

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Wellesbourne CE Primary and Nursery School

Address	Mountford Close, Wellesbourne, Warwickshire CV35 9QG		
Date of inspection	17 October 2019	Status of school	VC primary and nursery
Diocese	Coventry	URN	125651

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	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good

School context

Wellesbourne is a primary and nursery school with 388 pupils on roll, and 61 children in the nursery. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is near national averages and is increasing. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages, depending on year group. The number of pupils requiring additional support for social and emotional needs is increasing. The school is federated with Tysoe CE primary school. An executive headteacher leads both schools.

The school's Christian vision

'The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.'
(Galatians 5:22)

Wellesbourne CE Primary School is a Christian community, which by sowing the seeds of friendship, forgiveness and service will enable the growth of happy and healthy individuals. Through love, nurture, respect and support of one another we will flourish and bloom. With a sprinkling of perseverance and determination, we can become the people that God has made us to be.

Key findings

- This is an excellent Church school which lives and breathes its vision, deeply grounded in biblical teaching, where all ages feel safe, loved and so are able to learn. Pupils demonstrate the 'fruit of the Spirit'. The new vision is less evident in key documents.
- Highly effective leaders, ably supported by dedicated staff, mean the school is outward facing and a 'leading light' amongst other schools in the area, and is described as such by the Diocese.
- Innovative approaches to a rich curriculum ensure academic progress is consistently good and often above national standards, including for those with additional needs.
- Exceptional care is shown to pupils and families. Work for, and with, those who are more vulnerable is exemplary, 'there are no Lost Sheep'.
- Religious education (RE) and collective worship contribute well to pupils' sense of their place in our multi-cultural world. Currently, older pupils contribute to leading acts of worship.

Areas for development

- Apply the vision to policies and development plans more explicitly in order to sustain growth as an effective Church school.
- Enable a wider age-range of pupils to independently plan and lead worship in order to improve pupil engagement.
- Explore growing and articulating a shared language around spirituality to provide progressively deeper opportunities for this across the curriculum.

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

Wellesbourne is the good soil which enables pupils and adults to blossom and flourish. The distinctive vision, recently expressed through Galatians 5:22, and the Parable of the Sower, captures the spirit of the school. It is based on well-established aims and values. The process of refreshing and consulting on the vision demonstrates how leaders treat everyone with dignity and respect. At present, the school website and key documents partly reference the new vision. Leaders acknowledge that this is work in progress. Nevertheless, the vision has a powerful impact on the daily life of the school.

The hallmark of this school is the way it enables all pupils, regardless of background or ability, to feel valued and grow as unique and wonderfully made. Sensitive care for those with learning or social and communication needs is seen at every turn. Discreet practical support is offered, so that all play a full part in the learning and experiences offered. Breakfast club (Woosh) enables all to have a positive start to the day. The timetable for the day is creatively designed so that those who receive extra help have their support sessions at the start of the day. This enables pupils to be ready to learn.

The school is truly blessed in its leaders, including skilled and visionary governors. If the pupils are the fruits, leaders are the gardeners who tend the shoots and ensure a fruitful harvest. They make bold, ethical decisions to ensure needs are met. Their commitment, despite financial implications, to make nursery provision accessible locally is testament to the vision of growth. As a member of staff said, 'Love is at the heart of what we do. The sense of something bigger than me, it motivates and sustains us'. The chair of governors is instrumental in ensuring the school is at the heart of its community. A prayer group, including parents, meets in school. Pupils offer their thoughts in prayer and know others are holding these up to God on their behalf. Governors know the school extremely well. The work of the Christian foundation committee contributes to the life of the school as a Church school. More formal use of the committee's views and feedback is not informing school improvement. Pupils refer to their vision when deciding which charities to support. This demonstrates their thinking of wider issues, for example being ecologically aware.

Staff wellbeing is of paramount importance. Staff are upheld and encouraged in their key roles. Undoubtedly, the gifted leadership of the executive headteacher inspires others. Her ambitious drive means Wellesbourne is well-respected. New leaders and staff are grown and supported to develop their own interests and skills. Other schools benefit from the partnership which Wellesbourne creates. The head of school has the confidence of parents and staff. He promotes the culture of success and lives out the vision to serve others and encourage all to fulfil their dreams.

The school has grown significantly in recent years and with this, the number of challenges has also grown. The school provides the best possible soil and conditions for growth. Insightful early help and sensitive support is offered to families and children. Innovative recruitment of specialist staff is highly effective in removing barriers to learning. This may be seen in the accelerated progress pupils make, some from low starting points. Aspiration is key to improving standards and hope for the future. In response to a request to talk to pupils about their own careers, over twenty parents have offered to speak to and encourage pupils to aim high. Many Year 6 aspire to train as teachers in the future. High attendance confirms that pupils love school.

What sets this school apart from other strong Church schools is the many ways leaders cherish and persevere with every child. This is not just at Wellesbourne or even Tysoe. The executive headteacher leads the local consortium of schools and this demonstrates her dynamic approach to supporting others. The Diocese too regards the school as a centre of excellence where other schools may find support and inspiration. As a result, the school makes an impressive contribution to the education of pupils beyond Wellesbourne. This is done with characteristic humility.

This exemplary approach is also seen in the way school and church are friends to each other. Parents and pupils express a genuine affection for the parish church and clergy, youth worker and members of the congregation who do so much for the school. The partnership works both ways. As a direct result of connections with school, attendance at church services and events has risen. Volunteers lead the 'Open the Book' worship and this is the highlight of worship for many pupils.

Collective worship is an important part of tending the spiritual garden which is the school community. Staff promote awe and wonder through worship and curriculum activities but the school does not have a shared language around this to offer progressively deeper experiences for spiritual growth. Worship is carefully planned to be relevant and explore the school's vision and values. While there are some secular aspects to 'assemblies' there are clear elements of Anglican traditions in worship. This aspect of Wellesbourne has improved. More time and places for prayer during the school day enhance the spiritual growth of adults and pupils. The collective worship co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has plans to extend pupil leadership beyond those in Year 6. By using a worship table, artefacts and regular Bible readings, acts of worship have an intentional focus on Christianity, and the life and teaching of Jesus. In developing reflection spaces, indoors and outdoors in the Rainbow garden, areas for improvement from the previous denominational inspection have been met.

Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and the range of religions studied in RE. The subject makes a strong contribution to flourishing, and to how pupils connect with and are interested in others. Staff training on using 'Understanding Christianity' resource is beginning to bear fruit. Work in pupils' books demonstrates great pride in presentation. Pupils make strong progress as they move through school. Pupils talk about the importance of the subject, 'it matters that we learn about different faiths,' said one. Older pupils are encouraged to think of inclusion and equality through work like that considering the lives of Muslim children in modern Britain. Links with a school in Sierra Leone stimulate pupils' thinking on how much they have in common.

While there are elements to develop and take further, Wellesbourne is an excellent example of how good seed, the right soil and skillful tending lead to an abundance of life and a fruitful harvest.

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