

Understanding our world



Paul Dunning
Diocesan Director of Education

The SIAMS inspection framework poses some challenging and important questions. Inspection Question 5 says *'How does the theologically rooted Christian vision create an active culture of justice and responsibility?'* It goes on to ask how this culture *'encourage(s)*

justice and courageous advocacy, enabling pupils to make ethical choices and to be agents of change?'

The articles that follow show different creative ways that schools are enabling their pupils to learn about the world, its different cultures, faiths, injustices and challenges. Such work is often facilitated through partnerships with different organisations thereby bringing alive pupils' learning and delivering an impactful and memorable educational experience.

Whilst such learning will celebrate other cultures it also highlights the injustices in our world, something the Bible in both the Old and New Testament speaks into. In fact, Jesus himself quotes Isaiah when

he sets out his own ministry saying *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'* (Luke 4:18-19).

We all know that our younger generation need to learn about our wonderful diverse world and how we should treat those who seem different to us. The example of Jesus is always before us. He reached out across differences of religion, race, nationality, gender and economic or social status. My prayer is that our schools can embody the love and compassion he showed.

Tas Valley Federation

To celebrate their 10-year anniversary, Culham St. Gabriel's Trust offered ten £1000 grants, and Tas Valley Federation was lucky enough to be awarded one of these for a project called 'Our Multi-Faith Society.' This aimed to make pupils at our two schools, Preston CEVC Primary School and Saxlingham CEVC Primary School, aware of the diverse society in which they live and to build connections with local faith communities.

Fun concrete learning formed the basis of the plan: pupils from both schools enjoyed visits to Norwich Synagogue where they participated in a Shabbat workshop and investigated further aspects of Jewish culture and worship.

This was followed by an exploration of the Hindu faith. The Norwich Interfaith Society taught the children about Puja (daily worship). We also participated in a Hindu workshop where pupils dressed in Indian clothing, performed stick dances, and learned about Hindu deities.

Beyond this project, we have a long-established international link with the pupils of Xetólacw Community School British Columbia, Canada. This First Nations Community school provides a learning environment where Lílwat culture, language and values are taught and celebrated alongside



the academic curriculum. Some of our older pupils regularly exchange letters with the children in Grade 6. They have been really excited to be able to share information about life in Norfolk and to be able to find out about living in a contrasting community on the other side of the world.

By connecting with people from other

faiths and cultures, pupils are building the foundations of empathy and respect. They have experienced how people from different faiths and cultures are the same as them, and how interesting it is to learn about differences. As one pupil said: 'We learn to celebrate differences and accept that people are different and that we can be different too!'

Sophia (Year 6 pupil)

Alpington and Bergh Apton VA Primary

Race across the world

We had a challenge to go around the world from London to Kathmandu. We had a budget of £1,000 per head for a group and had to do it as fast as possible. There were places we couldn't go: warzones.

When we were first tasked with this, I was slightly nervous yet excited because I was wondering whether we'd have enough money or even if we would be able to complete it.

But once we started, it became easier. We went from London to France, Italy, Romania, Greece, Mumbai, to Kathmandu. I thought finding different means of transport and lovely hotels fun, especially with my friends.

We had to work out the price of hotels, restaurants, sightseeing, flights, ferries



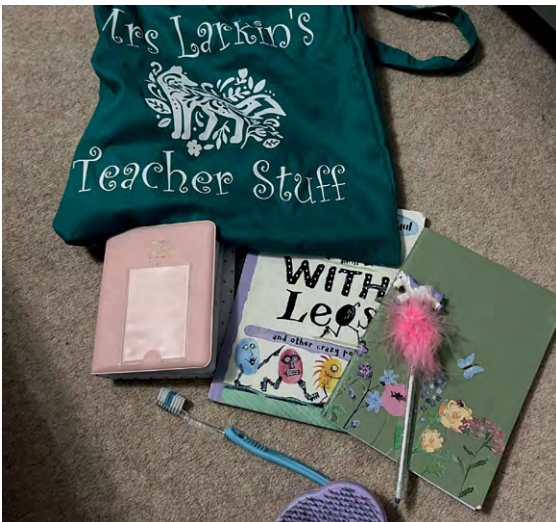
and more. In France, we went to the Eiffel tower, the Museum of Arts in Bologna and the Taj Mahal in India.

We tried our best to finish in time and did half of our PowerPoint on flashcards.

In France, we went to a restaurant at the very foot of the Eiffel tower, went up to the top of the Eiffel tower, then we went to

a hotel nearby. We only stopped in Italy to get food and go to bologna Museum.

In Romania, we stopped to get more food as the journey from Italy to Romania was very long. We got a plane from Greece to Mumbai. Then, we drove to Kathmandu, stopping at the Taj Mahal on the way. Our final balance was roughly £1,000.



