

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>Ilfracombe Church of England Junior School</b>	
Address	Princess Avenue, Ilfracombe, EX34 9LW
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
<p style="text-align: center;">'To enable all, through the love of God in Jesus Christ, to 'live life in all its fullness' John 10:10</p> <p>Our school is both a sanctuary and a forum. Where we experience incredible opportunities to develop our talents, character and to grow spiritually. Where an exceptional curriculum, world class teaching and enthusiastic learners flourish together. Pupils become knowledgeable, thoughtful, wise and articulate – able to reach out to the world with an open hand.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's Christian vision drives leaders to meet the needs of the local community. This inspires the school to be highly inclusive and welcoming to all adults and pupils, especially the vulnerable.</li> <li>• Leaders ensure the provision for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is very impressive. It changes pupils' lives, allowing them to flourish and 'live life to the full'.</li> <li>• Innovative learning opportunities provide breadth and challenge, enabling pupils to flourish. However, opportunities for spiritual development are not fully embedded.</li> <li>• The Christian vision drives collective worship which is varied and well planned. There are good opportunities for reflection, but pupils are not involved in leading and evaluating worship.</li> <li>• Religious education (RE) is well planned, allowing pupils to learn about Christianity and a range of religions and worldviews. However, assessment in RE is at an early stage of development</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop further opportunities for personal and spiritual development, in order to enhance the flourishing of all pupils and adults.</li> <li>• Ensure pupils have the opportunity to lead and evaluate collective worship, providing the Ethos group with clear strengths and areas for development.</li> <li>• Extend and embed assessment in RE so that pupils can better understand how well they are progressing with their learning.</li> </ul>

## Inspection findings

The school's Christian vision is driven by leaders who are committed to serving the needs of the local community. This ensures that all pupils are included and given the tools to 'live life to the full'. They articulate well how John 10:10 underpins this. Leaders rightly explain how the vision drives them to overcome barriers, for example by setting up a supportive hub for pupils at risk of exclusion. This ensures that the school is a safe place or 'sanctuary' for pupils where Christian values are modelled and explicitly taught. Thus all pupils, including those who are vulnerable or have SEND, are given many opportunities to flourish. Staff understand the importance of the vision and how it impacts their work with pupils. Governors are fully committed to the vision. They are very clear on its theological roots and passionate about how inclusivity permeates the school. There is a highly effective governors' ethos group that evaluates the school's Christian distinctiveness. Here their findings are fed back to the main governing body, which leads to improvement. For example, they monitor staff and pupil mental health, meaning that appropriate support is diligently applied where required. However, pupils are not involved in the ethos group meaning that their insights are not included. The local authority (LA) and the diocese also provide useful monitoring and feedback. All this means that the school is challenged, encouraged and thus grows as a Church school.

The Christian vision shapes learning opportunities that are broad and ambitious. Pupils are specifically taught knowledge and skills, including good behaviour. They are then encouraged to use this knowledge wisely to form opinions via balanced, informed debate. These opportunities allow them to be challenged, to learn well and therefore to flourish. Pupils learn about disadvantage, deprivation and the natural world in themes running through the curriculum. The John Muir award for all pupils provides them with chances to help preserve the natural world. This is through activities such as litter picking or writing to their MP about single use plastics. However, child-led social action projects are underdeveloped.

There are high levels of consistency across the school in how staff use Christian values to shape conversations about behaviour. Because of this, pupils' conduct is very good. They are calm and respectful. Inspired by the Christian vision, pupils value every individual. They give a warm welcome to those from all backgrounds and cultures. School buildings are used imaginatively to support the emphasis on oracy and discussion in the curriculum. The new 'forum' in the quad is a quiet space which gives the opportunity for formal debates and cultural experiences. This allows all pupils to develop well spiritually and to 'live life to the full'. The school has a secure policy on how the curriculum can provide for pupils' spiritual development. However, this is not fully embedded in classroom practice.

Provision for pupils with SEND and those who are vulnerable is highly impressive. Leaders go 'the extra mile' to provide calm spaces, support learning and personalised pastoral help for all those in need. The school works in tandem with the LA to provide very good provision for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion. There is also a highly effective 'hub' for pupils who are struggling with mainstream classrooms. Teaching assistants, pastoral and family support workers provide expert guidance. This means that all pupils, whatever their background or need, are able to flourish and grow.

Relationships are very good. Leaders at the school have an 'open door' policy. Staff and pupils are listened to and supported with their mental health. There is a pro-active student council that is currently working towards improving play areas. This gives pupils opportunities to lead and to flourish by contributing to improvements in the school. Pupils feel very safe and confident to solve any minor disagreements themselves. On rare occasions when they are concerned, they rightly report these issues to staff, which are effectively dealt with. This

means that the school is, indeed, a 'sanctuary' for the pupils.

Collective worship is well planned. Leaders support staff well with high quality resources. It is varied, with the whole school meeting weekly in the local Church. There is also effective provision in classroom worship, as well as occasional opportunities in whole year groups. A team of chaplains from different denominational backgrounds provide a variety of styles of worship. Bible stories, drama, role play or video excerpts encourage pupils to consider their own lives or those of others. This sometimes inspires them to action. For example, pupils have focussed on performing random acts of kindness for others, or writing 'thank you' letters to their teachers. There are always opportunities for prayer and reflection. Pupils rightly say it is an important time for them to experience calm and quiet. 'It can switch your day if you have had a rocky start'. In this way, collective worship is effective in providing for their spiritual development. However, at present, pupils do not have opportunities to lead and evaluate worship.

RE is very well led and resourced, ensuring it meets statutory obligations. Staff attend diocese-led training and lead the RE hub that brings together local teachers and RE professionals. Staff at the school are therefore well supported. There is a detailed curriculum plan. Pupils study Christianity and a range of world religions and worldviews. They can discuss their own beliefs and opinions in a safe space. Thus, RE makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual growth. Leaders monitor RE work to ensure consistency across year groups, but formal assessment in the subject is at an early stage of development.

This school truly is a sanctuary for its pupils. Leaders and staff work hard to ensure that everyone in the school has the best opportunity to 'live life in all its fullness'.

Information			
School	Ilfracombe Church of England Junior School	Inspection date	28 February 2023
URN	113381	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled
Diocese/District	Exeter	Pupils on roll	397
Headteacher	Jody Le Bredonchel		
Chair of Governors	Deb Callaghan		
Inspector	Judith Larrington	No.	948