

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

St Michael's Church of England VC Primary School, Bournemouth	
Address	Somerville Road, Bournemouth, BH2 5LH
School vision	
<p>Like a lighthouse, St Michael's is a beacon of safety and stability. It takes courage to learn and remember knowledge, develop new skills and allow your own light to shine in the world. We respect our differences and know that working peacefully together allows our lights to shine more brightly.</p> <p>'Let your light shine' Matthew 5:16</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Christian vision has clear biblical roots and is lived by the school community. It is used as a driving force for decisions and actions that enable the school community to flourish.</li> <li>• The vision inspires a contextually appropriate curriculum that enables pupils to engage well with their learning and to have ambition. The 'St Michael's Way' establishes clear expectations for behaviour. This results in widespread engagement throughout the school in line with the vision.</li> <li>• Adult led worship is inspiring, inclusive and invitational. There is a coherence across the school due to strong leadership.</li> <li>• As a result of the vision, a nurturing culture exists. Everybody is treated with respect and care taking full account of their individual needs. Carefully planned support for pupils, especially those considered to be vulnerable, ensures all are treated well and can flourish.</li> <li>• There is a strong sense of spirituality which stems from the Christian vision. This pervades all areas of school life. Spirituality is made meaningful to people of all faiths and of none.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further engage with the local community to enhance the religious education (RE) curriculum with a range of religious visits and visitors. This is to further embed understanding of the variety of faiths within this diverse school community.</li> <li>• Further develop opportunities for older pupils to plan and lead worship. This is to empower them and to embed the relevance of worship to their daily lives.</li> <li>• Broaden pupils' first-hand knowledge of engagement with social action. This is to further extend their understanding of themselves as agents of change.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>This is an effective church school which meets the needs of a richly diverse population. For context, 57 languages are spoken. A wide variety of belief systems exist and all are fully respected. Leaders work hard to ensure that the school is true to its Christian foundation. Staff present Jesus as a role model for love, justice, kindness and compassion with a relevance that transcends individual beliefs. Leaders carefully considered the specific context of their school when consulting on the vision. As a result of this, it is widely understood and lived out. Leaders respond to the needs of the community</p>	

with sensitivity. This enables people from diverse communities to live well together, feel safe and flourish. Regular visits enable governors to monitor impact successfully. They have the insight to both support and question the school leadership effectively. Governors are invested in the success of the school and fully understand the challenges and the successes.

Leaders ensure that the vision is effective in driving decisions and actions. For example, they set clear expectations for a behaviour curriculum that reflects the 'St Michael's Way'. The pupil parliament are proud of their involvement in further developing this system with rewards. Moreover, pupils are able to articulate how these expectations link to the vision. A further example of how the school lives out its vision is the weekly initiative called 'midweek meals'. Volunteers cater for and serve a free evening meal, and everyone is welcome to attend. This provides a wonderful opportunity for families to mix and create a supportive community. Every individual is valued, and pastoral care is strong for the pupils, their families and the staff.

RE is recognized by school leaders as an area which needed improvement. Leaders ensure that there is progression in key concepts and an appropriate balance of religions are taught. However, the resources for visits and visitors within the community are underused. The impact of RE is monitored effectively by leaders which feeds into a successful improvement plan. However, medium term plans to further assist colleagues are in the early stages of development. Subject leaders submit reports to governors enabling them to fulfil their role in monitoring the RE curriculum. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the importance of the subject and can articulate their learning. They demonstrate high levels of understanding about a range of religions and worldviews. The context of the school enables them to be highly aware of cultures beyond the UK and Europe. Therefore pupils appreciate Christianity as a global, world faith.

Learning experiences are carefully structured to be broad in content to meet the needs of all. Leaders rightly prioritise establishing vital foundations in oracy and literacy. This enables pupils to fully access all the other opportunities to flourish. Leaders select learning materials carefully to ensure that the diverse school population is represented. This successfully promotes understanding and empathy. Furthermore, child translators help to welcome children with little or no English and assist wherever possible. This enables all to live well together in an inclusive, dignifying and equitable culture. Extra-curricular activities such as music and sport are appreciated by pupils and broaden their experiences and interests. These opportunities enable them to integrate and flourish even if recently arrived from abroad. A review of sport has ensured equality of opportunity for all in line with the vision. For example, the recently established girls football team has raised aspirations. Bold funding decisions support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This ensures equity of provision. The dedicated staff and 'beach hut' facility provide the individual approach needed for these pupils to flourish. These examples show how the school lives out the values of peace, courage and respect which underpin the vision.

Spirituality is evident, as leaders ensure effective opportunities to 'prepare, provide and reflect'. Rich learning experiences such as a recent MP visit and involvement in a community art project provoke deep reflection. The school successfully prepares pupils to be thoughtful and respectful citizens within a diverse community. Leaders are proactive in explicitly planning to develop pupils' spiritual capacities. For example, when reflecting on harvest, pupils appreciate and are thankful for what is good in their lives. As a result of this, they extend generosity to others. The staff elicit questioning and instil the importance of reflection. As a result, pupils articulate their thoughts with confidence. One such effective example is 'incidental science'. This captures the wonders of nature. Consequently, spirituality is understood and developed in a way which is accessible to people of all religions and none. As a result, pupils are encouraged to use quiet spaces for contemplation, both within the building and grounds. This makes a positive contribution towards pupils' ability to flourish spiritually.

Collective worship is very well led and organised. Leaders ensure it is engaging and inclusive. Spiritual capacity is carefully and systematically developed with questions linked to a Bible story and verse. Music is chosen effectively to engage pupils and to enhance worship. Singing is joyful and enthusiastic which creates a spiritual and uplifting experience. Leaders approach current news events with sensitivity to promote profound reflection. The impact of this is demonstrated through pupils' prayers, shared both in worship and through the school newsletter. Although they participate under adult direction, opportunities for pupils to lead worship are less well developed. This limits the opportunities for them to be actively engaged in its shaping and evaluation. It also reduces the opportunities for leaders to monitor the impact of school wide worship on pupils and adults.

A welcoming and respectful atmosphere is evident throughout the school. Strong and caring relationships are inspired by the vision. There is a sense that the school is a family which nurtures and cares for all of its members. The wellbeing of all is a priority, and as a direct result of this, all flourish. Pupils are encouraged to look outwards to understand the needs of the community. For example, they support 'Hope for Food' the local food bank. Pupils also make soup for the homeless which is served locally with the help of staff. Pupils understand that in helping others they let their light shine and rightly describe their teachers as 'guiding lights'. However, their understanding of being independent advocates for change is less well developed. Initiatives tend to be adult led and linked to the curriculum. An exception to this is the child-initiated litter picking group. This operates both within and beyond the school grounds and is supported by local Rotarians.

Overall, St Michael's is a school with a universal language of respect. People of multiple backgrounds exist together peacefully and with understanding. St Michael's is like a lighthouse of safety as set out in the vision and also a beacon of hope for the future.

These inspection findings indicate that St Michael's Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

Information			
Inspection date	19 October 2023	URN	142446
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	625
Diocese	Portsmouth;Winchester		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Anthony Evans		
Chair	Nicola Pearce		
Inspector	Amanda Brockway	No.	2214