

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

### Sherborne St John Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

At Sherborne St John, our children will achieve their full potential, enjoy their learning and be inspired by the experiences we provide. Our values of trust, truth and forgiveness enable us to build a secure and loving environment where everyone works together so that the whole school community can thrive.

Sherborne St John Church of England School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Notable Strengths

- The Christian vision and values are deeply embedded and evident throughout school life, including at the heart of decision-making at all levels. This enables pupils and adults to flourish.
- Relationships here are strong and rooted in the Christian vision. Modelled by staff, pupils learn to live lives characterised by truth, trust and forgiveness. This contributes significantly to a profound sense of community that permeates the school.
- Collective worship is enriched by the mutually valued and fruitful partnership with the church. This creates an inclusive Christian community. It is an example of living out the vision in a wider village context and nurtures spiritual development.
- The school is a place of welcome and acceptance, where the wellbeing of pupils and adults is a priority for leaders. Consequently, pupils feel safe, parents are known and staff are valued.
- Inspired by the vision, leaders ensure that learning meets pupils' needs. This includes those who find learning challenging. As a result, pupils enjoy their school experience and are happy, confident learners.

#### Development Points

- Broaden and deepen the school's understanding of spirituality. This is in order to promote opportunities for adults and pupils to grow spiritually.
- Empower pupils to actively explore questions of injustice and wider issues that concern them. This is to develop their understanding of justice and responsibility and enable them as agents change.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision is well established and, together with its associated values, is threaded throughout school life. These cohesively bind pupils and adults together to make a vibrant, welcoming school community. This is particularly significant since the school has experienced an extended period of instability in leadership. Crucially, the vision and values have provided a shared context and continuity, enabling the school community to thrive. The Christian vision inspires leaders, including governors. Consistent monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the vision enables them to make bold strategic decisions. These include employing a designated special needs teacher to enable those with learning barriers to flourish. They show courage in making difficult decisions with grace, sensitivity and with a deep understanding of the community they serve. In addition, the staff team are relentless in nurturing their pupils and modelling the vision. All of which substantially contributes to pupils and adults flourishing personally, professionally and in their learning.

### Vision and Curriculum

Inspired by the vision, leaders have designed a curriculum which places pupils' needs and interests at its heart. They are ambitious for their pupils. The school's values of trust, truth and forgiveness are woven through learning. Pupils trust their teachers to provide help and encouragement to succeed. Their natural enthusiasm is harnessed to search for truth, and pupils forgive themselves and move forward when they face challenges. Consequently, they develop curiosity and resilience. Pupils know that these values also positively shape their character. This is celebrated each week through 'high 5s.' Pupils are invited to reflect on their most significant achievements of the week. As one pupil commented, pupils are encouraged to 'achieve at life.' Leaders know that success comes in many forms and the 'high 5s' enable pupils to understand this for themselves. A range of extracurricular activities are accessible and available to all those who wish to participate. This expands interest and contributes significantly to pupils' self-esteem and ability to thrive. A shared language to explore spirituality is beneficial in helping pupils understand that they are spiritual beings. However, opportunities within the curriculum to strengthen and develop spiritual growth are not always identified and are therefore being lost.

### Worship and Spirituality

Worship is valued by both pupils and adults as a cherished time of peace, reflection and belonging. Prayer is important to pupils. They appreciate the opportunity to use prayer beads for personal prayer that are then symbolically gathered together in worship. This, along with the use of class candles, provides visible connections between worship and wider school life, extending its impact. Worship is inclusive and uplifting. It is carefully planned to enhance school values. Moreover, worship invites pupils and adults to explore how these might be applied in their own lives. Pupils and adults feel a deep sense of belonging in these times, whatever their personal beliefs. School life in general, and worship in particular is enriched by the close partnership with the village church. The school benefits greatly from welcoming a dedicated team from the church to lead worship. Parents value the opportunities they have to join worship and share in Christian festivals celebrated in church with the school. These quite varied experiences expand pupils' opportunities for spiritual growth and understanding of worship.

### Vision and School Culture

Leaders prioritise the wellbeing of pupils and adults. The practice of twice-daily emotional check-ins ensures that any concerns pupils may have are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. The pastoral support provided by the church is welcomed and valued. This includes the church being open for quiet prayer and reflection during lunchtime. Moreover, as a small village school, each member of the school community is known and appreciated as a unique individual. This understanding deepens relationships and enables leaders to provide thoughtful, pastoral care for staff, pupils and their families. Consequently, pupils know that they are safe and accepted for who they are. Parents have confidence that they will be treated with dignity and respect. In addition, staff value the reality



that they work as a team and are proactive in compassionately supporting each other. For their part, governors know the school very well and so exercise a genuine and thoughtful duty of care. A pupil summed up this lived experience, 'Everyone has a place here and everyone is welcome.'

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The Christian vision inspires the effective management of everyday playground behaviour. Pupils understand the importance of living out the school's value of truth. In the same way, they naturally seek and offer forgiveness. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness at Sherborne. They understand the difference between equity and equality. This is evident in their acceptance of each other's needs. Led by the school council, pupils are enthusiastic about raising money for causes that concern them. Adults ensure that they are aware of the context for any fundraising. In this way pupils develop an awareness of the need behind the fun. An example of this is Fairtrade. Pupils explore in class and worship what this charity stands for and how it contributes to a fairer world. However, these opportunities to reflect upon injustice in its widest sense are generally adult initiated. Although pupils are kind and articulate, they are not encouraged to use these qualities to be change makers themselves. Consequently, they have little understanding of the difference they can make to the lives of others. Furthermore, they are unaware of their responsibility to do so.

#### Religious Education

Religious education (RE) is well-led. The RE curriculum is carefully planned and well-balanced. For example, pupils study a limited number of faiths in depth rather than gaining superficial knowledge of many. The diocese has been instrumental in giving support and expertise. This inspires leaders to revisit the RE curriculum to include new ideas and sharpen practice. As a result, leaders decided to timetable weekly RE lessons. This enables pupils to retain their learning and has established the place of RE more firmly in the wider curriculum. RE offers opportunities for pupils to explore how faith impacts the life of a believer. This is especially deepened by their peers' willingness to share varied experiences of faith. RE also provides a safe space for pupils to reflect upon their own beliefs and explore life's big questions. In this way, RE contributes significantly to a school community that respects and celebrates differences.

## Information

Address	Church Lane, Sherborne St John, Basingstoke, RH24 9HT.		
Date	19 January 2026	URN	116315
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	113
Diocese	Winchester		
Headteacher	Vickie Alvis		
Chair of Governors	Woody Ruane		
Inspector	Dorothy Robinson		