

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Alderbury and West Grimstead Church of England Primary School	
Address	Firs Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, SP5 3BD
School vision	
<p>'Foundations for Life'</p> <p>Our vision is based on the parable of the wise and foolish builders.</p> <p>'Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.'</p> <p>(Matthew 7:24-27)</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders live out the distinctive Christian vision of building strong foundations for life. They are inspired by the biblical underpinning of the parable of the wise and foolish builders. Leaders' strategic oversight and day to day management of school improvement is strong and purposeful. • Enquiry-based learning experiences inspire pupils to engage well and to have high aspirations. Opportunities for spiritual development are built into the curriculum. Pupils show confidence to question, reflect and express their thoughts. • As a result of the vision, a nurturing culture has been built and is treasured. Everybody is treated with kindness, justice and respect in line with the school's Christian values. Pupils are articulate ambassadors for their school. • Leaders ensure that collective worship is carefully planned to be meaningful and relevant. Pupils are actively involved in leading this, enhancing the impact upon them and their peers. • Pupils learn about a breadth of diverse beliefs and cultures. This successfully enables them to have respect and understanding for all people, building strong foundations for life. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further embed pupils' understanding about the foundations for life referred to in the parable of the two builders. This is to strengthen the biblical roots of the vision that relate to the teachings of Jesus. • Further develop the long-term plans for religious education (RE) to match the needs of the pupils. This is to ensure robust progression and continuity in the teaching of key concepts. • In line with the school's overall review of assessment methods, build upon the start made with judging attainment in RE. This is to further inform planning and to assist in the monitoring of progress. 	

Inspection findings

Alderbury and West Grimstead is a highly successful church school with strong Christian leadership. The vision, rooted in the parable of the wise and foolish builders, is deeply embedded. Governors actively support, monitor and evaluate its effectiveness. Leaders understand the school's journey of improvement and the need for strong foundations to secure momentum. Priorities flow naturally from the vision, keeping it alive and purposeful. However, less clear is pupils' understanding of the link between the vision and the wider teachings of Jesus. Nevertheless, they appreciate the importance of strong foundations in their lives. This is summarised for the school community using the acronym 'LIFE'. All understand this refers to the importance of 'Learning, Individuals, Friendship and Environment'.

Leaders model dedication, inspiring colleagues to continue their spiritual and professional journeys. For example, three members of staff are undertaking further study with the Church of England National Professional Qualifications scheme. Staff engage meaningfully with training provided by the local diocese leading to positive changes. The Christian vision, therefore, enables pupils and adults to thrive in a nurturing environment. To enrich this, governors have recently approved the decision to join the Pickwick Academy Trust. Leaders have worked hard to choose an organisation which aligns with their vision. This further strengthens the commitment to laying good foundations through fostering collaboration for improved outcomes.

All associated with the school rightly comment that this is a welcoming and inclusive place. The carefully chosen Christian values of kindness, justice and respect enhance the vision. Pupils understand how this helps them to live well. The vision of foundations for life, permeates through to the 'Calm School Code'. Older pupils benefit from the responsibility that they are given for nurturing their younger peers. They correctly relate this to giving them good foundations. Nominated 'values prefects' recognise when these are lived out. This demonstrates the tangible impact of the Christian vision and values on pupil behaviour and engagement.

The learning and spiritual flourishing of all pupils is supported through the adoption of the 'Curious City' curriculum. This aligns with the school's vision of building strong foundations. Leaders have raised academic expectations. Consequently, pupils flourish, including those who are disadvantaged. An enquiry approach facilitates deep questioning and reflection. It emphasises 'states of being' such as being geographers, philosophers or mathematicians, raising aspirations. Extracurricular sporting activities are actively supported and encouraged. As a result, sports teams are enjoying significant success, allowing pupils to flourish in this area. Environmental awareness is promoted through the eco group. The 'Newsday Tuesday' team takes an investigative approach towards issues. They present this to their peers in collective worship setting tasks to facilitate deep reflection. The impact is shown through the thoughtful responses elicited. This develops important qualities such as leadership, confidence and a sense of responsibility for the planet. These foundations prepare pupils well for their future.

Spirituality is defined and incorporated into the curriculum. Effective use is made of the 'Philosophy for Children' approach which contributes to pupils flourishing. For example, families enjoy discussing the 'sticky questions' which their children bring home. This leads to further debate as part of 'Thoughtful Thursdays'. Therefore, spirituality in many forms is actively nurtured. For instance, pupils unselfconsciously contribute written submissions for the prayer tree. A recent initiative captures moments of spontaneous spirituality by writing on 'pearls of wisdom'. This enables fruitful time for contemplation. Engagement with external agencies, such as the Chaplaincy project from 'The Bridge', enhances the quality of reflection. This additional layer of Christian support is rightly valued by all. Pupils contribute towards developing the spiritual garden as a sacred space for reflection. For example, their artwork depicts the universal elements of earth, fire, air and

water. This area is non-faith based to be accessible to people of all faiths and none. Pupils articulate the importance of this and the specifically Christian area to reflect that this is a Church school.

Daily worship and prayer are part of the natural rhythm of school life, enhancing spirituality. Through a wide variety of activities, pupils reflect on the relevance of Christian values. Awards for living these out are proudly received showing impact. Time and space are provided for reflection, for example pupil journals, developing spiritually. Clergy are valued members of the school community, enabling close ties with both local churches. For example, members of the congregation effectively support worship through 'Open the Book' assemblies. Furthermore, the church is used regularly for services, displays and events. Thus, church and school work well together in developing spirituality. Governors effectively monitor and evaluate worship. There are regular meetings with the pupil ethos group and worship council. They accurately evaluate the effectiveness of worship and how it is relevant to their lives. Their thoughts and feelings are articulated with confidence. As a result, pupil evaluations contribute to improvement.

A well-balanced curriculum map for RE is in the early stages of refinement due to mixed age classes. There is effective monitoring, moderation, and trialling of new assessments. This indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good, and pupils are making good progress. The teaching of Christian concepts, such as The Trinity, is effective. A chronological frieze in the hall helps the school community to understand the sequence of events in the Bible. This aids understanding about both the Old and New Testament. Consequently, pupils understand the close historical relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Leaders ensure that world views are incorporated into the RE curriculum. Humanist visitors as well as representatives from the Christian and Jewish faiths are encountered. This facilitates the exploration and comparison of a wide range of world views. Therefore, pupils appreciate and respect multiple perspectives on faith and belief.

Collaborations exist with various organisations, including food banks, and humanitarian efforts. These contribute to a culture of justice and responsibility. This is recognised by achieving the Bronze Award from Christian Aid's 'Global Neighbours' scheme. There is a school commitment to environmental sustainability. This is demonstrated through pupils questioning their MP about government strategy. Persuasive letters are written both to the Prime Minister and the King, outlining their environmental concerns. Pupils show leadership on eco-friendly practices such as litter picking and recycling paper. These actions exemplify that they engage meaningfully with local and global issues, reflecting a commitment to social responsibility. Families, including refugees, appreciate the impact of Christian compassion in times of challenge.

The vision is lived out with a palpable sense of humility and kindness. A commitment to Christian values with emphasis on spiritual development is combined with an active pursuit of justice and responsibility. This successfully contributes to a flourishing and supportive school community.

These inspection findings indicate that Alderbury and West Grimstead School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	27 November 2023	URN	126445
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	146
Diocese	Salisbury		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Wesley Thorpe		
Chair	John Fuller		
Inspector	Amanda Brockway	No.	2214