

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Caston Church of England Primary Academy

Vision

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” Matthew 7:7

Caston Church of England Primary Academy is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Strengths

- A compelling Christian vision permeates all aspects of the school’s work. It drives decision making at all levels ensuring significant impact for pupils and adults.
- Leaders create a highly inclusive environment, underpinned by the vision and carefully selected values. This enables pupils including those who are vulnerable or with special educational needs (SEND) to enjoy many rich learning experiences.
- Reciprocally enriching partnerships offer strong support at all levels, encouraging positive relationships and powerful ways of working collaboratively. Work with the trust, diocese, local church and agencies has far-reaching impact on the lives of pupils and adults.
- Leadership of religious education (RE) is impressive, ensuring a carefully sequenced and progressive curriculum. There are many opportunities for pupils to think deeply and develop their knowledge of world religions and worldviews.
- Collective worship is well planned and organised, incorporating the school’s values and vision. Participants benefit from invitational moments of calm contemplation and engaging responses to biblical stories.

Development Points

- Develop the recently adopted approach to the teaching of RE so that opportunities for pupils to retrieve and revisit previous learning are embedded systematically. This will enable pupils to better recall their learning and take full advantage of all the opportunities offered by the RE curriculum.
- Deepen monitoring opportunities to ensure governors evaluate the impact of the RE curriculum on pupils. This will enable them to develop a fuller understanding of the effectiveness of RE in their school.



Inspection Findings

A simple yet highly effective vision permeates all aspects of the work of this small school. Using Matthew 7:7, leaders forge a culture of seeking enriching learning opportunities and opening up support for pupils and adults. This shared purpose creates an inclusive environment where relationships are prioritised ensuring people feel valued and care for. Adults model the values consistently, enabling pupils and staff to see themselves on a journey of growth and flourishing. Strong communication and building respectful partnerships are central to the school's evident success. A powerful example is found in the way the school supports pupils and families with the highest levels of need. Parents highly value the accessibility, guidance and care of the staff which often goes over and above what they expect. Governors receive timely and accurate information from leaders' monitoring about the school's effectiveness as a Church school. However, there is limited evaluation of the impact of monitoring by governors. Work to link the trust's vision to the school's is particularly successful. As a result, there is a strong resonance between the two visions whilst still maintaining Caston's uniqueness.

The vision directly inspires a curriculum that offers rich opportunities for pupils to ask questions and seek knowledge. Engaging learning activities, carefully tailored to individual needs, provide pupils meaningful experiences in which to develop their knowledge. Great care is taken to support and nurture those who may be vulnerable, ensuring that they, too, can thrive. Parents highly value this support, recognising the positive impact it has on their children. Personal interests are enriched and celebrated through a range of cultural events, trips and clubs. Opportunities for spiritual development are shaped by blending deliberately planned moments of awe with ordinary activities through the day. For example, learning in science and using the natural outside spaces allows pupils to consider what is important to them. There is a well-established understanding of spirituality, using the pictorial representation of windows, mirrors and doors to describe experiences. This ensures pupils and adults have the vocabulary to share spiritual encounters and capture the personal impact.

Collective worship is highly valued as an intrinsic part of the school's life. It is invitational, enabling pupils and adults, including parents, to participate thoughtfully. Careful and detailed planning provides engaging opportunities for songs and drama. Biblically based storytelling deepens pupils' understanding of the carefully chosen Christian values. Mindful of the vision, leaders seek to include pupils' contribution to worship regularly, helping them to develop confidence. They speak proudly of the pupil-written prayer used each day to conclude worship and the sense of community felt. As a result, pupils and adults flourish spiritually through these daily opportunities to come together for calm contemplation. Links with the local church community are mutually beneficial and nurturing. Clergy play an important role in worship, developing creative expressions and inspiring the school community. For example, pupils and parents speak powerfully of the impact welcoming the Posada into their homes had on their families. Valued visitors such as the Fountain of Life team are eagerly anticipated, offering clubs and broadening the styles of worship experienced.

