

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Leonards Church of England Primary Academy

Vision

Within our caring Christian community, we offer a relevant and aspirational curriculum, which gives everyone the opportunity to build firm foundations as life-long learners.

‘Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.’ Proverbs 22:6.

St Leonards 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.

Strengths

- Leaders have a deep understanding of the school’s context. This understanding means that the Christian vision has considerable impact. It drives decisions and is lived out by leaders, staff and pupils.
- The school is a place of welcome and belonging. A culture of wellbeing is at the heart of the school and the support for pupils, families and staff is all embracing. Provision for the vulnerable and those with additional needs is highly effective.
- Shaped by the vision, the curriculum is aspirational and reflects the school’s context. It inspires learners and fosters a deep appreciation of the natural world.
- Collective worship creates a firm foundation for the start of each school day. Enriched by the partnership with the church, it provides a rich source of opportunities for all to be still, reflect and develop their spirituality.
- Religious education (RE) is highly regarded. The curriculum is rich, interesting, and has a clear structure to build pupils’ learning. It enables pupils to develop their understanding of a range of world faiths and encourages respect for all.

Development Points

- Embed a rigorous system for governors to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Christian vision. This is to ensure that all leaders have a clear understanding of its impact on pupils and adults.
- Refine the current work on spirituality so that pupils and adults are more confident to articulate their personal spiritual growth.



Inspection Findings

St Leonards Primary Academy offers a warm welcome. Leaders are deeply committed to understanding and supporting the community they serve. As a result, this is a loving school where members feel safe and have a strong sense of belonging. Guided by the Christian vision, leaders ensure the school provides a firm foundation for the future. This applies to both pupils' personal and academic flourishing. The vision serves as a powerful catalyst for progress, fostering growth within the church school. Leaders have effective systems for listening to the views of parents, staff, and pupils. They make good use of external support from the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust and the Diocese of Chichester. For example, training and monitoring inform the celebration of progress and the identification of next steps. Governors are committed and have a strong understanding of the school's work. They regularly visit and are actively involved in school life. However, they have not developed clear processes for measuring the impact of the school's vision.

At the heart of the vision is a determination that pupils and adults receive care and nurture to succeed. This guides the school to offer support to both pupils and families, helping them to thrive. Pupils and adults, including parents and carers, appreciate the provision that supports them through difficult times. Pupils benefit from a range of services that promote positive mental health and wellbeing. They are independent, resilient, and empathetic. They confidently manage relationships and know adults are there to help when challenges arise. Support for families is a clear strength. Parents and carers feel heard and work in partnership with staff. Families receive advice, guidance, and supplies through The Olive Branch which helps support those families with the greatest need. Across the school, there is a sense of mutual support and respect. Strong, trusting relationships are built and nurtured.

The school's commitment to building firm foundations as life-long learners is evident in its approach to the curriculum. Tailored to meet the needs of the community, pupils benefit from a wide range of cultural and learning experiences. These include enrichment activities such as sports, drama, and collaborations with professionals like opera singers. Pupils are excited by these opportunities which raise aspirations. Local opportunities, such as learning at the beach, motivate and sustain their interests. Exploring coastal environments fosters a connection with nature and develops essential life skills like teamwork, resilience, and beach safety. Pupils enjoy regular outdoor learning experiences in a woodland environment. This carefully designed area of the curriculum boosts confidence, builds determination, and sparks curiosity, creativity, and exploration. It is evident that these opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. They inspire learners and foster a deep appreciation of the natural world. Spiritual development is highly valued. Spiritual journeys are thoughtfully mapped across the curriculum, and pupils are provided with time to reflect in inviting spaces. A shared language for spirituality is established, creating a unified approach. However, pupils lack confidence to express their personal spirituality fully. The school's unwavering commitment to supporting pupils with additional needs brings the vision to life. Learning is thoughtfully adapted to meet individual needs. This ensures pupils engage and succeed in learning.

As a result of its vision, a strong sense of justice and fairness permeates school life. Pupils and staff have a clear understanding of the importance of equity. There is a focus on recognising and celebrating differences in others. Pupils gain an appreciation for the diversity of the world around them. For instance, local partnerships with the foodbank and other organisations, selected by pupils, foster a sense of community involvement. Links with a school in Sierra Leone allow pupils and staff to build authentic relationships with peers in Africa. Both the curriculum and collective worship provide opportunities for pupils to become confident change makers. Older pupils, for example,



explore justice through art, leading them to understand the importance of 'speaking out when something is wrong'. Younger pupils learn they can make a difference by reaching out to lonely friends and taking care of the environment. Pupils are empowered to develop a sense of responsibility within the school community. For instance, the faith council spearheaded the creation of a temporary prayer garden while a new spiritual space is constructed.

RE is highly valued at St Leonards, with leaders demonstrating a clear ambition for its role in the curriculum. The subject is engaging, diverse, and well-structured, exploring a broad range of world faiths, including Christianity. It offers pupils excellent opportunities for deep reflection, considering big questions, engaging in debates and expressing creative responses. Visits to the church and interactions with the vicar enhance pupils' understanding of Christianity. Parents and members of the local community share their own faith stories. Links with the local mosque provide pupils with opportunities to visit and learn directly from members of the Muslim community. Pupils appreciate RE for broadening their understanding and promoting respect for others. Professional development in RE is a priority, ensuring staff are confident and well-equipped to teach the subject. Collaboration with the multi academy trust, diocese and local church further enriches training and the overall RE provision.

Pupils' and adults' spiritual development is enriched through daily collective worship. The school and church work in partnership to ensure worship plays a central role in school life. Held at the start of each day, collective worship offers a positive beginning. It fosters a sense of belonging as the community gathers. Pupils value this time, explaining it helps them 'get ready for the new day'. Pupils and adults speak confidently about feeling included in worship, regardless of their beliefs. In its various forms, worship allows them to sing joyfully, pray and reflect privately. Visits from the vicar and the Open the Book group inspire pupils to reflect on the meaning of Bible stories. Pupils consider how these stories relate to their own behaviour and relationships. Parents and carers appreciate joining school services held in the church during key moments in the Christian calendar, such as Easter. This further strengthens the bonds within this caring Christian community.

Information

Address	Collinswood Drive, St. Leonards on Sea, East Sussex. TN38 ONX		
Date	31 March 2025	URN	141868
Type of school	Primary Academy	No. of pupils	413
Diocese	Chichester		
MAT	Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Faith Rew		
Chair of Governors	Tony Davis		
Inspector	Susan Costa		