

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

### Ilsham Church of England Primary Academy

#### Vision

To grow and flourish wherever you are planted.

‘But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its shoots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes, its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.’ Jeremiah 17: 7-8

Ilsham Church of England Primary Academy 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 is a lived reality as pupils and adults are ‘rooted’ in a loving atmosphere of mutual respect. Consequently, they ‘grow’ as unique and valued individuals.
- Devoted school leaders and staff are driven to ensure that pupils develop holistically to be the best that they can be. The school’s innovative approach to spirituality is exemplary. It nurtures pupils in self-awareness, develops their respect for others and prompts them to ask big questions.
- Daily collective worship brings this school community together to ponder deep issues and express their shared joy. They are cherished times of spiritual refreshment and encouragement.
- School leaders ensure that there is a carefully considered curriculum for religious education (RE). As a result, pupils develop a secure understanding of a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. This prepares them well to understand and respect the viewpoints of others now and in the future.
- Ilsham Church of England Primary Academy is a place where people in all their diversity are welcomed and feel safe. They develop confidence and self-belief. Consequently, pupils and staff develop the moral strength and fortitude to ‘flourish’ in challenging situations.

#### Development Point

- Strengthen pupils’ understanding of justice and injustice within the wider world. This is so that they are empowered by having further opportunities to act responsibly and respond to injustice.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

The Christian vision is deeply apparent as pupils and staff in all their diversity 'grow and flourish'. This is because school leaders are wholehearted about meeting individual needs. The school is a place of equity. People are accepted whatever their background and are nurtured to 'bear fruit' whatever their circumstances may bring in the future. Christian values are well established. They are evident in the compassionate, respectful, courageous, honest and inspirational ways that the school community live and learn together. There is a shared resolve between school, trust and church leaders to drive improvement in this highly effective church school. They are bound by a common purpose for people to live life to the full. Consequently, they take time to listen to pupils and staff and discern how well the school's provision is enabling people to flourish. This school moves forward creatively so that individuals thrive in a harmonious and aspirational environment.

### Vision and Curriculum

School leaders are tenacious in developing a curriculum that is rooted in the vision. It enables pupils to develop confidently as whole and cherished individuals. They develop life-long skills such as resilience and perseverance along with knowledge and understanding. Staff have a heartfelt desire to meet the needs of individual pupils. This is particularly evident in their support for those considered to be vulnerable and/or those who have special educational needs (SEND). Working closely with parents and carers they create personalised support which builds self-belief and success. The effectiveness of the school's work across the curriculum is rightly recognised by trust leaders. It is shared generously with other schools. School leaders have implemented an innovative and intentional approach to spirituality across the curriculum. Pupils reflect deeply on their thoughts and feelings 'inwardly', 'outwardly' and 'upwards' throughout the school day. Consequently, their expression of spiritual experiences in relation to personal growth, respect for the world and asking questions is profound. For example, in response to a science lesson, a pupil considers, 'Why did God create space?' Furthermore, school leaders have created a discrete space of calm in the timetable each week as flourishing time. In their classes pupils explore various themes, such as 'peace' using inspirational resources. These are times of deep spiritual nourishment.

### Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship provides a calm and holy space appreciated by this school community at the beginning of each school day. It is led thoughtfully and sensitively enabling adults and pupils to be fully engaged as they listen and reflect quietly. Together they consider big questions, identify their own feelings and respond. Therefore, pupils make profound connections between the experiences of others, themselves and the school's vision. For example, pupils reflected on how it might feel for children who can't go to school because of a current global conflict. A young pupil responded by saying, 'I would miss my friends. They help me to grow and support me like gardeners.' Collective worship is profoundly enriched by a close relationship with leaders and members of the local parish church. Bible stories are shared with the school community each week, alternately in school and in church. This strengthens the pupils' understanding of values from a Christian perspective. For instance, they talk about God giving courage in relation to the story of David and Goliath. Pupils and adults experience spiritual joy and unity as they sing together. Prayer and quiet reflection are an intrinsic part of collective worship. Throughout the school day pupils continue to access interactive reflection and prayer spaces. For example, using binoculars to see what God has given them. Through such inspirational provision the lives of this school community are deeply enriched spiritually.

### Religious Education

School leaders are wholly committed to ensuring that RE is a subject of high importance. This is strengthened through mutually beneficial dialogue and training within the diocese and trust. Leaders appreciate the subject's unique place in preparing pupils to live well in a world of diversity. The aspirational curriculum enables pupils to deepen their understanding and respect for people with various religious and non-religious viewpoints. This



learning is strengthened when pupils encounter people from a range of faith and worldview perspectives. For example, pupils speak enthusiastically and knowledgeably about a visit to a mosque. RE lessons impact powerfully on pupils' spiritual development as they ask and debate big questions. Skillful and enthusiastic leaders support teachers and access age-appropriate resources that engage pupils throughout the school. For instance, they learn the Easter story in multi-sensory ways that have a powerful impact on their understanding of Christianity.

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Pupils across the school are eager to act responsibly and make choices that improve the lives of others. Staff listen to the ideas of pupils and act to make them a reality. Consequently, a sound system was installed in the playground. It engenders a calm atmosphere appreciated by pupils and their families from the moment that they enter the school gates. The school's vision of faith and compassion is deeply intertwined with that of the Anglican church, literally next door. School and church members work together extending friendship to those who live and work in this vibrant area of the town. For example, older pupils help weekly at a lunchtime gathering time for members of the local community in the church. People, including those from a nearby care home, are welcomed into this uplifting time of fellowship. Pupils serve food, clean up and enjoy rich conversation. This is a joyous experience of giving and receiving for them and the people that they encounter. Across the curriculum, pupils learn about and reflect on some of the challenges that affect the wider world. However, the opportunities for pupils to respond to such situations prompted by a deeper sense of justice and injustice are limited.

#### Vision and School Culture

Deep-rooted friendship and faith sustain this school community in times of gladness and challenge. Compassion is evident as pupils and adults reach out to each other offering practical support and words of kindness. School leaders appreciate the diverse strengths and needs of staff. They inspire each other to be the best that they can be professionally and personally. As a result, staff speak of feeling 'blessed' to work in the school. In turn, they tend and nurture pupils in their care, educating them for life in all its fullness. Pupils learn how to live well together and are prepared with attributes to thrive 'wherever they are planted' in the future. They develop skills that enable them to resolve disagreements honestly and respectfully. There is an enriching source of trust, joy and goodness that flows throughout Ilsham Church of England Primary Academy.

## Information

Address	Ilsham Road, Torquay, Devon, TQ1 2JQ		
Date of inspection	18 March 2026	URN	137034
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	177
Diocese	Exeter		
MAT	Learning Academy Partnership		
MAT Chair	Tracey Cleverly		
Headteacher	Jake Grinsill		
Chair of Governors	Sue Davies		
Inspector	Angela Daniel		