



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

High Bickington Church of England Primary Academy	
Address	High Bickington, UMBERLEIGH, EX37 9AY
School vision	
<p>‘Let your light shine’. Life, Love and Learning to the Full.</p> <p>At High Bickington Church of England Primary Academy, we aim to help each child shine their light; to foster their own self esteem as well as to make a difference to the world around them. We work to build the foundations of life in all its fullness underpinned by our Christian values of Love, Respect, Perseverance, Truthfulness, Forgiveness and Friendship, where we understand what it means to be loved and to love others within our school and our local, national and global community.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Christian vision is the heart beat of this Church school, fundamental to its life and improvements. It creates an inclusive caring community where all are valued and treat one another with a high degree of dignity and respect.</li> <li>• The vision inspires and nurtures pupils’ aspirations. They feel they can ‘shine’, discover their talents, make a difference for the community and flourish.</li> <li>• Collective worship deepens pupils’ understanding of the vision and Christian values and their significance for their lives. Providing opportunities to reflect on these shape attitudes and actions, leading pupils to confidently articulate the difference worship makes.</li> <li>• The quality and impact of the provision to meet all pupils’ needs, particularly those who are vulnerable, is rising significantly. Pupils are nurtured to overcome challenges and grow in self-belief.</li> <li>• Staff and leaders see their role as living out the vision showing the difference it makes. Partnerships with the Team Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) enables the school to grow and flourish.</li> </ul>	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a systematic approach to evaluating the impact that the Christian vision makes on all aspects of a Church school. This is so that all members can contribute to the continuous improvement of the school.</li> <li>• Ensure opportunities for spiritual flourishing are an intrinsic part of the curriculum. This is so that pupils' opportunities for spiritual experiences are maximised.</li> <li>• In religious education (RE) expand opportunities for pupils to deepen their awareness and understanding of the diversity of Christianity.</li> </ul>	
Inspection findings	
<p>The Christian vision is at the heart of this community, permeating and shaping its life and improvements. The vision stands out in the way it brings the village together, initiating celebrations and creating a sense of community. Pupils articulate a thoughtful understanding of the vision. They</p>	



are encouraged to 'shine', discover their God-given gifts and make a difference for others. Pupils use the language of Christian values throughout the day, deepening their appreciation of the vision's significance. They talk of persevering in learning and the importance of relationships. The vision was refined so that it effectively addresses the needs of the locality. The impact of the vision results in aspirations rising and extending understanding of diversity and the wider world. One of the strengths of the school is the cohesive and dedicated staff team where individual talents are developed. This enables them to take on further leadership responsibilities, growing their expertise, so they feel valued. Staff see their role as living out the vision, so all see the difference it makes. Leaders are totally committed to providing the best education, increasing the impact that this Church school makes. They identify high-quality practice and adapt this to meet specific needs. Leaders consistently shape initiatives enhancing the difference these make. Governors are enthusiastic and dedicated to supporting the school. For instance, their monitoring has led to greater pupil involvement in worship. However, monitoring lacks a robust plan which ensures that all aspects of a Church school are effectively evaluated. Therefore, the impact the vision makes is not always clearly identified.

Leaders are inspired by Jesus' example of reaching out to those facing challenges on life's journey. They help pupils to overcome barriers to flourish. The impact of support for vulnerable pupils is rising. Enthusiastic leaders draw effectively on MAT expertise, growing staff knowledge and skills and sharing best practice. Pupils' social and emotional needs are carefully nurtured so that they can recognise and verbalise their feelings. Individual strategies are agreed that help them to be calm. Music, art and dance approaches are increasingly used which pupils find helpful. Staff develop pupils' communication skills, enriching their vocabulary. Dedicated spaces allow pupils to be calm and reflect. Mental health and wellbeing are important for staff and pupils. Pupils draw upon a range of approaches, such as deep breathing, that enable them to be calm. This is enhanced by opportunities in forest school. Growing pupils' aspiration is an important part of the vision. A culture of high expectations comes from staff through developing trusting relationships. All success is celebrated, whilst a language of using mistakes as opportunities for further learning is widespread. The MAT enables pupils to perform on stage, demonstrating that pupils' different talents can shine, raising pupils' self-belief. This shows the vision being lived out.