Ryan Freeman
Executive Headteacher
The Ark Federation
Peterhouse Primary Academy
Moorlands Primary Academy

At Moorlands, we work hard to build positive relationships with the local community. However, as the school is in a rural Norfolk village, we also feel it is essential to take every opportunity to connect with the wider world and develop our pupils' understanding of it.

Over the past two years, we have been moving towards achieving School of Sanctuary status and are currently in the final stages of our application. Along with many other schools, we take part in the annual Day of Welcome in June, which takes place directly before Refugee Week. There have been several refugee children join us recently and we celebrate the contribution they make to the school, both in terms of language and culture.

Alongside this, we continue to work

with the team at Empathy Lab to help our children develop their empathy skills and are looking forward to Empathy Action Month in November. Last year, we focused on refugees around the world and how we would feel if we had to leave our homes. Our staff and pupils all brought in a bag which contained five important items they would take with them and discussed the reasons why they had selected each one. We also worked with local refugee charity GYROS, who will be visiting the school later in the year. The last time they came to Moorlands, their two representatives were both refugees, one from Mozambique and one from Armenia, who shared their personal experiences with the children. This was an eye-opening and unforgettable experience, not just for the pupils but also for our staff.

Whenever we work with authors and poets, we consider their background and how they will be able to enrich our pupils' understanding of different cultures. Over recent years, we have been visited by Sita Brahmachari, Sharna Jackson, Rashmi

Sirdeshpande, Joseph Coelho and many more. The pupils are not only inspired on the day but are also noticeably more willing to attempt books by a wider range of writers after each visit.

The names of our schoolhouses change every two years. We have previously had authors (including Joseph Coelho and SF Said) and sports people (including Emma Raducanu, Sky Brown and Marcus Rashford). They are currently famous mathematicians (Alan Turing, Katherine Johnson, Al-Khwarizmi and Shakuntala Devi). Each is introduced in an assembly, with information about where they are from and their significant achievements.

As reading is central to our culture at Moorlands, class teachers occasionally arrange online meetings with other classes around the UK when the children talk about books and share recommendations. The next step is to organise this with pupils from other countries but there are a few logistics involving time-zones to overcome first!

Open Academy redesignated as a Church of England academy

Open Academy was the first academy to be opened in Norfolk in 2008, moving into its brand new building in 2010. It replaced the former Heartsease High school and joined DNEAT in 2014. The school was judged 'good' by Ofsted last year.

Open Academy was always built on strong Christian values, and now, following a wide-ranging community consultation where 96% of responses were in favour, the Department of Education have approved the academy to be designated as a Church of England school.

On the 9 October the Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham Usher, toured Open Academy, meeting pupils and staff and leading assemblies, to celebrate it becoming a Church of England school. Pupils told him that some of their favourite things about the school were that it was fun, sporty and inclusive, with good teachers and interesting lessons. He spoke to pupils about serving and helping others and met some of its student leaders and some of its most vulnerable students and the staff who work with them.

Principal Jon Ford said, "We are delighted. Open Academy has become a beacon of success in inclusive education precisely because we are driven by our strong Christian values. We will remain proudly welcoming of all students from



our local community. Our new faith designation will protect our inclusive ethos and ensure that our whole community knows it is loved and valued. As in all church schools, we will continue to welcome children, staff and visitors of all faiths and none."

Welcoming the school into Norfolk's family of Church of England Schools, the Bishop blessed two crosses to be displayed at the school and said: "I am delighted that the Open Academy has become a Church of England school. Our schools support students from a wide variety of communities and we are committed to enabling students to find life in all its fullness within the distinctive

Christian ethos of our schools where there is a deep respect and care for all."

Mr Ford said it had been an inspirational day, and a chance to show the Bishop why being a Church of England school is so important to the work of Open Academy.

Oliver Burwood, CEO of DNEAT, said: "It became clear that the overwhelming desire of the community was for Open Academy to become officially a Church of England academy."

Year 11 Open Academy student Riley Benfield acted as official photographer for the visit. The pictures are all by him, except the one of Riley and the Bishop which is copyright Diocese of Norwich.

Welcome

Headteachers starting

Binks Neate-Evans

Interim Pathfinders Federation (Aylsham, Erpingham and Northrepps)

Farewell

Heads leaving

John Neenan

Pathfinders Federation (Aylsham, Erpingham and Northrepps)

Others

Holly Davy

16 years at the Diocese of Norwich, formally as PA to the Diocesan Secretary (CEO) and since 2015, PA to the Director of Education (DDE)

SIAMS congratulations

Congratulations to the following schools that have had their SIAMS inspections this term.

Earsham VA Primary

Fritcham Primary Academy

Harpley VC Primary

Tacolneston Primary Academy

Dereham Junior Academy

Kessingland Primary Academy

REQM congratulations

Gold

St Michael's Primary Academy, Kings Lynn

Wreningham VC Primary