



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Drake's Church of England Primary School	
Address	Middle St, East Budleigh, Budleigh Salterton, EX9 7DQ
School vision	
<p style="text-align: center;">'Growing Stronger Together'</p> <p>At Drake's Church of England Primary school, we believe in supporting all members of our community to enable and inspire them to grow as confident, independent learners, fully equipped and ready for life's challenges. This is based on the parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32). We believe that given guidance and support even the smallest can flourish and achieve.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian vision is the heart and soul of this school. It inspires the caring ethos, enabling pupils to feel safe. It promotes excellent behaviour, positive relationships and the well-being of the whole school community. • Leaders are fully focussed on the needs of pupils and staff. This drives improvements in all areas of school life. Thus, pupils flourish academically and spiritually as they 'grow stronger together'. • Religious education (RE) is well led and resourced. Teaching is very good. Pupils respond enthusiastically in their lessons and progress well. RE effectively provides opportunities for pupils to explore and debate their own views. They successfully study a wide range of world faiths and worldviews. • Collective worship builds this school as a community with love at its core. It has variety, and is highly inclusive. Worship is joyful, reflecting the supportive, close relationships in this school. This allows them to live well together and inspires them to help others. • Strong community links with parents, the church and local charities empower pupils to be highly effective agents for change. As a result of helping others, they develop their own spiritual lives. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively share the variety of good practice at Drake's with other schools in the Trust. This is to enable them to all 'grow stronger together'. • Continue to refine, adapt and grow the RE curriculum. This is to enable pupils to further develop their knowledge and understanding over the four-year rolling programme of study. • Continue to ensure that pupils are educated about diversity and difference in the wider community. This is to enable them to be well prepared for life in modern Britain. 	

Inspection findings

At Drake's, the whole school community is rooted in, and guided by, its Christian vision and related values. This is inspired by the need for pupils in this small, rural school to grow in confidence and independence. The vision, and the parable of the mustard seed which underpins it, is well known and understood by all. It inspires the school's approach to the curriculum, policies and practices. These all work together to help pupils grow stronger in their learning and spiritual development. Leaders are highly effective in monitoring the impact of the vision with staff, pupils and governors. The Link Academy Trust is very supportive of the Christian foundation of the school, providing invaluable training and advice for staff. This enables everyone to flourish. They ensure that the Local Advisory Committee ethos group evaluates the school both formally and informally. This is very effective, leading to improvements and changes which help everyone to grow and develop.

Collective worship is varied and inspired by the Christian vision of the school. It is enjoyed by pupils and staff, enabling them to flourish in their spiritual lives. Singing is joyful. Pupils in the ethos group are involved in helping to plan and deliver it confidently and well. This means that the whole school grows stronger together as they explore their vision and values in detail. A close relationship with the local church provides inspirational worship led by church leaders and the 'open the book' team. The school also celebrates the main Christian festivals at the church. In this way, excellent links are fostered with the community. Staff and pupils have a clear understanding of what spiritual development is, and they link this closely to caring for their neighbours. Pupils rightly say 'in helping others, I grow and help myself to become a better person'. Thus, both worship and lessons are highly effective in encouraging and developing pupils to be agents of change in the surrounding area. They are inspired to campaign for change, fundraise and take action. A recent example of this involves key stage one children noticing litter in the playground and their community. The pupil ethos group helps this to develop into a litter pick, poster competition, working with a charity and organising a beach clean. In this way, pupils are empowered to be effective in changing and improving their local community.

Leaders ensure that the programme of learning experiences serves the needs of all pupils at this school very well. It is inspired by the Christian vision 'growing stronger together'. It allows everyone to grow and learn collaboratively, leaving no-one behind. Teachers ensure that all pupils can access learning at their own level. They successfully help each other, and are presented with appropriate challenge and support by staff. This means that every individual, including the vulnerable and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can flourish. Pupils are confident and articulate. They regularly ask 'big questions' of meaning relevant to their units of study. In this way they interrogate facts and ideas and grow stronger academically, mentally and spiritually. Extra-curricular activities and visits help to expand their horizons. For example, there was a recent outing to both the mosque and cathedral in Exeter. This helps pupils to see the relevance of faith and beliefs in people's day to day lives. These visits increase their understanding of diversity and difference in our world. This in turn inspires confident and detailed written work in class. In addition, teachers carefully use an excellent specialist programme provided by the Trust. This gives pupils a real insight into the lives and views of people from many different countries and backgrounds. In this way, they widen their horizons outside of this small village community, and are prepared for life in the wider world. These types of projects ensure pupils continue to learn about diversity and difference. However, they are at an early stage of development in the curriculum.

Staff and pupils are kept safe and feel highly valued at this school. It has a strong and loving ethos with older pupils constantly caring for and looking out for their younger peers. Parents rightly value the way in which the safety and happiness of their children is the highest priority of the staff. This is because of the commitment of leaders and teachers to their Christian vision and values. This is clearly evidenced in the daily life of the school. Children trust their teachers who know them well as

individuals. They have a clear focus on pupils' academic needs and well-being. Staff appreciate the mentoring, support and career opportunities offered to them by school and Trust. This allows them to develop well as professionals and to feel very well supported in times of difficulty or challenge. The 'relational' approach to behaviour management, championed by the Trust, means that classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils are treated fairly and rightly say that 'teachers always listen to both sides of the story'. Staff aid pupils in resolving their disputes on their own, helping them to grow to become independent and confident.

RE is given a high priority in the curriculum at Drake's and is valued by pupils and staff. The subject is led well, both at school and Trust level. Both the Trust and the Diocese provide good quality training for teachers. This ensures that RE learning experiences are highly effective at meeting the academic needs of pupils. They take every opportunity to discuss and debate, which contributes well to their spiritual development. Careful planning and use of good quality resources means that pupils are engaged in lessons. They contribute well to classroom discussions and therefore learn well. RE teaching is very good, taking into account the diverse needs of every pupil in the class. The recently implemented four-year rolling programme of study ensures that the RE curriculum is fully covered by all pupils over their time at the school. However, its refinement to ensure that each unit is fully accessible to every pupil in the mixed-age classes is at an early stage of development. Assessment in RE is well organised, understood by pupils and allows teachers to accurately plan future lessons. As a result, pupils make very good progress in their learning in RE.

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

Information			
Inspection date	14 December 2023	URN	147495
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	36
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT/Federation	Link Academy Trust		
Academy Executive Headteacher	Peter Halford		
Chair	Cheryl Mathison		
Inspector	Judith Larrington	No.	948