

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

<b>Sidmouth Church of England Primary School</b>	
Address	Woolbrook Road, Sidmouth, EX10 9XB
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	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
<p>'Aspire, Flourish, Achieve'.</p> <p>We aim to enable our children to aspire, flourish and achieve, leading to 'life in all its fullness'. (John 10: 10). We aspire for pupils to have high hopes for all, seeing themselves as part of a community. Pupils are encouraged to explore themselves as unique and develop their character, gifts, and abilities.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school promotes an effective Christian vision through strong school and Trust leadership which ensures the flourishing of pupils and adults. Future development as a Church school is not clear in the current improvement plan.</li> <li>• Collective worship is an excellent feature of the school, thoroughly supporting the vision and with highly significant impact. The school community is comprehensively inspired to spiritual reflection.</li> <li>• Religious Education (RE) teaching and learning is particularly effective amongst older pupils who speak readily and confidently about religious matters. There is limited understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith. Systems of measuring and tracking progress are yet to be fully developed.</li> <li>• The vision has significant impact on the wider community. There is a particularly strong relationship between parents and carers, the school and the church. This mutual and substantial benefit is seen in the whole community living well together.</li> <li>• Spirituality is strongly evident in the work of ethos committees. The pupil ethos committee is particularly impressive in its mature understanding of this. Work on spirituality has yet to be fully embedded in all curriculum subjects.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify rich opportunities for spiritual development in all curriculum subject areas to extend pupils' understanding that spirituality pervades all of life.</li> <li>• Develop knowledge and appreciation of globally diverse Christian practice so pupils know that God may be approached in various ways.</li> <li>• Embed systems of monitoring progress in RE, and evaluate their effectiveness in ensuring the positive impact of the subject.</li> </ul>



## Inspection findings

A highly committed headteacher and staff promote an effective Christian vision strongly supported by the First Federation Trust (FFT). The enthusiastic and knowledgeable governors and directors provide expertise and challenge. This is evident in a generic plan for development of Church schools in the Trust. However, there is no specific focus on this school's improvement plan. Evaluating the vision's impact takes place through regular visits of governors and directors. Minutes and reports show visits ensure the vision drives all school activities. Strong leadership enables staff to flourish and feel valued, and is evident in their commitment to the school. The Trust provides considerable opportunities for developing leaders, and this is seen in the career progression of staff. The vision is truly lived by pupils through a very clear set of Christian values. It is apparent in positive relationships and good behaviour. Pupils recognise the vision as the source of those values, and readily link them with Bible stories.

The school has a very strong sense of community driven by the vision. This is seen in supportive partnerships between the school, parents, the local church, and the wider community. The diocese also provides strong support to the school through training. As a result, staff feel confident in their teaching. Senior leaders remark 'The church invests in us'. Classrooms and corridors display the Christian vision and values and pupils talk about them freely. Families report that the vision also inspires conversation and reflection at home on the Christian message. As a result, pupils see the relevance of the vision for their lives.

The Christian vision is lived through comprehensive care in educating and supporting all pupils. There is extensive provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A full time parental support adviser is also on the staff resulting in parents seeing the vision in meaningful action. Pupils are encouraged to believe that they can do anything 'in God's strength'. Parents appreciate newsletters and other communications from school, and the ready approachability of staff. This is reflected in a considerable number of letters and personal anecdotes and illustrates the effectiveness of the vision. There is a real sense that everyone is valued, with needs appropriately met.

There is a broad curriculum and particular opportunities to encourage spiritual development in various areas. Spiritual reflection is evident in pupils' understanding of the Christian concept of the Trinity, and God as three in one. They use a variety of symbols and illustrations to explain this. However, rich opportunities for spiritual development are not identified in all curriculum subjects. Pupils reflect well on their learning, and readily make connections with biblical material. The vision ensures the mental health and wellbeing of the school community. Pupils and staff talk about this freely and consider it in their relationships with one another. As a result, the whole community indicates they feel cared for and supported.

Pupils react positively to reflective moments in lessons, and informally in personal interaction. They understand that Bible teaching promotes human flourishing and Jesus' example may help people to achieve the same. Pupils are beginning to realise the importance of social action through a growing awareness of local, national and global issues. They are strongly aware of ecological issues and there is some understanding of themselves as agents of change that is yet to be fully developed. Some are able to link this with the vision and identify justice issues.


Pupils are enthusiastic in working together, and are very articulate. This is particularly evident in the work of the pupil ethos committee. They understand that biblical stories may help to resolve differences of opinion and show dignity and respect. The school's Christian approach emphasises the value of everyone before God. Reflection on forgiveness as a



value derived from the vision is clearly seen in the lives and attitudes of the pupils. The comfortable prayer space is used by pupils to reflect on spiritual matters and the impact on their lives. Prayer has an important place in the life of the school and the impact of this is seen in class prayer books written by pupils. The distinctive Christian ideal of love and forgiveness is modelled by the whole school community.

Excellent collective worship that is highly inclusive and invitational is evident in school life. The outstanding impact of collective worship is particularly evidenced by the confident approach of the pupil ethos committee. They are highly enthused by the vision and are active in helping their peers understand how that might work out in their lives. Their understanding of Christian doctrine and belief is impressive. They are involved both in the delivery and planning of worship and do so with a high level of spiritual and theological knowledge. All pupils engage strongly with worship and respond well with enthusiastic singing and participation in drama. This deepens their spiritual understanding. Opening greetings and responses and are used with other elements of Anglican tradition. Pupils identify moments which inspire action. Their opportunity to be involved in forty acts of kindness during Lent is a particular example of this. Through a wide variety of worship leaders drawn from local churches, pupils are aware of many Christian approaches to worship. Visits to church take place on the special occasions of the church year, and this worship has a strong impact on the wider community. Worshipping members of the churches own and support the school. They do this in various ways such as 'Open the Book' and by assisting pupils with reading. Pupils understand the significance of Christian festivals and their impact personally and on the world. They readily speak about how helpful collective worship is in understanding of the Bible.

The RE subject lead has a well organised programme throughout the school, and staff are thoroughly resourced. Pupils respond well with even the youngest readily exploring 'big questions' in RE. Involvement in diocesan training and RE support groups further strengthens this. RE has clear impact on the lives of the pupils and their personal spirituality seen in a depth of understanding. Pupils readily speak about their enjoyment of RE and display clear and confident knowledge of Christianity and worldviews. Feedback on work is both written and verbal. Comments in books help pupils develop skills and there is good evidence of thorough learning, although systems for monitoring progress are not fully developed. Older pupils understand Christianity as a living faith and speak about its effect on the world. Understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith is limited. Outstanding classroom displays provide a highly stimulating environment, promoting learning.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good	
	<p>RE shows good practice in confident teaching. Planning is well organised and there is a broad, rich and engaging curriculum. Pupil progress is tracked using a new system which has yet to be fully embedded and evaluated. All pupils including those with SEND show a depth of knowledge, which enhances their spiritual understanding of the world. Quality features include the ability of older pupils to give confident and articulate accounts of Christianity and worldviews.</p>			
Information				
School	Sidmouth Church of England Primary School	Inspection date	26 April 2023	
URN	143183	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	
Diocese/District	Exeter	Pupils on roll	495	
MAT/Federation	First Federation			
Head of School	Alex Spraggon			
Chair of Governors	Ann Denner			
Inspector	Jeremy Hellier	No.	899	