

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

### Silverton Church of England VC Primary School

#### Vision

The image of a tree being planted by water and being nourished so that it flourishes in good times and hard times and continues to bear fruit, has been chosen because of the Silverton Oak Tree and the trees in the grounds of the school which make it a special place to live and work. The words of Jeremiah Chapter 17 verses 7 and 8 connect the emblem of an oak tree with the blessing of God on those who trust in him. Just as the oak tree continued to bear fruit, so do those who trust in God flourish, even in challenging times. Inspired by our vision we support children to 'grow tall' and have high aspirations and expectations. Our school values are the toolkit that we use to enable every child and adult to flourish.

Silverton 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

- Inspired by the Christian vision, leaders at Silverton create an influential culture of inclusion, with an emphasis on belonging. Pupils and staff feel valued and through the school's high aspirations want to be the best they can be.
- The vision reflects the uniqueness of this school community. It provides clear strategic direction and drives ongoing developments. Pupils value the significance of the vision for them and where it positively shapes relationships.
- Staff introduce new approaches to teaching that enable pupils to readily access learning. This extends the school's culture of equity. Pupils are nurtured to think at a deeper level, growing a love of learning.
- The Exe Valley Federation (Federation) provides strong support. Together with the diocese, they share high-quality practice that raises the impact that this Church school makes.
- Collective worship plays a major role in deepening pupils' understanding of the Christian vision and associated values. The pupils' Junior Ethos Team (Jets) makes a valuable contribution to worship, enriching pupils' and staff's spiritual thinking.

#### Development Points

- Ensure experiences for spiritual flourishing are an integral part of the curriculum. This is to enrich the varied ways that these moments impact on pupils' spiritual development.
- Extend the range of opportunities for pupils to explore questions in religious education (RE). This is to enable them to deepen their understanding of the various ways that people live out their diverse beliefs.
- Deepen pupils' awareness of their mental health and wellbeing. This is so they are confident to identify and use strategies that make a difference for them.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

Leaders worked with the community to establish a new Christian vision, drawing on the landmark of the oak tree. This enables pupils to develop a deeper understanding of its significance and take greater ownership of it. Pupils see themselves as oak trees, nurtured through their learning and Christian values, so that they can grow and flourish. The vision and values provide a language used throughout the day, so pupils talk about being the best they can be. The Christian vision gives clear strategic direction for improvements, effectively addressing this community's needs. For instance, extending pupils' understanding of the wider world. Numerous experiences, such as residential, enable pupils to discover their talents. Leaders enthusiastically identify best practice that enables pupils and adults to flourish. Staff see their role as living out the vision, so the impact it makes is clear. Opportunities to explore the vision are woven throughout learning, enhancing pupil's understanding of its significance. Leaders' evaluations are astute and systematic. Federation leaders annually review the school's Christian distinctiveness. This considers various aspects of a Church school, leading to well-focused initiatives. As a result, developing spirituality is a priority. Governors are dedicated and knowledgeable. Their evaluations led to the introduction of school chaplains who offer valuable pastoral support.

### Vision and Curriculum

The Christian vision inspires leaders to draw on research that enables pupils to flourish. This leads to approaches to teaching that support pupils to readily access new ideas. Specifically designed tasks remove barriers to learning. This enables pupils to recognise that the school 'finds the best way to help you learn'. Class culture promotes discussions with peers that lead to deeper thinking. This practice is shared across the Federation. Pupils articulate that school is a place to think deeply. This enhances dignity, grows self-belief and raises aspiration. Outdoor challenges, for instance, stimulate curiosity, growing a love of learning. This reflects the school's drive for equity. Provision to meet pupils' diverse needs continues to develop. For example, they are nurtured to recognise and articulate their emotions. Together with trusted adults, they identify strategies that support them. Federation leaders share best practice to address specific needs, whilst drawing on external expertise to extend this provision. Staff use an agreed understanding of spirituality and identify experiences that enrich pupils' development. Pupils adopt an approach that is beginning to guide their spiritual thinking. However, these opportunities are not an intrinsic part of the curriculum. There are limited instances for pupils to express their ideas, so the impact these moments have is not clear.

