

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

<b>Saint Michael and All Angels Church of England VA Infant School</b>	
<b>Address</b>	High Street, Lyndhurst, Hampshire, SO43 7BB

### School vision

Connected through the values of love, respect and compassion. Three separate schools, we journey together to grow physically, spiritually, emotionally and intellectually, so that everyone can fulfil their potential. We strive to preserve the wonder of childhood, whilst ensuring our children are future ready.

“Be strong and of good courage, do not be afraid nor be dismayed for the lord your God is with you wherever you go” Joshua 1:9

### School strengths

- Pupils and adults are flourishing. They are given the confidence to fulfil their potential in line with the school’s Christian vision.
- The vision is driving and informing the strategic direction of the Oaks Church of England Learning Federation. This means that the Christian values of the school are supported by and rooted in this shared vision.
- There is a very strong partnership with the local churches. Church leaders and members actively support a range of significant activities within school life.
- Positive relationships at all levels are built on the school’s values. This means that staff are well supported personally and professionally.
- Pupils show confidence in exploring big questions. This means that they are able to articulate a growing understanding of critical thinking about the world around them.

### Areas for development

- Establish a shared language of spirituality for the school. This is to ensure that rich opportunities are explicitly understood and planned across the curriculum and across the wider life of the school.
- Ensure that pupils can relate their learning about different faiths to their own life experiences as appropriate. This is so that they can fully understand the impact of faith and belief in the world around them.

### Inspection findings

Saint Michael and All Angels has implemented a Christian vision which guides the school community in its day to day life. Leaders have taken the shared vision of the Oaks CE Learning Federation, creating a natural synergy between the schools within it. Parents rightly praise the commitment of the headteacher and staff. This commitment makes a significant difference in the lives of pupils and their families. As a result of this shared vision and commitment, pupils and adults flourish here and happiness is prioritised.

The well-established Christian values are woven through the life of the school. This means that the whole school community confidently articulates the values of love, respect and compassion. As a result of this, the school has the feel of a family where everyone is known and cared for. There is an atmosphere of innate Christian love. Pupils eloquently explain what the individual values mean and receive awards for living them out. These values are also deeply embedded in the local community with a parent calling the school an 'environment of kindness'.

All leaders and staff believe passionately that each pupil is unique and of immense value. This inspires them to work together as a team to ensure that all reach their full potential. High levels of modelling, nurturing and supporting by both adults and pupils result in mutual appreciation. Everyone values each individual's contribution to the life and success of this small school. Exceptionally harmonious relationships exist due to the culture of respect and compassion. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school.

Worship is integral to community living at St Michaels and All Angels. It is an inclusive, joyful experience, with an invitation to share prayer and to give thanks. This is because of the careful planning that takes place. Friday worship is a celebration of the school's values and includes practical examples of where they have been lived out across the week. Prayer plays an important part in school life, with pupils writing and delivering their own. Each class has a dedicated reflection area. 'Big questions' are added to reflection areas regularly for the children to ponder and discuss in collective worship. However, the absence of a shared understanding of a language of spirituality means that opportunities for spiritual reflection are sometimes missed.

The school's identity as a Church school is greatly enhanced by its close partnership with nearby churches and local organisations. Parents and pupils alike look forward to regularly family worship. Pupils enjoy being active in worship and enjoy the variety of worship offered within school and the local community. Whilst everyone is looking forward to returning to the church once restoration work is complete, acts of worship have continued throughout this time. In school, community and church members present 'Open the Book' sessions. These sessions bring Bible stories to life and make them meaningful. Clergy from the local churches are greatly valued. They are readily available to support the spiritual needs of all members of the school community. The local churches go 'above and beyond', offering a range of services including after school and before school care. The quality of these relationships is a real strength. Ongoing support from Winchester Diocese is valued by the school. This beneficial partnership supports staff, leaders and governors in developing the Christian distinctiveness of the school.

The school's vision to 'strive to preserve the wonder of childhood' is reflected in their school curriculum. Many aspects of the curriculum draw from the teaching of Jesus. Other policies also make links to biblical teaching. One example is the way in which the relationship policy is based on Jesus' words about loving God and loving one's neighbour. Enquiry-based learning experiences inspire pupils to actively engage in their learning. The RE curriculum is well-planned, and sequential, although by blocking units of work pupils sometimes struggle to retain knowledge. However, the careful use of assessment appropriately enables teachers to build on previous learning. Support is quickly put in place for those who need it. Pupils explore their aspirations and dreams for the future. Pupils are able to reflect on well-chosen Bible stories and can make links other class texts, for example from their literacy. Teachers prepare thought-provoking activities linked to the RE learning. Pupils are developing their knowledge of Judaism, Christianity and their own worldviews. However, they are not always able to make connections between their earlier and their current learning. This limits their understanding of how faith and belief has an impact on people's lived experience. Staff feel well supported by a strong RE lead who they can turn to at any time. The beautiful floor books show

good evidence of the variety of teaching taking place. There is a growing understanding of Christianity as a global faith. Pupils talk about their link to a friend and a church in Rwanda and about a memorable unit of work titled 'An angel like me'.

The pupils have a developing understanding of being able to make a difference in the world. A parent gave an example of a child requesting a litter picking at home after designing litter bags in school for a local beach. Staff support pupils to think about issues of justice. The focus that leaders place on justice and responsibility inspires pupils to help others. Pupils support national and local charities with individuals reflecting on the importance of helping others.

As a result of the vision, a nurturing culture has been built. Staff are inspirational role models for the pupils in their care. Everyone flourishes because they feel highly valued as individuals. All members of the school community are united in their desire to live out their Christian values. They show love, respect and compassion in all they do.

The inspection findings indicate that St Michael and All Angels Church of England VA Infant School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

#### Information

Inspection date	23 May 2024	URN	116366
VA/VC/Academy	VA	Pupils on roll	48
Diocese	Diocese of Winchester		
MAT/Federation	The Oaks CE Learning Federation		
Headteacher	Mathew Bowen		
Chair	Jill Cairns		
Inspector	Rebecca Bone	No.	C23.24