

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Gregory's Church of England Primary School

Vision

Where learning has no limits through faith, hope and love.

"...and now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is Love"

1 Corinthians 13:13

St Gregory's Church of England 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

- Faith, hope and love underpin the actions of leaders. Robust systems assure trustees and local governance committee members that these are leading to the flourishing of pupils and staff.
- Positive routines are embedded in the life of the school. These range from 'Reception buddies' to greeting pupils by name in the morning. They create a community in which pupils and staff are known and cherished.
- The strong relationship between the local church and school enriches inclusive collective worship. Through a period of significant change this has rooted St Gregory's in the vision and allowed pupils and staff to benefit from times of calm reflection.
- Pupils develop a clear understanding of justice and responsibility. Leaders carefully map a range of leadership roles and learning experiences. These include ethical design tasks, house captains and guinea pig monitors.
- Leaders in school are well supported by the Pickwick Academy Trust to promote the wellbeing of staff and pupils. The visions of the school and trust align and lead to a shared endeavour to offer opportunities for learning and personal growth 'with no limits'.

Development Points

- Embed the understanding of the school framework for spirituality. This is so pupils can make the most of opportunities for spiritual growth across the curriculum and beyond.
- Ensure pupils have regular opportunities to revisit prior learning in religious education (RE). This is so they learn key content securely.



Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership

The image of a hot air balloon gliding over the Blackmore Vale is used by staff, pupils and parents alike to explain the vision of the school. They talk with clarity about the way that faith, hope and love help them to take flight and rise high, even when things get tough. It is this clear and compelling vision, exemplified by the Bible verse 1 Corinthians 13: 13 that underpins the work of the school. Trustees and members of the local governance committee work with trust and school leaders to define what flourishing looks like in their school. They use this to systematically check that the decisions they make are enabling pupils and staff be ambitious for themselves and the school community. As a result, the impact of the vision on the school is significant and has shaped the new approaches to school development.

Vision and Curriculum

A revised curriculum has been designed and adapted by leaders to spark the curiosity of pupils and enable them to 'aim high'. Right from the start of the Reception Year pupils have visits from people who do a range of jobs. In Year 3/4 pupils use visits to the graveyard to find names which they then research using the historical records of the school. This brings history alive to them and makes them inquisitive about how events impact on the lives of ordinary people. The 'big question' approach enables pupils to shape the learning and acquire key knowledge and skills. For example, a Year 5/6 enquiry on inventors coincided with a trip to London where many pupils encountered homelessness for the first time. This led to pupils researching materials and designing solutions to support people without shelter. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in learning and extra-curricular activities. Leaders work with them and their families to make sure that they are supported but also challenged to 'have a go'. The school, in conjunction with the trust, has introduced a consistent approach to spiritual development. Whilst displays and plans reflect clear understanding by adults, the pupils do not share this knowledge. This means they do not make the most of opportunities for spiritual growth within the curriculum.

Worship and Spirituality

Daily collective worship is carefully planned and expertly led. It inspires pupils to think about the wider world and understand the key value of 'faith' in action. Pupil worship ambassadors enthusiastically lead 'Wednesday worship' in the local parish church. They grow in confidence as they open spiritual 'doors' to others in their school through the retelling of stories from the Bible. The relationship between the school and the local parish church is very close. Adults and pupils flourish spiritually because of the warm and affirming relationships that are nurtured through regular times of worship together. Church leaders support staff in school to use techniques in class worship that bring a consistent approach. This enables pupils, including those who have SEND, to know what to expect and therefore engage enthusiastically. In the past few years St Gregory's has encountered a number of challenges. The daily moments of quiet and calm have kept 'hope and faith' at the centre of school life. Those responsible for governance check that collective worship is meeting their high expectations. The annual trust 'church school flourishing' morning enables pupils to worship with other schools and encounter different styles of worship.

Vision and School Culture

The Christian understanding of caring 'love' is a vibrant reality at St Gregory's. Each morning starts with a welcome by name at the gate. This helps pupils to feel safe and secure as they begin their day. Those who need a little more help to transfer from home to school have carefully thought-out support. This means that they enter the classroom ready for learning. Pupils understand 'love' as friendship and kindness and they go out of their way to share this with their schoolmates from across the years. 'Reception buddies' help the youngest pupils to feel welcome and included. Pupils know that when things go wrong, this is not the end of the story. They can reflect on unhelpful actions or behaviours and find ways to 'get it right'. Communication between



home and school is regular and responsive. This means that the school can respond discreetly and quickly when families encounter difficulties. Staff know that they are valued by leaders in school and those who are part of the wider trust. Carefully considered policies around positive mental health and daily 'check ins' mean that even in tough situations they are well supported. Although leadership is shared with another school, pupils and staff are rightly confident that, as one staff member noted, 'we are known fully here'.

Vision, Justice and Responsibility

Justice and responsibility are woven through the curriculum. As a result, pupils develop a secure understanding of what they mean. Ethical questions are posed by teachers as part of the learning and pupils are encouraged to think carefully about what that means in their lives. The recent fair-trade cafe involved the whole school community in considering questions of equity in trade and raising money for charity. In this small school there are a large number of roles of responsibility that pupils diligently undertake. They know that they are trusted to complete tasks, for example the care of the guinea pigs. They rise to this challenge and as a result they grow in confidence and self-belief. This culture of justice and responsibility extends beyond the school gate. Pupils write letters and make cards for older members of the village community. The work of local volunteers established a school garden. Pupils were then able to take part in growing and entering vegetables for the village show, demonstrating their commitment to the life of their wider community.

Religious Education

As part of the wider curriculum review and refresh leaders have completely redesigned the RE curriculum. It is now well balanced and focussed. The two-year cycle of learning means that mixed age classes are taught the curriculum in a way that makes sense. Leaders have made sure teachers are well trained to teach this course of study. Leaders have selected a range of world religions including Christianity and non-religious worldviews. This means that the curriculum is appropriate for and diverse. Alongside visits to the local church the school make 'virtual' trips to places of worship so that pupils can build an understanding of significant places in chosen religions.

Leaders at school and trust level check that teachers are delivering the well-designed curriculum in the way that they intend. Staff find this approach supportive and know that they can always seek guidance if they are unsure. Pupils enjoying learning in RE. They value debating their ideas with their peers and they listen closely to the opinions of others. Over the last few years there have been a significant number of changes within the school. As a result, many pupils in the older years do not recall earlier learning as well as they should. Those in Key Stage 1 show strong recall of prior learning. New approaches to assessment and the use of vocabulary are clear and robust.

Information

Address	New Street, Marnhull, Sturminster Newton, Dorset, DT10 1PZ		
Date	27 November 2025	URN	150360
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	52
Diocese	Salisbury		
MAT	Pickwick Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Rob Ward		
Headteacher	Jill Farndale		
Chair of Governors	Harriet Ridout		
Inspector	Lizzie Jeanes		