

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary Church of England VC Primary School, Wareham

Address Streche Road, Wareham Dorset, , United Kingdom, BH20 4PG

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Overall grade

Good

The impact of collective worship

Good

School's vision

As children of God, we are nurturing, responsible and courageous. 'Once again the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish.' Matthew 13:47 We feel that this reflects our desire to be like the kingdom of heaven and welcome everyone: children, families, staff and community into our school.

Key findings

- The school's distinctive Christian vision has brought clear focus and direction to improvements. Leaders are totally dedicated to their work with a passion to make a difference for every pupil.
- Significant partnerships are promoted by the vision, enhancing the work and the quality of education offered. Strong relationships with local schools, the trust and the church have strengthened provision at all levels.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are shaped by the vision and associated Christian values. They show dignity and respect for one another. Their understanding of other communities, national and global are less-well developed.
- Collective worship has a high profile in daily life. 'Journey days' offer opportunities to explore festivals in greater depth. At present pupils do not have opportunities to plan and lead collective worship.
- The vision promotes the importance of religious education which deepen pupils' understanding of what the vision looks like in everyday life. There are examples of high quality work which is deepening pupils' thinking. At present pupils' understanding of other world faiths is less well developed.

Areas for development

- Deepen pupils' understanding of other world faiths so that they are confident to explain how faith shapes people's actions and behaviour.
- Extend pupils' knowledge of other communities, nationally and globally, so they can celebrate differences and diversity.
- Enable pupils to plan and lead collective worship independently so they are confident to articulate how this can shape their actions and thinking.

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

Leaders recognised that the school's vision made limited impact on daily life and was largely unknown. They involved pupils in creating a new distinctive Christian vision of which they now have real ownership. This has effectively given a clear direction to improvements. Leaders are totally dedicated to their work and determined to enable pupils to flourish. They confidently articulate the biblical principles underpinning the vision. They use Jesus' parable of catching fish, showing how he welcomes everyone because they are special to God. The school seeks to follow in Jesus' footsteps, using his teaching as a guide for daily life. Pupils can explain how the vision shapes their actions, giving examples of how they nurture others. Pupils talk of being courageous, either when they encounter challenging learning or standing up for what is right. The school has made rapid progress in recent years as a Church school. It has developed pockets of high-quality practice, notably with its curriculum and pastoral support. The vision is reflected in the approach to admissions, welcoming those who have a high level of need. A strong staff team has been established, who feel valued and are growing their talents. Together, they live out the vision and associated values, so all can recognise the difference that these make.

The school's provision is enriched by significant partnerships. These are informed by the vision, and associated values, enabling the school to share its expertise and nurture others, whilst also being supported itself. The school works closely with three other schools as part of a local hub. Subject leaders with appropriate expertise work alongside staff at all the schools, sharing good practice. The school team make a major contribution to this, developing staff across the hub schools. The RE leader trials new initiatives and nurtures staff in their development. Being part of the trust brings effective strategies to raise achievement linked to focused evaluations. The trust enables staff to grow their leadership skills and take up positions of greater responsibility as future leaders in Church schools. The influence of governors' monitoring has grown due to focused work from the trust, producing a clear overview. Increasingly this leads to new targets that are raising the impact of being a Church school. The Diocese offers focused training and visits. The church actively supports the school through the 'pioneer minister', who leads worship and contributes expertly to governor monitoring.

The challenge and quality of the curriculum is being extended, enabling pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning. For example, rich reading texts are linked to each unit of study exploring issues such as, climate change, disability and equality. These promote informed debates and deepen pupils' understanding and respect. Pupils are encouraged to become advocates for change, demonstrating the influence and importance of the Christian vision. Role models who have championed change against injustice are considered, showing how individuals can do the same. Weekly awards recognise pupils who challenge themselves and raise their aspirations. They demonstrate the vision in action as they courageously tackle harder and more challenging questions. Pupils use the language of perseverance and draw upon ideas coming from their Christian values, such as endurance. At present there are limited opportunities to explore other communities, either nationally or globally. Pupils' understanding of difference and diversity is not as fully developed when compared with other pupils of a similar age.

The Christian vision and values shape pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils treat one another with dignity and respect, taking responsibility for their actions. Through the school council pupils asked to create playtime buddies to nurture younger peers. These are now in place. A warm atmosphere and culture of learning and flourishing is evident across the school.

During the pandemic relationships with families remained strong. Staff offered effective support for pupils' wellbeing, ensuring learning continued, including collective worship, so all felt part of the family. Absent pupils can still join lessons through online links to continue learning. The pastoral support makes a major difference to pupils' lives. Their emotional needs are effectively met, supporting and raising their self-esteem as they return to their learning after the pandemic. The wellbeing of all is effectively nurtured by a mental health first aider. Vulnerable pupils are carefully monitored, so they feel valued and enabled to flourish in various ways. The provision for spirituality is growing, with more time and focus upon reflection. New approaches have been introduced but not yet embedded. Some creative experiences are offered through

'forest school' opportunities which are really valued. Pupils can express their thinking, recording these in class praise books, thoughtfully comparing responses.

The quality and depth of pupils' work in RE is steadily rising, led by an enthusiastic expert from the hub. Planning is more detailed, giving examples of how to improve specific RE skills and raise staff knowledge. Pupils are curious when responding to 'big questions' of meaning and purpose, discussing and refining ideas, recognising their relevance. They learn to disagree positively and respectfully. Teachers' individualised questions at the end of a piece of work deepens their thinking. Pupils have some understanding of a few key Christian concepts, such as salvation. World faiths are explored, but pupils are unable to talk about these in any depth. Assessment strategies are secure, enabling teachers to focus on the next stage of each pupils' learning. Ongoing improvements, such as introducing the resources of 'Understanding Christianity' is enriching pupils' knowledge of the Christian faith.

Collective worship is inclusive and invitational. Planning is thorough, allowing pupils to extend their understanding of values and the difference that they can make to everyday situations. Class worship, a recent initiative, enables age- appropriate questions to be discussed with pupils' understanding growing. Planning for class worship is good. Pupils' evaluations requested more visual elements and additional music, both now in place. Class reflection spaces are well established, which pupils generally find helpful. Pupils write prayers on different occasions and find this a useful way of expressing ideas. Rich experiences in termly journey days explore festivals or Christian values in creative ways. For instance, pupils deepened their understanding of the Christian belief of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At present pupils do not have the opportunity to plan and lead worship. Whilst some pupils can articulate the difference worship makes to their thinking, some are not confident to do so. Pupils talk about the main Christian festivals and are aware of their importance for Christians. Collective worship has a good profile in the life of the school.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	22 March 2022	URN	142167
Date of previous inspection	24 March 2015		
School status	VC	NOR	185
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation	Coastal Learning Partnership		
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Salisbury		
Headteacher	Nicole Davids		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	Above National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Above National Average		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector's name	David Hatrey	No.	0844