

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

### St Andrew's Church of England Primary Academy, Chardstock

#### Vision

Christian values, high expectations, treasuring uniqueness - sitting at the heart of the community  
'... I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness.' (John 10:10)

At St Andrew's Church of England Primary Academy, Chardstock, we believe that our high expectations enable us to become the very best versions of ourselves in a flourishing Christian community. Our school community is a place of friendship and respect upholding Christian values. With Jesus as our helper, we all flourish in a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment. As a school, we have a cherished place within our community where everyone is treasured for their uniqueness and is given a wide range of opportunities to learn and nurture their talents. Our Christian vision runs through everything that we do and enables us to enjoy and celebrate life.

St Andrew's Church of England Primary Academy is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Strengths

- Creative and devoted school leaders have established a clear Christian vision which is supported by the First Federation Trust (FFT). Working in partnership empowers leaders and staff. It strengthens their work as an inspirational church school with high expectations.
- St Andrew's Church of England Primary Academy is a place where people are welcomed and treasured for their uniqueness. As a result, pupils gain a sense of self-awareness, confidence and achievement.
- Pupils and staff flourish in this community within a strong nurturing culture of respect and friendship. The Christian vision is a life-changing reality as kindness and encouragement radiate from the school enriching the lives of others.
- School and trust leaders are wholehearted about working together to provide a curriculum which enables pupils to develop holistically. Consequently, the school vision becomes a reality as pupils are given the opportunity to 'live in all its fullness'.
- Religious education (RE) is led and taught with enthusiasm and skill. Lessons ensure that pupils build upon prior learning. Therefore, they develop an increasingly secure knowledge about religious and non-religious worldviews.

#### Development Points

- Enrich daily collective worship. This is so that pupils and adults have more stimulating experiences that enhance their spiritual flourishing.
- Strengthen the RE curriculum so that pupils learn more about the variety of belief and practice within individual religions. This is so that they develop a better understanding of diversity among people of faith.



## Inspection Findings

St Andrew's is a special place where pupils and adults are nurtured to live life in all its fullness. The Christian vision is lived out as people are valued as unique and precious individuals. Pupils learn how to live and learn well through regular reference to the school's core Christian values. These values are about 'celebrating life' through friendship, by making good decisions, persevering and by being peaceful, loving and respectful. Devoted school leaders and staff consider deeply what is best for pupils, their families and the local community. Recently, this resolve has been strengthened significantly by working in partnership with the First Federation Trust. The support of the trust has given school leaders and staff a renewed sense of confidence and energy. The trust's vision for people 'to aspire, flourish and achieve' resonates powerfully with the school's vision. School families, members of the church and village delight in the school as a loving place where people are welcome and accepted. The partnership with the trust has reinforced processes for ensuring that the school continually develops as an effective church school. Consequently, the Christian vision is realised as pupils flourish together in an atmosphere of high expectation.

The Christian vision for 'high expectations' drives an ambitious and holistic curriculum. School and trust leaders, along with committed staff, are deeply invested in meeting the individual needs of their pupils. A wealth of additional activities, such as chess and eco-club, are provided to target pupils' interests and aptitudes. The Christian vision to 'treasure uniqueness' is deeply apparent. School leaders and staff skilfully adapt teaching and learning. Consequently, pupils receive the support and challenge that they need to make progress. This is especially important for vulnerable pupils and those with special education needs and disabilities (SEND). They thrive in an inclusive classroom environment in which resources, such as technological aids, are targeted to support independent learning. Staff ensure that pupils, with a variety of gifts and talents, have the chance to shine and are celebrated. Consequently, pupils grow in confidence and self-belief enabling them to achieve. An encouraging and caring atmosphere wraps around pupils, with high levels of support for emotional and mental wellbeing. Staff develop trusting relationships with parents and carers. This has considerable impact on the way that pupils aspire and develop to be their best as precious individuals. Staff maximise the school's idyllic rural setting as a calming and therapeutic environment for pupils. Time is given to appreciate beauty, to wonder, to have fun, to consider others and be inspired to reflect and pray. In such ways pupils develop spiritually and socially.

