

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Mrs Ethelston's Church of England Primary Academy

Vision

Deep Christian roots, nurturing strong growth, flourishing children.

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” Colossians 2:6-7

Mrs Ethelston's 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.

Notable Strengths

- The deeply embedded Christian vision provides a strong foundation for strategic decision making. As a result, leaders make considered choices and take courageous action when required.
- Pupils and adults are treated with love, care, compassion and respect. Wellbeing is prioritised and those who are considered vulnerable are thoughtfully nurtured, so they are enabled to flourish.
- Leaders at all levels are passionate about creating an environment in which everyone is valued. This fosters a happy, safe and inclusive ethos in which pupils and adults take pride in their school.
- Pupils live out the school's values in their learning, behaviour and actions. The older pupils are role models for the younger students. They make a positive difference to the culture of the school through their leadership responsibilities.
- The teaching of religious education (RE) is engaging, well-structured and creative. Assessment is effectively used to develop pupils' learning. As a result, pupils progress well.

Development Points

- Promote spirituality as a key aspect within 'house' collective worship. This is to deepen the pupils and adults' understanding of their own spiritual growth.
- Place more emphasis on the teaching of Christianity as a global faith. This is to broaden the pupils' knowledge of Christianity as a worldwide religion.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The deeply embedded Christian vision guides the life and work of the school strongly. There is a highly committed staff team and a tangible sense of working together. Strategic decisions made by leaders and governors are shaped by the vision, reflecting a commitment to the school's historic foundation. When faced with challenging circumstances, such as classes being relocated due to emergency repair work, the vision guides leaders' decisions. It provides a strong foundation to prioritise what is best for the pupils. Collaborative partnerships, such as that with the trust and the church, enhance its work. Monitoring and evaluation from governors assists leaders in evaluating its effectiveness as a Church school. The vision guides a supportive and inclusive community. This creates a culture in which pupils shine in their learning and friendships. As a result, pupils and staff enjoy school and flourish as individuals. There is a high level of parental confidence. This is rightly based on the kindness and respect shown to families, especially when they face difficulties.

Vision and Curriculum

Driven by the vision, the curriculum encourages pupils to have a strong foundation. It helps them to grow in their thinking and to have confidence in their actions. As a result of high expectations, combined with an emphasis on relevant support, pupils flourish. Staff are committed to ensuring pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are taught the same ambitious curriculum. Educational visits, ranging from those within the local area to residential stays, enrich the curriculum. These create memorable experiences that deepen pupils' understanding and engagement. Extra-curricular activities support pupils to develop their own love of life. Opportunities such as choir, sports, woodwork and computing inspire pupils to explore their own talents. As a lead school for music, pupils are encouraged to shine through singing, learning an instrument and performing. Leaders have recently introduced a shared framework for spiritual development. Pupils are fluent in explaining it using actions. Across the curriculum, they are encouraged to consider 'big questions' such as 'how can I show respect and kindness even when I disagree?' This helps pupils to think deeply about how they live and encourages spiritual development.

Worship and Spirituality

Daily inclusive worship and invitational prayer express the school's vision and associated values. The morning worship provides a calm start to each day and a sense of togetherness as a school. This is mirrored in the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils throughout the day. The school makes regular use of the adjacent parish church for times of worship and religious celebration. The use of this sacred space helps to deepen the pupils and adults' spirituality. Parents and carers are invited to class-led workshops. They value the opportunities provided by the school for the pupils to be strengthened in faith. The local clergy and church members play an active role in school life. The Open the Book workshops are enthusiastically received and are having a positive impact. For example, pupils can relate the actions of Jesus to the kindness and respect they display towards others. Older pupils support the younger pupils to articulate their thoughts during 'house' workshops which helps to nurture their confidence. However, the planned promotion of spirituality during these worship times is not sufficiently strong.

Vision and School Culture

Positive, trusting and loving relationships reflect the school's Christian vision and create a culture of care and belonging. Pupils demonstrate genuine thankfulness towards each other and adults. Wellbeing and good mental health are clear priorities and central to school life. The dedicated team of pupil mental health ambassadors play an active role in supporting their peers. The high-quality training they receive within their role means they are effective. The school is very welcoming and parents are listened to. The trust and leaders invest in wellbeing programmes and high-quality staff development, showing that staff are appreciated and valued. This enables them to champion pupils to flourish, both mentally and academically. Staff, pupils and families are extremely



well supported through difficult times. They feel confident sharing their concerns, knowing they will be met by leaders and the local clergy with compassion and action. As a result, lives of some individuals and their families are transformed. The calming presence of Flopsy and Daisy, the school's rabbits, is hugely valued by the pupils. They bring joy and share happiness especially when someone is having a tricky time.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Shaped by the school's vision, the pupils have a well-developed sense of rights and responsibility. There is an awareness that at times individual pupils require different levels of adult support. Leadership roles, including house captains and ethos group members, empower the pupils to make an active contribution to school life. The curriculum and collective worships are carefully designed to introduce and explore principles of justice and responsibility. Older pupils explain justice as being fair for all and everyone getting what they need to live well. They understand that actions have consequences. The school's behaviour system provides clear boundaries leading to a calm learning environment. As a result of their awareness of injustice, pupils are inspired to take individual action. Meaningful, charitable causes are supported through actions and fundraising activities. The innovative Mrs E's Freeze provides the pupils and adults with the opportunity to pause the typical curriculum lessons. On six occasions throughout the year, each class considers its place within the school, local and wider community. This provides planned space within the curriculum for spiritual, moral and cultural reflection. It also enables the pupils to take positive action for change such as making cards for a local care home.

Religious Education

Leaders ensure that RE has a high profile across the school. The curriculum provides a strong balance between the teaching of Christianity and a range of religions and worldviews. It is well-sequenced, enabling pupils to build progressively on prior knowledge and deepen their understanding over time. Leaders are proactive about their own professional development in RE which is enhanced by the trust, diocese and church partnerships. School leaders collaborate with other local schools to provide them with guidance and support. Teachers feel skilled and confident through the leadership they are given. A robust system of monitoring and evaluation ensures the school is aware of its strengths. However, pupils' understanding of Christianity as a worldwide religion is weaker.

The pupils talk in detail about what they have learnt and are engaged in their learning. They progress well and are supported through effective feedback so that misconceptions and gaps in learning are quickly addressed. Pupils take pride in the work they produce. The use of visitors to enrich the RE curriculum is valued by leaders. This provides the opportunity to develop the pupils' understanding.

Information

Address	Pound Lane, Uplyme, Lyme Regis, Devon, DT7 3TT		
Date	15 January 2026	URN	141525
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	197
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT	First Federation Trust		
MAT Chair	Alex Walmsley		
Headteacher	Katy Allington		
Chair of Governors	Dom Makemson		
Inspector	Nigel Helm		