

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St James Church of England Primary Academy

Address Pokesdown Hill, Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, United Kingdom, BH7 6DW

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Overall grade **Good**

The impact of collective worship **Good**

The effectiveness of religious education (RE) **Good**

School's vision

Learning as a family in Jesus, through Love, Hope and Forgiveness. 'With God, all things are possible.'
Matthew 19:26

Key findings

- Every pupil and adult flourishes within the family at St James'. The interim headteacher and leaders have swiftly ensured that the Christian vision and associated values are well embedded in the academy community. The decisions of committed leaders and the multi-academy trust (MAT) are driven by the coherent vision to enhance outcomes for pupils and adults. Sometimes, there are missed opportunities for leaders at all levels to monitor and evaluate the impact of St James' as a Church academy.
- Exemplary opportunities for character development and nurture are harnessed by staff and pupils. As a result, pupils have hope and aspiration for their futures and compassion which leads to social action in the local and global communities.
- The instigation of forgiveness and reconciliation within policies and procedures are the driving force for recent improvements in pupil behaviour. Social and cultural development are effective and contribute to the flourishing of all.
- Worship is the heartbeat of St James' and is a strong expression of the vision. It is fully inclusive and offers people a safe and invitational place to worship, reflect and pray. Strong links with the parish church exist. Staff monitor worship accurately, but pupils are not actively engaged in planning and monitoring acts of worship.
- Pupils flourish in rich and thought-provoking religious education (RE) lessons. The subject is well led and has a high priority across St James'. A robust system of assessment in RE is in its infancy.

Areas for development

- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the vision, so that the Christian character at St James' continues to be enhanced at all levels.

- Broaden the range of the academy community that is actively involved in planning and evaluating collective worship. Develop pupil engagement with leading worship, so that it is enhanced, and the impact of the Christian vision is further extended.
- Embed an effective assessment system in RE, so that teachers can gauge how well pupils are learning. Ensure that pupils understand how they can make progress.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

Leaders at St James' are passionate that pupils and adults flourish. The vision and associated values are woven throughout every aspect of the learning family. Love, hope, and forgiveness are embodied in the interim headteacher and staff who have brought about stability during turbulent times of the pandemic. Strong Christian leadership ensures that everyone is aware of the Christian teaching that all things are possible with God. Effective practice is rooted in the values and teachings of Jesus. The vision is well lived out in how vulnerable pupils are helped to learn and socialise. Skilled adults are champions for all, which ensures that improvements in learning have been transformational for many pupils. Deeply compassionate systems are in place to welcome and settle new pupils. Hope and love are rooted in the academy's highly effective approach to mental health and wellbeing.

With the coherently shared vision statements, St James' and the MAT work effectively in partnership to enhance the positive outcomes for pupils and staff. Rapid improvements in teaching and learning are because of a shared commitment to delivering the best for everyone. MAT staff know St James' well and strengthen leaders and governors on a journey of improvement. Governors articulate the vision with clarity and speak passionately about the way in which it has led them to resource training. However, leaders do not monitor and evaluate the vision consistently enough to gauge its full impact.

The aspirational vision results in exceptional character and moral development of pupils. They are enabled to be advocates for change locally, nationally, and globally. Extensive charitable works and social action projects harness rich learning opportunities to effectively demonstrate the vision. Pupils tackle injustice within the setting and have a deep understanding of the exploitation of the natural world. One typical example is the long-lasting impact of the pupil's ongoing campaign to protect local beaches. Through campaigning nationally over several years, they instigated the launching of over 6,000 plastic bottle vessels, entering the Guinness World Records in 2022. Whole academy projects such as this are regular experiences for all pupils. These experiences demonstrate the lasting impact of the vision, enabling them to be stewards of God's creation.

The recently updated admissions policy reflects the inclusive vision by welcoming pupils from increasingly diverse backgrounds. Through respect and learning about different cultures, everyone is effectively included. The skillfully created Acts of Random Kindness (ARK) Curriculum enhances the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils. ARK is a nurturing framework that enables the vision to come to fruition. It allows pupils a safe space to ask and explore the big questions of life. Good personal, social, and health education (PSHE) lessons make connections between Bible teaching and pupils' experiences. This enables flourishing and supports pupils as they live out the vision.

