

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church CofE Primary and Nursery Academy, St Leonards-on-Sea	
Address	Woodland Vale Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, TN37 6JJ
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	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Excellent

School's vision
<p>Learning to Live Together, Together Living to Learn</p> <p>"Learn from Me." (Matthew 11:29)</p> <p>For every child to reach their God-given potential in a positive, caring and aspirational environment.</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole school community is united around their Christian vision. Everyone is inspired by the parable of the lost sheep, and the image of Jesus as the good shepherd. This means that all flourish in an atmosphere of love. • Leaders plan religious education (RE) meticulously and monitor it closely. As a result, pupils deepen their knowledge of various faiths as they get older and make excellent progress. • Collective worship is a daily distillation and expression of the Christian vision. This highly diverse school effectively serves everyone including those from a range of faith and ethnic backgrounds. They encounter Christ as a loving shepherd and, without compulsion, are sensitively encouraged to reflect upon his example. • This school rejoices in its diversity. Adults and pupils celebrate each other's differences in an unforced expression of their vision to learn to live together. The school is held together by a web of deeply trusting relationships. • A strong instinct of generosity runs through the school. All are tireless in their determination to meet each other's needs so that all can flourish. Many pupils also have opportunities to be a force for good beyond their school community. Leaders, however, have not ensured that this opportunity is available to all.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the curriculum enables all pupils to speak out and take action to challenge injustice beyond the school community.

Inspection findings

The Christian Vision at Christ Church is at the heart of everything the school does. Diversity is embraced in its highly inclusive environment. Adults and pupils understand the vision in terms of the parable of the good shepherd. As a result they want to follow Jesus' example of caring for the needs of others. In spite of the challenges that they face, the school community flourishes. This is because all adults and pupils take responsibility for everyone else's welfare. Every aspect of school life coalesces around its vision.

The curriculum is carefully planned to enable pupils to flourish and reach their God-given potential. Examples of rich experiences include 'forest school' and 'beach school'. Here, specifically trained members of staff inspire pupils to reflect on the ideas of the wider world and what may lie beyond it. The curriculum also promotes life skills that build their own sense of self-worth. These include 'funky food' cooking skills and personal safety.

Christ Church is a highly valued member of the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust (DCAT). They draw on the school's expertise in RE and other aspects of leadership to support others in the partnership. Effective links with the local parish and the Diocese of Chichester enhance provision for all even further. Representatives, including the parish rector, help to lead worship regularly. Every class visits the church as part of the RE curriculum. They also co-operate on projects such as the school pilgrimage to Walsingham, the Easter garden and the provision of seasonal displays.

The governing body shares a common determination to realise the Christian vision so that all can flourish. They monitor leaders diligently. They are especially knowledgeable about RE and collective worship. Regular attendance of both supports their ability to monitor leaders diligently. Governors speak to pupils to help them judge the impact of leaders' actions. They value the support and training that they receive from DCAT to help them to promote spiritual development for all.

The school welcomes pupils with a wide variety of languages and ethnicities. Difference is celebrated because the vision promotes a culture of equality before God. Leaders provide expert support for pupils speaking English as an additional language (EAL). This enables them fully to access the curriculum and flourish. The unifying factor across this diversity is the common understanding of the parable of the good shepherd. Leaders reflect this in their fierce determination to make sure that no adult or child falls outside the embrace of the school community. This ethos also applies to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They follow the example set to them by staff to treat each other as equally important members of the school 'flock'.

Crucial to this expression of the vision is the pastoral care team. This highly trained group of staff work closely to promote pupils' attendance as well as their mental health and wellbeing. They understand their work in terms of the Christian vision. Staff discuss the parable of the lost sheep with the pupils that they support. When necessary, calmness is promoted using a variety of effective methods. The wellbeing of staff is also prioritised. All value the strong relationships they have with each other as the vision draws them together in a unity of purpose. As a consequence, they generally continue to work at the school for a long time. This provides stability for pupils that helps them to flourish.


Pupils are deeply generous and enthusiastically raise money for a variety of local and global causes. For example, one group made and sold necklaces to raise funds for cancer research. Pupil worship leaders have also identified courageous advocates for justice from the Bible such as Daniel. They have the opportunity to take action to improve the lives of people in their local community. Pupils have visited a local old peoples' home to lead art and craft



activities as well as sing for the residents. There is, however, a lack of opportunity for every pupil to speak out and take action to challenge injustice.

Collective worship gives the school's all-encompassing Christian vision its firm theological underpinning. Everyone in the learning community is included in the invitation to be inspired by Christ's example. Adults and pupils understand that Jesus' different identities in the Bible can enable them to develop spiritually in a range of ways. They describe how Christ the King makes them think about hope, or Christ the Redeemer makes them think about sacrifice. Leaders skilfully craft this to make it inclusive for adults and pupils of all faith backgrounds. Worship is carefully planned by a group that includes staff, pupils and representatives from the church. Joyful singing is an expression of the togetherness of their Christian vision. The use of sign language promotes the school's inclusive ethos as well as providing moments of quiet calm and reflection. Pupils speak enthusiastically about how collective worship draws the school community together. Consequently, all feel calm, confident and uplifted.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils in RE, and have high expectations of teachers. Pupils' written work is consistently of an impressive quality, identified and effectively highlighted in regular monitoring. Teachers receive expert support to extend their own subject knowledge. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of the key beliefs of a number of religions including Christianity. For example, they explain the Holy Trinity in terms of the different characteristics of the separate persons of God. They respond with maturity to the key questions that are embedded throughout the curriculum, and compare different religions. For example, year 6 pupils are challenged to consider how faith helps people when life gets hard. They reflect on how this might help them to deal with life's challenges and reach their own God-given potential. The RE curriculum helps pupils to flourish by offering inspiring visits and experiences. The most important one of these is the school's pilgrimage to Walsingham. This is open to all pupils in year 6, following on from a specific unit of work. The pilgrimage is supported by the local church, and pupils talk with joy of its spiritual impact on them.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Excellent	
	<p>Pupils make excellent progress in RE. It is meticulously planned for all pupils, including the nursery. Diligent and imaginative leadership provides teachers with high quality resources. They use these to challenge pupils with thoughtfully crafted questions. These become more demanding as pupils get older. This enables them to deepen their knowledge of the different faiths that they study. Pupils' work is accurately assessed, and leaders use this information to modify the curriculum where necessary.</p>			
Information				
School	Christ Church CofE Primary and Nursery Academy, St Leonards-on-Sea	Inspection date	11 July 2023	
URN	144521	VC/VA/Academy	Academy	
Diocese/District	Chichester	Pupils on roll	445	
Headteachers	Susannah Singh and Russell Thorne			
Chair of Trust Board	Archdeacon Luke Irvine-Capel			
Inspector	Richard Hopkins	No.	2234	