Leaders take the view that all are wonderfully made by God and special to him. Therefore, they see it as their responsibility to enable everyone to become the best person they can be. Developments in spirituality raise its significance. Pupils are beginning to use an approach to spirituality that guides their thinking. Staff are aware of opportunities that can nurture spiritual flourishing, although these are not an intrinsic part of the curriculum. Nor is it clear what impact these experiences make. Pupils have an informed awareness of diversity. Exciting residential to London enable them to consider different customs and cultures. A range of class reading books stimulate discussions, for example on refugees and women's roles. As a result, pupils talk of people being special to God. They develop leadership skills through various opportunities, notably school council. They are increasingly becoming independent agents for change and champion local causes. These include planting trees and raising awareness of the homeless. The link with an Indian school extends their thinking on injustice, leading to projects where they are helping to improve other people's lives.

There is a distinct sense of being part of an inclusive, caring community, promoted by the vision. Pupils emulate the trusting relationships staff model, treating all with a high degree of dignity and respect. Older pupils lead by example and nurture younger peers, taking joy in collaboration and celebrating each others' successes. This is where the vision stands out.

Enabling others to 'shine' through sharing good practice and drawing upon their expertise drives leaders to create partnerships. The MAT provides invaluable guidance, whilst bringing together subject leaders to share best practice and planning. Staff feel part of a wider team. The diocese

provides well focused training, from which adults benefit. A good example is extending staff knowledge of Christianity.

Pupils' understanding of the vision and what it looks like are heightened through collective worship. Exploring Christian values associated with the vision shows pupils the variety of situations where they make a difference. Opportunities to reflect and discuss worship themes encourage all to see their relevance. The use of worship journals to record their ideas reveals a depth of thinking. As a result, pupils of all faiths and none, confidently articulate where values shape their thoughts and actions. Collective worship is invitational and allows everyone to contribute with integrity. It can be inspirational and challenge pupils to take action for issues they feel are important, such as caring for God's world. Collective worship enhances pupils' spiritual flourishing. For instance, many pupils find prayer helpful, as a way of sharing ideas with God. Others appreciate the time for stillness. Pupil ambassadors suggested improvements that led to a greater range of worship songs being introduced. Partnership with the local church adds variety to worship, through its leadership by clergy and an Open the Book team. The links with other MAT schools culminate in new ideas being introduced. These include dedicated reflection places that stimulate thinking on a range of ideas. Pupils enjoy such opportunities to pause in busy days.

Leaders ensure that RE has a high profile. A broad, balanced, diverse and sequential curriculum progressively deepens pupils' understanding. The subject leader introduces new approaches which engage and stimulate thinking. Drama encourages pupils to put themselves in others' shoes and consider how they think. Staff identify what pupils know, so new learning builds upon this. This allows pupils to indicate what interests them so these questions are explored. Pupils have a good appreciation of Christianity as a living faith. However, pupils' awareness of the diversity of Christianity is less well-developed. The use of 'big questions' is growing well, encouraging pupils to verbalise ideas, listen to others and shape opinions. Pupils talk thoughtfully of worldviews, discussing similarities, recognising how belief shapes actions. A MAT team of RE leaders facilitates sharing good practice. As a result, the 'speaking like an expert' initiative allows pupils to develop their understanding of religious vocabulary and core concepts positively. Pupils articulate that RE challenges their thinking, perceiving its relevance for their daily lives.

The inspection findings indicate that High Bickington Church of England Primary Academy is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	27 February 2024	URN	144535
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	99
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT/Federation	TEAM MAT		
Head of School	Rob Norton		
Chair	Susie Kevern		
Inspector	David Hatrey	No.	844