision and values.

Reflecting its distinctive vision and values, the school is an inclusive community where all are welcomed and treated with dignity and respect. Pupils are given regular curriculum opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference and diversity and to recognise, promote and enjoy their own diversity and uniqueness.

Collective worship is inclusive, and pupils and adults in the school family value time together for reflection, stillness and prayer. It is planned around the school's values, Bible stories and festivals and seasons in the Church calendar. Pupils understand the messages that are being presented and how they impact on their daily lives. Pupils respond positively and are taking increasing responsibility for its leadership. The Anglican tradition is apparent in the use of candles, Bible stories, liturgy and singing. Regular leadership of worship by leaders from St Gregory's Church and the local Baptist church ensures that pupils experience rich variety of worship styles.

RE is prioritised, making it a 'fourth core subject'. Curriculum planning is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils in mixed-age groups. The school's adoption of 'Building Learning Power' approaches directly strengthens teaching and learning in RE. Pupils enjoy their RE lessons, and they are able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions and world views. Key Stage 2 pupils showed confidence and strong development of their thinking in a debate about what life would be like if there were no God. From this, a clear and strong understanding emerged of what believing in God actually involves.

Headteacher	Bethany Stanley
Inspector's name and number	Canon Linda Burton 426