### Worship and Spirituality

Leaders enhance the importance of collective worship with new approaches that engage pupils. A major initiative is the Jets, who take a key role in leading aspects of worship. They evaluate worship weekly, ensuring themes are clear and suggesting improvements, such as the use of drama or new songs. Their written summary is shared in the newsletter that also includes the weekly reflection question. This promotes further reflection at home. Worship plays a major role in deepening understanding of the Christian vision and values. Specialist resources demonstrate how values are lived out in a wide range of global contexts and the difference they make. This extends pupils' appreciation of their importance. Class worship encourages deeper discussions in smaller groups. Celebration worship allows pupils to show where values have influenced their actions during the week. Worship is welcoming and allows pupils to contribute with integrity. It is inspirational, notably when church leaders explain their link with a school in Kenya. This entuses pupils to raise funds for resources that enrich others' lives. Leaders increasingly weave opportunities to enhance the spiritual development of adults and pupils. The use of reflection, music and questions stimulates deeper thinking. Pupils find these helpful, although they are at an early stage of articulating their ideas. Local church leaders bring various styles to worship that pupils value, increasing their awareness of the diversity of Christian traditions.



### Vision and School Culture

The importance of the school's inclusive, dignifying and equitable culture stands out. Leaders follow Jesus' example of ensuring pupils and families feel valued. They champion the importance of belonging. This is seen as the essential first step in enabling each person to flourish. As a result, pupils and adults treat one another with respect, establishing trusting relationships and celebrating one another's successes. Governors are particularly active in nurturing staff wellbeing. Curriculum opportunities support pupils' mental health. However, pupils are not confident to talk about this or are not fully aware of strategies that they can draw upon. The practical and emotional support staff provide for families during difficult times often transforms situations positively. This is where the Christian vision is lived out.

### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

The partnership with the Federation is strong and is instrumental in increasing the impact this Church school has. It develops leaders, enhances curriculum design and facilitates the sharing of best practice among subject leaders. The diocese extends leaders' expertise, adding depth to evaluations, whilst enriching the development of RE and collective worship. For instance, diocesan support includes modelling new approaches in class worship. This is making a significant difference. Pupils show a thoughtful understanding of justice in a culture that effectively encourages them to care for others. Throughout the year, pupils work in mixed age groups, developing an awareness of peers' particular needs. This led to pupils to challenge governors about the lunch menu that restricted some to repeatedly having the same meal. The annual charity market allows older pupils to raise awareness of injustice. For example, pupils support cancer charities, Alzheimer's research and a range of other causes. The school's civic award promotes leadership skills and encourages pupils to make a positive difference for others. Younger pupils champion caring for God's creation locally.

### Religious Education

Religious Education holds a prominent role in school life. The curriculum is well planned, diverse and well sequenced, with key vocabulary identified. Key RE skills are effectively woven throughout planning, enhancing their importance. An introductory page for each unit gives clear information on what is to be explored each week. The quality and depth of planning in some classes are impressive. Visual resources and pertinent questions stimulate rich discussion. Pupils share their ideas, reason and justify their opinions, often thinking at a deeper level. As a result, pupils recognise the relevance of the subject and enjoy learning. Pupils' knowledge of core religious concepts is growing. Enriching understanding of worldviews is particularly strong. A series of online interviews enables pupils to pose questions to leaders of various beliefs. This leads to pupils appreciating how faith shapes actions and the importance of religious festivals. Ongoing reviews by leaders determine aspects to be developed. This leads to Federation RE days that extend staff knowledge, for instance through training on the use of religious language.

## Information

Address	Coach Road, Silverton, Exeter, Devon. EX5 4JY		
Date	20 May 2026	URN	113365
Type of school	Voluntary controlled	No. of pupils	95
Diocese	Exeter		
Federation	Exe Valley Federation		
Headteacher	John Jolliffe		
Chair of Governors	Jackie Enright		
Inspector	David Hatrey		