

Summary SIAMS Self-Evaluation 2026-2027



Our Vision:

“Make great choices. Be our best.”

Underpinned by the story of the Wise and Foolish Builders

(Matthew 7: 24-27)



At the heart of our school we believe that everyone should be enabled to be the very best that they can be. We are committed to being a thriving village school and nursery; providing a solid foundation from which to build on, where all in our community are valued, respected and cared for. Through the creation of positive, life-long habits, we send life-long learners into the wider world with the skills, confidence and drive that they need to flourish.

Our school values of *Hope, Peace, Respect, Friendship, Trust* and *Kindness* are captured through the story of the Wise and Foolish Builders and lived out by children, staff and parents across our community.

OUR SCHOOL STORY

A long time ago, Jesus told a story...

The wise builder built his house upon the rock. He thought carefully; he built it slowly; he took his time. He showed **RESPECT** by listening and following instructions.

The foolish builder built on the sand. He rushed; he did not use the right materials. His house was not strong.

A storm came! The wise builder's house did not fall down. On the other hand, the foolish builder's house crumbled down onto the sand.

In the morning there was **PEACE**, it was calm and quiet. The wise builder showed the foolish builder **FRIENDSHIP** and **KINDNESS** by helping him and giving him the book to show him how to build a strong house.

Jesus told the people, making wise choices will help them have good lives and that we can **TRUST** in God. We should build our lives on rock not sand. We do this by making wise choices to help us be our best. God **HOPES** that we will all make good choices.

Who we are....

St James' CE First School and Nursery is a Church of England school set in the rural village of Alderholt, Dorset.

Contextual data (last updated September 2026 and in line with 25/26 IDSR):

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) – 11 pupils- well below average
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities- EHCP- 5- close to average
- Disadvantage- 9 pupils (Targeted support/ Ever 6)- well below average as well as 8 children on enhanced support
- Ethnicity- 2 pupils- well below average
- No pupils who speak English as an Additional Language- well below average
- Pupil mobility is steady- more children join our school rather than leave; this is mostly due to families moving into the area- - school stability is above average
- 3 service children currently on role- no parents in active service
- Attendance 95.9% year to date
- Persistent absence – 5% year to date
- We have 0 exclusions- year to date and 0 over the previous 12 months
- Staff stability is strong and there is minimal movement, as numbers expand we have been able to grow the team

We currently have 129 children on roll and this is an increasing number for our school, although none of our classes reaches their PAN of 30. Supported by a 100% turnover of children coming from our nursery as well as other local nurseries. Some of our families choose to come from other local towns and villages.

We are proud to be a part of Heath Academy Trust, a small collaboration of six school who work very closely together to 'grow excellent learners'.

The Trust has an active board of members and Trustees who operate alongside the CEO. The CEO is also an executive head of schools within the Trust; there are two additional experienced headteachers and four head of schools who make up the school leadership team. Our Church School Flourishing document provide a clear guide as to what it means to be a church school within the context of the mixed academy trust.

As headteacher of this school, I am Leader for Church School Flourishing across the church schools in our Trust. We also have leaders for RE and CW as well as champions for church school governance and recruitment. Leading in all of these areas, I sit on the board as a Trustee as Church School representative.

St James is fully supported by Salisbury Diocese Board of Education. We work very closely with advisors who provide regular QA sessions, training opportunities and networking days.

Partnerships with both the local St James Church but also the local Chapel (Evangelical); both leads deliver alternate weekly worship supporting the weekly-directed theme. Offers diversity of Christianity.

Partnerships with various educational partners and community support services to ensure we offer a broad range of services to enable our families to be involved in choices that allow them to their best.



What we are doing here...

Our school's vision is Make Great Choices. Be our Best. This is underpinned by the story of the Wise and Foolish Builders (Matthew 7: 24-27) The vision and values were reviewed in 2022 in response to securing the school's position in the community, having to make difficult decisions in pursuit of being the best and in the need to reflect the main drivers in school improvement.

Our school values of Hope, Peace, Respect, Friendship, Trust and Kindness were selected in consultation with all stakeholders in response to the story of the Wise and Foolish Builders, the values they could see being lived within the story and the school ethos that we wanted to build.

At the heart of our school we believe that everyone should be enabled to be the very best that they can be. We are committed to being a thriving village school and nursery; providing a solid foundation from which to build on, where all in our community are valued, respected and cared for. Through the creation of positive, life-long habits, we send life-long learners into the wider world with the skills, confidence and drive that they need to flourish.

There is a Trust strapline of 'Growing excellent learners'. This resonates and builds on our vision of strong, firm foundations and enabling all of stakeholders to see themselves as lifelong learners who, with a firm grounding in faith, knowledge and skills, are enabled to constantly strive to be their best.

Our school joined the Heath Academy Trust in 2015. It was a conscious decision to join a smaller Trust in order to benefit from the collaborative aspect of developing our schools together whilst retaining autonomy and the ability to respond to our community's needs.

Whilst the CEO and Trustees are responsible for the strategic management, there is clear representation of our local school committee (LSC) on the board as well as the headteachers. As the Church School Flourishing lead on the Trust board we ensure our Church school's Christian vision and original foundation are heard, understood and promoted.

