

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Branscombe Church of England VC Primary School

Vision

In our school community we build an environment where aspiration, inspiration and motivation flourish. Rooted in our Christian values, we aspire for every child to reach their fullest potential. We inspire our children to explore their unique talents and passions, instilling a lifelong love of learning. We motivate our children through a rich and varied curriculum, to cultivate confident, compassionate, and resilient individuals who are prepared to make a positive impact on the world. Our Christian ethos is rooted in the Parable of the two builders. (Matthew 7:24-29)

Branscombe Church of England VC Primary 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 school provides a wide range of support that meets pupils' diverse needs effectively. This transforms pupils' attitudes to themselves, growing a love of learning and raising aspirations.
- Detailed and systematic monitoring and evaluations, involving leaders at all levels, consistently leads to well-focused improvements. These inspire pupils to be the best they can be.
- The support from the Link Academy Trust extends the impact this Church school makes. Dedicated and ambitious school leaders actively identify high quality practice to enable pupils to flourish.
- A distinct Christian vision is well understood, driving improvements. It creates a sense of being part of a caring, dignifying school community. Pupils and adults treat one another with a high degree of care and respect.
- New approaches to collective worship effectively engage pupils. Worship deepens their understanding of Christian values and enhances their spiritual flourishing.

Development Points

- Ensure opportunities for spiritual flourishing are identified in curriculum planning. This is to give opportunities for pupils to express their deepening ideas clearly.
- Extend the opportunities for pupils to explore questions in religious education (RE). This is to enable them to deepen their understanding of the subject.
- Enrich and widen pupils' understanding of injustice. This is so pupils develop the skills and confidence to make a difference for others.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The recent refreshing of the school's Christian vision has had a significant impact in ensuring it has a central role in inspiring leaders to initiate improvements. Pupils talk fluently about Jesus' parable of the two builders, drawing upon ideas from Christian values linked to this. Due to its geographical position, pupils are aware of beaches and recognize that building on sand is unwise. They articulate that through learning and using Jesus' example, they can build firm foundations to grow. Leaders have a well-developed understanding of local needs. For instance, a new initiative nurtures pupils to manage their behaviour effectively. This draws upon the school's values of love and compassion. Leaders are ambitious and highly committed to serving pupils, living by example. They use the vision to make a difference. For example, introducing new and individualised approaches to meet pupils' diverse needs. The trust drives the school's relationship with others, promoting joint initiatives. It fulfills its vision of enabling pupils to flourish. A wide range of support enriches teaching, through subject expertise and monitoring. Staff are valued and take a significant role in shaping the school's strategic direction. Monitoring the impact the Christian vision makes, is rigorously and systematically undertaken. This is enhanced by the trust's adviser who helps to indicate possible questions that enable leaders to explore this impact in greater depth. Planning for monitoring ensures all aspects are annually reviewed. Involving staff and pupils gives greater insight into strengths. Local governors are knowledgeable, consistently evaluating where the Christian vision makes a difference and where their decisions reflect it. This provides well-focused and ongoing foci for improvements. A good example of this is refreshing the vision so pupils can more readily understand it and creating a local ethos group to strengthen evaluations.

Vision and Curriculum

Leaders follow Jesus' example of helping those who face challenges on the journey of life. This is so they can become the best person they can be. The Christian vision increasingly shapes pupils' learning, where the curriculum provides experiences beyond the school. This extends understanding of the wider world as well as enabling pupils to discover their talents. There is a strong focus on meeting the diverse needs of pupils in this very small rural school. This makes a transformational difference for some pupils who have had different experiences of education. Staff know pupils' needs well, forming trusting relationships. They draw on the expertise of the trust to implement individual plans to address these. They enhance pupils' social and emotional development, enabling them to recognize and verbalise their feelings. Staff nurture pupils to identify a toolbox of effective personal strategies that support their emotional development. This grows self-esteem and belief. It reflects the school's vision of inspiring pupils and raising aspirations. Diocesan training has led to spiritual flourishing having a higher profile. Staff have some awareness of opportunities to deepen pupils' spiritual flourishing. However, these experiences are not planned across the curriculum.

Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship deepens pupils' understanding of the Christian vision and values, strengthening the sense of community. Leaders draw upon the riches of the Anglican tradition that encourage pupils to flourish spiritually. Weekly questions nurture pupils' curiosity to explore and find answers, thus encouraging them to listen to others and refine their answers. Opportunities to reflect are valued, where pupils use a new approach that supports their thinking and how they can respond. Pupils asked for worship to be held outdoors, so they could use nature to inspire their ideas. Trusting relationships encourage pupils to feel confident to contribute to worship, writing prayers or sharing thoughts. They are beginning to articulate what spirituality means to them. Adults feel spirituality has reawakened their sense of awe and wonder. Worship is inclusive and allows pupils to contribute with integrity. It is well led, recognising the different needs pupils have. Themes inspire pupils to consider ideas and their importance. Governors' evaluations led to pupils exploring global news, identifying where Christian



values make a difference in various situations. In addition, a monthly service brings families and the community together. This form of worship celebrates where pupils live out the vision and values, so their significance is extended. Partnerships enrich and extend the difference the school makes for pupils. The relationship with the local church brings varied approaches to worship, led by the vicar, that pupils find helpful. The trust facilitates strong links with schools sharing expertise through RE and collective worship leaders. This has improved planning, adding visual resources, so the impact of collective worship has been enhanced.

Vision and School Culture

The school offers a warm, inclusive and dignifying community. This is underpinned by the associated Christian values that guide pupils' attitudes and actions, reflecting how Jesus treated others. As one pupil correctly concluded, 'values make this a better place'. Pupils treat one another with a high degree of dignity and respect, recognizing that they are all different, but valuing one another. The trust inclusion team work with pupils and families in tailored support in difficult times. This enables families to nurture their children, changing attitudes. Pupils work with staff agreeing individual strategies to use when anxious, drawing upon a range of ideas. They use breathing techniques or spaces within school that enhance wellbeing and mental health. Adult wellbeing champions have dedicated opportunities to ensure staff are supported. The trust enhances this through bringing staff together for joint training, wellbeing days and reducing workload, so they feel important.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The school's vision draws on Jesus' teaching that everyone is special. Curriculum experiences, particularly exploring reading texts, are beginning to grow pupils' understanding of the wider world. This extends thinking about poverty, being a refugee and injustice. However, pupils' awareness of injustice is not well developed. They show kindness to one another but are not confident to make a difference for those beyond the school. Increasingly pupils work together to take on additional responsibilities, such as organizing parts of the monthly collective worship that is shared with parents and the community. This is developing an awareness of how they can help others.

Religious Education

Trust leaders, working with staff, have designed a new RE curriculum that progressively develops pupils' knowledge. Learning is well-sequenced and covers a broad range of themes. New units have been introduced, such as humanism, growing pupils' awareness of non-religious views. Planning is regularly updated, so it is clear what specific vocabulary they will explore. Pupils talk thoughtfully about core Christian concepts and their importance. They have a growing understanding of RE skills and where these help their thinking. However, pupils are not provided with a range of approaches that allow them to fully explore their own beliefs, deepening understanding. Pupils enjoy studying worldviews and how these shape actions, making thoughtful comparisons. Monitoring has led to pupils recording their ideas in various ways which they appreciate. New visual resources and artefacts help bring to life what it means to be a member of a worldview and celebrate special occasions.

Information

Address	Branscombe, Seaton, Devon. EX12 3DA		
Date	13 January 2026	URN	151001
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	6
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT	The Link Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Cheryl Mathieson		
Executive Headteacher	Sam Butler		
Inspector	David Hatrey		