Pupils and adults flourish spiritually, as a secure definition of spirituality is grown from the vision. Staff plan inspiring lessons for spiritual growth across the curriculum. This is enhanced by effective collective worship. Spontaneous experiences to harness spirituality lead to a deep sense of spiritual growth for all learners. Vulnerable pupils are exceptionally well supported, and leaders ensure pupils have high aspirations. Any barriers to learning are soon overcome through careful, timely interventions. This ensures that each individual flourishes

Policies and procedures are motivated by the Christian vision. Pupils' behaviour is good and has recently improved because the value of forgiveness is now embedded and underpins practices. Good attendance is valued by the academy community, as pupils are motivated by their learning. Built on love and hope, a safe and secure learning environment enables the pupils confidently explore the big questions of life. Pupils know that they will be listened to, and their views respected. Pupils learn to disagree well, by making connections to the vision when there is a difference of opinion. Leaders ensure that the academy is informed about trauma and bereavement through specialist training. Consequently, support for this aspect of mental health and wellbeing is highly effective.

Collective worship is a rich expression of the Christian vision. It is highly valued by all members of the academy as it is fully inclusive. Pupils and staff are welcomed and spiritually nourished at the start of the day. Whilst worship is routinely planned by adults, there are limited opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning, leading, and evaluating acts of worship. Prayer and reflection are at the heart of St James'. These are invitational and of an inclusive nature. The use of Makaton signing for many aspects of worship means that those pupils with significant special educational needs and disabilities are fully included. Leaders do not shy away from sensitive issues in the safe and nurturing environment the worship creates. The teachings of Jesus are expertly woven throughout worship so that pupils develop impressive biblical knowledge. For example, a recent sports week was linked to inspirational stories and St Paul's letter to the Corinthians. 'Welcome and Leaving Reflections' focuses pupils as they gather and leave worship, enabling them to ponder thought-provoking questions. Anglican traditions are celebrated through Christian festivals and connections are carefully made for pupils to understand different styles of worship at age-appropriate levels. The trinitarian nature of God is well understood by pupils.

Leaders have secured mutually beneficial relationships with St James' Church. During the recent vacancy, practical support for worship is limited. However, pupils benefit from using the church for RE lessons, worship, and as a reflection space. Shared community projects between the academy and church enable pupils to live out the vision and strengthen their ability to develop personally and spiritually.

RE has a prominent place within the curriculum because of the vision. RE subject leadership is strong. Skilled leaders weave the vision throughout the ambitious RE curriculum. This gives clarity of vision and supports pupils' exploration of theology, philosophy, and the human social sciences. Theological concepts are effectively unpicked and explored at age-appropriate levels. As a result, pupils' conversations about world views, faith, and beliefs, are well articulated. Pupils have developed age-appropriate skills of inquiry, critical analysis, and interpretation. Moderation of pupils' work ensures consistency across year groups. Pupils learn about the global aspect of Christianity. The diverse and changing faith communities at St James' are celebrated and shared effectively throughout RE lessons. One pupil explained how, 'We value learning about Islam, as this helps us to understand the culture and religion of others'. Pupils demonstrate an informed and respectful understanding of a range of religions and worldviews.

Love, hope, and forgiveness are the hallmarks of St James'. Every member of the community understands the part they must play in the learning family. At St James' all things are possible. The vision ensures that pupils and adults flourish.



The effectiveness of RE is

Good

Regular, accurate monitoring shows that teaching and learning in RE are consistently good. The rich curriculum is enhanced by training from the diocese and MAT. As a result, all pupils make good progress in lessons and flourish in RE. Pupils recall and make links between prior and current learning. A bespoke assessment system is still being implemented. Consequently, not all teachers are aware of how well pupils are learning, nor how pupils can make further progress.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	20 June 2022	URN	140760
Date of previous inspection	26 March 2015		
School status	VA	NOR	411
Name of Multi Academy Trust or Federation	Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust		
Diocese or Methodist Circuit	Portsmouth;Winchester		
Headteacher	Alastair Brown (Interim Headteacher)		
Proportion of pupils deemed to be disadvantaged	In Line with National Average		
Proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	In Line with National Average		

Additional significant information (if needed)	Since January 2022, the deputy headteacher has been in the role of the interim headteacher. The proportion of pupils who are from ethnic minorities is in line with national averages. The parish church is currently in a vacancy.		
Inspector's name	Toby Long	No.	0896