

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Castor Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Stocks Hill, Castor, Peterborough, PE5 7AY

School vision
<p>‘Let Your Light Shine.’ Matthew 5:16</p> <p>We recognise that every child and adult in the school community has been given special gifts and talents that we want to nurture for the benefits of the individual and the wider community so we can flourish together and make a difference and spread God’s light in a dark world.</p>
School strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed leaders, including governors and staff, are dedicated to the community Castor serves and know it well. They work to ensure that pupils and their families feel loved and cared for. Partnerships between the school, local church and diocese are exceptional. These beneficial relationships ensure valued support for pupils and adults during times of challenge and enable them to flourish. Leaders bring stability to Castor, shaping the Christian vision and deepening pupils’ understanding of its significance. Consequently, the vision gives clear direction to drive improvements. Collective worship unites the whole school family in a powerful bond of togetherness. It is thought provoking with moments for reflection enriching adults and pupils' spiritual growth. The exemplary partnership with the local church community serves to deepen pupils’ understanding of Christianity as a living faith. Effective leadership in religious education (RE) has established a relevant and creative curriculum. Pupils speak confidently about a range of worldviews and religions, including Christianity. They demonstrate high levels of respect for difference.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broaden opportunities for all pupils to actively challenge injustice. This to inspire them to make a difference to the world as agents of change.
Inspection findings
<p>Castor Church of England Primary School is a school full of love and respect. The Christian vision to ‘Let your light shine’ (Matthew 5:16) permeates all aspects of the school community. Castor has been subject to significant uncertainty, upheaval and change over the last year. However, relatively recent developments in school leadership have brought stability, calm and positive progress. This is having a significant impact and has been warmly welcomed by pupils and adults. Leaders have shaped the Christian vision, effectively putting it at the heart of the school. Pupils explain how they feel loved and cared for by the staff team. Consequently, they are happy at Castor. There is a palpable sense of community, which is harnessed by leaders to great effect. The determination among staff that all should shine creates a culture of support, love and aspiration. The impact of</p>

the local church community on the way the Christian vision is lived out in the school is exemplary. They are devoted to Castor and are heavily involved in all aspects of school life. Members of the community are welcomed and included fully in the life of the school. The Christian vision recognises the unique gifts of those within the school community and effectively addresses the needs of pupils and adults. This leads to strengthening relationships with families. Parents praise the school for the positive impact of recent changes. They correctly highlight the dedication of the staff. One parent shared, 'we are back to being a community.' Highly valued support from diocesan advisers has further developed the understanding, and impact of the Christian vision. This enriches the school's provision of collective worship and the RE curriculum. Leaders attend training and work closely with the diocese and local church community to ensure continuous learning and improvement. Partnerships between the school, local church and diocese are fundamental to the success of Castor. These strong relationships enable all to work collaboratively towards their shared vision, fostering a sense of belonging and support for all. Pupils and adults affirm the positive impact that this has had to date. This is evident in the approach taken to staff wellbeing. Courageous decisions have been taken by leaders with compassion and care. Staff describe how they feel part of a supportive and nurturing family. This is a result of the vision serving as a guiding light. It enables pupils and adults to come together in unity and support one another in their personal and academic growth.

A desire to have the best outcomes for all is at the heart of curriculum development. A variety of carefully planned curriculum activities ensures that pupils enjoy their time at Castor and are engaged in their learning. The range of extra-curricular clubs and curriculum enrichment activities play a key part in raising pupils' aspirations. For example, an opportunity for Year 6 pupils to prepare a gala dinner for their families, created a sense of togetherness. Such events also allow for personal individuality to shine. Pupils confidently articulate their desire for a bright future. Staff work tenaciously to find, and provide for, the talent in every pupil so that they have the chance to 'let their light shine'. The value placed on meeting the needs of all has spurred on the work with those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Specific interventions and programmes allow individuals to flourish. There are opportunities in lessons, and during unstructured times, for meaningful moments of reflection and wonder. The Hive provides pupils with opportunities for spiritual reflection during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils rightly speak of the positive value this has provided them with.

Collective worship makes an invaluable contribution to deepening pupils' understanding of the vision through exploring associated Christian values. The outstanding connection with the local church community has a significant positive impact on collective worship. Leaders carefully plan the themes linking collective worship into the Christian vision and associated values. Examples are shared that demonstrate the impact of values, showcasing the various areas in which they hold significance. Opportunities to interact with the stories of Jesus convey values that emphasise the dignity of each individual and the importance of harmonious living. Consequently, a culture of love and respect is lived out by pupils and staff. Planned moments of silence to reflect on Bible verses and the core theme provide meaningful opportunities for spiritual growth. Gathering together to learn, to explore and to reflect has a positive impact on the lives of adults and pupils. Visits to St Kyneburgha Church enrich pupils' understanding of Christianity and the traditions of worship in the Church of England. Celebration worship recognises and acclaims everyone's ability to shine. Consequently, time in church, combined with the richness of collective worship, significantly impacts on the spiritual development of pupils and staff. The way pupils can describe the impact of these opportunities for spiritual flourishing on them continues to be developed and embedded.

Pupils are acutely aware of their personal responsibilities within their school community. They have a high level of respect for their immediate setting. Inspired by the Christian vision, older pupils clearly articulate the importance of being good role models to younger pupils. This creates a happy and safe school. As such, they play a part in shining individually, which releases a collective shining by all. They have the confidence to express their views and are vocal in raising concerns with adults. Pupils have a voice and adults listen, taking on board and acting on their concerns. In this way, pupils do what they can to alleviate some of the pressing issues in the local area, such as graffiti. However, opportunities for pupils to actively, and independently, challenge injustice are at an early stage. Consequently, their impact as active agents of change is limited.

RE is a subject highly valued by pupils. The curriculum has been carefully planned to ensure it is relevant and balanced. Pupils appreciate their lessons, eagerly sharing their knowledge and understanding the

importance of respecting differing beliefs and views. Effective monitoring by governors and school leaders ensures the RE curriculum is relevant and adapted for Castor. The introduction of a 'big question' at the beginning of each topic serves as a focal point for developing ideas and comprehension. Consequently, pupils are able to express their opinions and exchange ideas respectfully with their peers. The RE curriculum offers pupils the opportunity to explore a diverse range of worldviews and religions, including Christianity. They enjoy the engaging mix of activities, such as embarking on a pilgrimage. School leaders actively engage in the diocesan network, promoting discussions on best practice in RE together with valued training opportunities. This knowledge is effectively shared with staff, positively impacting the continuous development of RE throughout the school.

The inspection findings indicate that Castor Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information

Inspection date	09 July 2024	URN	110824
VA/VC/Academy	VC	Pupils on roll	172
Diocese	Peterborough		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Suzie Phillips (Acting Headteacher)		
Chair	Peter Edward Ananicz		
Inspector	Frazer Smith	No.	2367