Driven by the vision-inspired Christian values, everyone in this small school community is expected to act with responsibility towards others. Meaningful opportunities are given for pupils to consider difference and diversity, reflective of the school's context. As a result, pupils value each other's contribution to community life and forge a highly welcoming environment. They accept people for the person they are. Use of reflective and restorative conversations help pupils build a keen understanding of fairness and justice towards one another. To develop aspirations, pupils are actively encouraged to take on leadership roles. They relish the chance to lead worship, make collective decisions in school council, and support with practical tasks. Keen to care for God's creation, the



school council organise litter picking groups around school and campaign for reducing waste. Pupils have opportunities to consider those beyond their own school through fundraising and awareness raising events for charities. Recognising a local need, the school runs a food bank for families to access freely, including uniform. Leaders have forged highly effective partnerships with the federation school, wider trust, and the diocese. Using this support, strategic and operational plans are shaped to meet the needs of pupils and staff with strong impact.

As a result of effective and thoughtful leadership, RE has a high profile and is prioritised. Leaders have outlined a clear progression of what is to be taught and when, based on the locally agreed syllabus. The content is challenging, relevant and diverse, enabling pupils to develop a good understanding of Christianity alongside worldviews and religions. Staff are provided with expert training and guidance from the RE leader with opportunities for professional development through the diocese. Subsequently, they feel confident and empowered in their teaching. Visitors from a variety of faiths are invited to school to bring the subject to life and enhance learning. Pupils speak of the impact immersion days, such as Interfaith Day, have inspiring deeper understanding and enjoyment. Consequently, they grow in awareness of the similarities between the major world religions. Pupils value the opportunity to think about their own beliefs and offer their own questions.

Teaching and learning in RE is effective. Pupils speak enthusiastically about RE and find the subject interesting and challenging. They are proud of their work and make good progress, which is carefully tracked through appropriate assessment and monitoring. Pupils from all year groups participate in thoughtful and reflective discussions, captured in class floor books. Further responses to learning are noted in individual pupil workbooks. This system supports pupils who are vulnerable or with SEND in their access and progress throughout their school life. As a result of their monitoring and desire to improve outcomes, leaders have introduced a new approach to RE. Teaching is now focused into blocks at the start of each half term. This enables a deeper immersion in the concepts and knowledge being taught. However, opportunities for retrieval throughout the term are not embedded in all classes. As a result, a small number of pupils find it harder to recall prior learning.

Leaders have created a culture where people are treated exceptionally well. The school's Christian values form an effective framework through which positive relationships are prioritised. Encouraged by the vision, pupils seek out opportunities to be kind and helpful to each other. One pupil eloquently commented 'This is an awesome school! Everyone looks after everyone else.' There is an open atmosphere of support amongst staff, where asking for help is actively driven by the vision. They particularly appreciate the support offered by leaders through the close partnership with the linked federation church school. Sharing resources, curriculum planning, and subject leadership ensures their workload is balanced and morale high. Pupils benefit from this partnership by sharing inspiring trips and extracurricular activities that bring learning to life across the federation. The school has fostered a wide range of strategies and approaches to ensure pupils' needs are met. Staff offer bespoke support tailored to individual pupils, seeking guidance from a broad range of external agencies to shape provision. The resultant inclusive and nurturing environment is highly valued by parents, who speak powerfully of the impact on their children. The whole community are rightly proud of Caston school as a place where pupils, and adults, flourish.

Information

Address	The Street, Caston, Attleborough, NR17 1DD		
Date	20/02/25	URN	148152
Type of school	Primary Academy (former Voluntary Aided)	No. of pupils	72
Diocese/District	Norwich		
MAT/Federation	The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust		
Headteacher	Sarah Disney		
Chair of Governors	Bruce Gordon		
Inspector	Philip Asher		