Collective worship is significantly enriched by a loving and supportive partnership with leaders and members of local churches. They regularly contribute to collective worship by telling and acting out Bible stories. Therefore, pupils can recall a range of Bible stories which deepen their understanding of how to make good decisions. For example, they explain that the story of David and Goliath reminds them to persevere even when they 'feel small'. School leaders know that collective worship plays a unique role in enabling pupils and adults to grow spiritually. They have established an understanding of spirituality that is about reflecting on self, others, choices and 'looking upwards'. However, collective worship does not consistently draw people away from the classroom into an atmosphere of expectation and reverence. There is a familiar pattern to daily collective worship which is comforting, such as the lighting of the candle and a shared prayer. Nevertheless, the lack of variety does not reliably engage and inspire pupils and adults. Pupils sometimes struggle to find a calm and reflective space in which they can grow spiritually. They value other opportunities to be quiet in school and at home when they can reflect and pray. Pupils express how singing in worship 'embraces their happiness'. There is a sense of freedom and unity as pupil and adult voices are raised in song. Singing together lifts their spirits.



The Christian vision for people to live 'life in all its fullness' is extended beyond the school. Staff seek out resources that reflect the diversity of a bigger world. This enables pupils to consider ethical issues of prejudice and injustice. Pupils are deeply concerned about inequality. For example, after learning about discrimination in a sporting context, pupils insisted that 'respect' became one of the school's Christian values. Older pupils are wholehearted about making a difference as they take on responsibilities, such as in the Eco-Group. They are highly motivated to care for God's creation expressing this in practical tasks, by spreading awareness and fund-raising. Pupils keep the outdoor environment free of litter and encourage wildlife. As a result, it is a source of joy and peace for the school community.

School and trust leaders are wholly committed to ensuring that RE is a subject of high importance. They understand its unique place in preparing pupils to live life to the full in a world of diversity. The subject is strengthened by a sharing of professional expertise, high quality resources and training within the trust and diocese. Leaders regularly review the RE curriculum to ensure that it is aspirational. As a result, pupil knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious viewpoints develops year on year. For example, older pupils speak confidently about the main beliefs of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. However, pupils' understanding of how beliefs and practices of people within the same religion might vary, is less secure. The RE curriculum is designed so that pupils develop skills such as reflecting, making connections and debating. Consequently, they grow as independent learners, as well as those who learn by listening respectfully to the viewpoints of others.

RE is led and taught skilfully and enthusiastically. Leaders and teachers regularly review how well individual pupils are remembering and understanding. Such reflective and creative practice results in innovative approaches that strengthen pupil progress. For example, a visual display in every classroom reminds pupils of their 'learning journey' through a topic such as Judaism. This is extremely effective, enabling pupils to remember vocabulary and be confident in talking about a range of faiths. RE lessons are enriched by pupils debating big questions and reflecting on their own thoughts and beliefs.

The Christian vision is deeply apparent in the way that leaders, staff and pupils respect and understand each other. Staff feel uniquely valued and trusted by school leaders. They are encouraged to flourish personally and professionally. This is strengthened through mutually beneficial dialogue and training within the trust and diocese. Leaders and staff actively promote the wellbeing and self-esteem of pupils. As a result, pupils develop an awareness of themselves as well as a sensitivity to the needs of others. They learn to live harmoniously and happily together. The school is a beacon of love and friendship in this close-knit community. In partnership with the church, it radiates hope and peace, encouraging people especially in challenging times. Families delight in being able to celebrate festivals such as Christmas and Easter together in the school or village church. These special times are a source of great joy and spiritual refreshment for those involved. In such ways, the community shares in the Christian vision of living life in all its fullness.

## Information

Address	Westcombes, Chardstock, Axminster, EX13 7BJ		
Date	2 April 2025	URN	151304
Type of school	Academy (inspected as Voluntary Aided)	No. of pupils	94
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT	First Federation Trust (FFT)		
Headteacher	Donna Butler		
Chair of Trust	Alex Walmsley		
Inspector	Angela Daniel		