

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Lady Seaward's Church of England VA Primary School	
Address	Clyst St George, Exeter, EX3 0RE

School vision

'Learning and life in all its fullness'. (Inspired by John 10: 10)

Our school exists because of the aspiration of Lady Seaward and the local church to support parish children in their academic and spiritual development, and to see them flourish. At Lady Seaward's, we are very aware of our history and the legacy that the local community is still benefitting from today. As educators, we are constantly reflecting and exploring how we support and develop spiritual growth across all subjects. We are on a 'Journey towards the Heart of God'; seeing ourselves as global citizens who want to go deeper in our learning about ourselves, our community and the wider world.

School strengths

- There is a highly relevant Christian vision lived by the whole school. This has a clear impact on everyone's personal lives.
- A strong sense of a caring family pervades the school and wider community. This has a significant positive effect on mental health and wellbeing.
- High quality and effective Christian leadership gives clear direction to staff and pupils alike.
- Collective worship is well planned and executed with the pupil ethos committee. It highlights the vision and plays an important role in spiritual development.
- Religious education (RE) teaching produces pupils who speak confidently about faith matters. The high quality curriculum ensures development in a relevant context.

Areas for development

- Extend work on spirituality by using opportunities for promoting spiritual development in all areas of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils will be helped to understand spirituality pervades all areas of life.
- Strengthen understanding of diversity through studying Christianity as a global, multi-cultural world faith. Pupils will be enabled to appreciate the variety of ways in which Christian worship is expressed across the world.
- Ensure all staff have access to continuing professional development in RE to promote confidence in teaching. This will reinforce the impact and effectiveness of the curriculum.

Inspection findings

Lady Seaward's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School has a strong Christian vision. Sensitive to the local context, and with regard to the local context, pupils are all very familiar with it. A colourful and informative graphic ensures effective impact. The First Federation Trust (FFT) strongly supports the vision. 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. The impact of this is seen in the school's enhancement of early years provision and development of wrap around care. 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. The vision is truly lived by pupils and is apparent in positive relationships and good behaviour. Pupils recognise the vision as the source of their values, and readily link them with Bible stories. Further impact is clearly seen in the wider community's level of interest engendering a keen sense of family.

The vision encourages a stimulating curriculum following the 'Life in all its fullness' idea in all areas. Pupils are confident, reflective learners seen in their willingness to discuss a variety of subjects. The vision encourages them to see themselves on a 'Journey towards the Heart of God'. They indicate their interest in learning through lively responses to challenges and questions. This extends to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Effective support for SEND pupils also comes from the trust so the needs of all learners are met. Quiet reflective spaces outdoors and in classrooms support learning, and pupils readily explain how these are used. A shared understanding of spirituality is evident, although opportunities in all curriculum subjects are not consistently recognised. The school provides a stimulating learning environment in a very special building which pupils clearly appreciate and enjoy.

Collective worship is well organised, and has a clear impact seen in the eager willingness of pupil participation. The school has a strong pupil ethos committee which helps in the planning and delivery of worship. The Churchwarden and staff have some input to this too. There are also bespoke ethos days, and pupils readily speak of their activities which help them understand the vision. As a result, pupils show a depth of understanding of worship and significant development in personal spirituality. Collective worship links with the vision through a set of Christian values each linked with biblical verses. Pupil comments on worship are recorded and shared to drive future planning. They understand the place of prayer in school and personal life. An example of this is seen in their explanation of how to use a prayer tree. There is an innovative 'Bears 'n Prayers' club led by a children and youth worker from a local church. This allows younger children to cuddle a teddy bear and find a calm and reflective space for prayer. Older pupils explain that prayer is a dialogue, and listening as well as speaking is required. Strong links are maintained with the church. This is seen in the provision of Bibles, and the regular use of the church each term. Together with input from the congregation, there is clear mutual and substantial benefit in terms of spiritual development. The church has a school notice board within the building which further strengthens the link between the two communities. The worship is demonstrably inclusive and invitational. Pupils are inspired through worship and demonstrate values such as compassion through a variety of causes. The local food bank is an example of this.

The vision promotes the idea of a 'Journey towards the Heart of God' and as a result pupils care for one another. They behave well and are very considerate. The use of the 'friendship bench' in the playground is one example of this, making sure that nobody feels excluded. As a result, character development is strong. The school council speak proudly of being elected to the role and are very mindful of their responsibilities. Pastoral care in this school is outstanding. All staff, whatever their role, speak of how the community helps their mental health and wellbeing. There is strong outreach to families through supportive and approachable staff. Transition arrangements into Reception, and onwards to secondary school are in place. As a result, pupils continue to be encouraged to carry the vision with them wherever they go. Parents value the weekly newsletter and other communications, so that they feel involved in all events. They speak enthusiastically of the Church school ethos and its impact in terms of a caring community and moral guidance.

Pupils understand the Christian quest for justice. The vision graphic shows being world-ready citizens as an essential part of the journey towards God. Most pupils can explain this in terms of action for change in the world. The school council champions their activities particularly in supporting such charities as Edukid. Pupils are enthusiastically supporting a boy in Uganda. Their understanding of his situation means they have a keen sense of the quest for justice. Pupils support him in numerous ways in helping him with his aspirations to be a doctor. Occasional Zoom calls have further reinforced their understanding of deprivation and concern to help. Pupils have a very strong sense of community, and the range of activities ensures an appreciation of the idea of Christian responsibility.

RE is very well planned throughout the school. Statutory and church requirements are met. Other than the RE lead, staff are not currently involved in continuing professional development in the subject. RE has a clear impact on the lives of the pupils and their personal spirituality. This is seen in the natural way they discuss faith matters and understand the effect that religion might have on other peoples' lives. A particularly strong feature is the study of religious texts which enhances the effectiveness of the curriculum. Floor and individual books indicate a mix of learning and age-appropriate pupil reflection. The effectiveness of the curriculum is also seen in pupils' explanations of religious symbols. There is some limited understanding of Christianity as a multicultural world faith.

Evidence of progress in skills and knowledge is seen in thorough assessment across the year groups. Assessment provides some information to inform future planning and is being further developed to ensure the subject's effectiveness. The quality of RE teaching is very good, with a strongly reflective approach evident. Monitoring of the quality of teaching takes place through the trust which effectively supports through a specialist subject lead. As a result of this RE promotes both knowledge and understanding evident in discussion with pupils. The age-appropriate curriculum stimulates thinking and personal spiritual development with pupils making substantial progress.

The inspection findings indicate that Lady Seaward's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	15 January 2024	URN	137642
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	78
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT/Federation	First Federation		
Head of School	Michala Firth		
Chair	Alex Walmsley		
Inspector	Jeremy Hellier	No.	899