Our LSC are fundamental in monitoring our school on all levels. Our active Christian Ethos Committee (CEC) are responsible for the closer monitoring of vision and values, RE and Collective worship across the school. Through termly monitoring, they have a clear vision of where the school is at, opportunities to shape improvements and are enabled to collect evidence of success.

The LSC ensure that the school's vision and values drive and shape the way the school moves forward. Being a part of the decision-making process, making great choices to enable everyone to be their best is crucial in how they live out their role in school.

Daily act of Anglican worship across school for pupils, nursery joins where they can. Currently driven by spiritual development- modelling language, offering opportunities in worship to set the tone and ensure that the ethos of spirituality and what that looks like for our children is becoming embedded.

The school follows a Trust wide RE curriculum, following Dorset locally agreed syllabus, which has been carefully crafted by the RE leads across the six schools. Whilst it has a Christianity focus, many other key world religions are explored.

Spirituality is clearly defined as to what it looks like for us. There is common language of self, others, world and beyond that is used to discuss big questions and look at big pictures through our 'window of wonder'. This is becoming more embedded in school during discrete times and is beginning to be explored within the curriculum.

Work with Salisbury Diocese Education Board has enhanced all areas of our school's Church school status. Opportunities have been taken to take on much additional training that has affected the understanding of key areas such as spiritual development, collective worship and RE teaching.

The school has chosen to work with both faith denominations represented in the village as the school serves families and staff from both places of worship. This offers opportunities for children to have a broader view of the Christian faith and experience a range of worship styles and Anglican traditions

Actions from previous SIAMS inspection report:

School leaders and local school committee members need to:

- deepen their understanding of the school's Christian vision ensuring it drives and shapes policy and practice
- establish and ensure a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the school as a church school.

Plan high quality opportunities, using a shared definition and common language, which enable pupils to flourish spiritually in collective worship and the wider curriculum.

Ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn about global diversity and the differences within the world in which they live. Support and equip them to confidently challenge injustice, enabling them to become agents of change

So what....

There has been a significantly further understanding and use of the school's vision in implementing and embedding policy and practise through the Local School Committee- documents now support LSC members in using the vision and values in 'real time' in the work that they are undertaking. This has also been rolled out to how church school's vision and values are represented and championed in the wider Trust policies and documentation.

We take a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the school as a church school, setting up the CEC group as a branch of the LSC. There is termly monitoring in the areas of Vision and Values, RE and Collective worship through a triangulated approach that looks at planning & practise, book looks and stakeholder voice. This allows CEC members to know strengths and next steps in their area and allow their challenge to have an impact of ensuring 'best practise'.

There is a common definition and language in place for spirituality that staff and pupils know and use with increasing security and understanding. High quality spirituality opportunities are planned into worship as the vehicle and this allows for further embedding through the curriculum and wider school day. Specific links to spirituality teaching is being rolled out in classrooms this academic year.

Embedding the language of justice and responsibility has been undertaken mainly through worship times and through our spiritual language exploring self, others, world and beyond. Children know they have a voice they can use to bring about change although further work needs to be done to strengthen the links between their voice and empowering them to bring about change. This is a focus for our Pilgrims school council group this year.

How then shall we live....?

IQ1 How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision enable pupils and adults to flourish?

At the heart of our school we believe that everyone should be enabled to be the very best that they can be. We are committed to being a thriving village school and nursery; providing a solid foundation from which to build on, where all in our community are valued, respected and cared for. Through the creation of positive, life-long habits, we send life-long learners into the wider world with the skills, confidence and drive that they need to flourish.

Our school values of Hope, Peace, Respect, Friendship, Trust and Kindness are captured through the story of the Wise and Foolish Builders and lived out by children, staff and parents across our community. The whole ethos of the school is based on the core elements coming through our vision story and values- all stakeholders feel loved, valued and cared for. There are clear and deep friendships between all, where people are trusted and kind to all; the atmosphere is supportive, peaceful and respectful.

Our curriculum is based on foundational skills, producing a carefully planned, stepped approach to our curriculum where academics are balanced with behavioural and pastoral teaching.

Policies and procedures, such as behaviour management, pastoral and personal development are all designed to allow children to learn from their mistakes in a safe and secure fashion and build on their prior learning. Reflection times, pause pods and bounce back trolleys all offer periods of time dedicated to reframing choices in a non-judgemental way and enabling children to 'be their best'.

Emotional literacy programme Hamish and Milo enables children to further explore values such as friendship and respect.

Pupil, Parent and staff questionnaires have been conducted- please see highlighted examples for evidence. SLT use these to look at strong outcomes and those that need actions either individually or holistically; e.g. a parent mentioned a lack of PE lessons on occasions, which was also felt when speaking with staff- timetabling for PE/ physical development was tightened and increased so as to up our PE offer on the curriculum.

Under previous senior leadership, we have not been the school of choice in our local area for a variety of reasons. New leadership has had to make variety of difficult decisions about staffing, timetabling, policy and procedures however, this has meant that the school is now more popular than ever (increasing school numbers), is the school of choice for the village and all stakeholders are enabled to flourish here.

Staff feel valued and it has been a conscious choice for the SLT to allow staff a strong ethos of work/ life balance and make family a priority. For example, paying compassionate leave where appropriate for staff needing time off for dependants, actively reducing workload and ensuring breaks, considering term-time leave for all staff when needed. Staff CPD is championed and encouraged in order to continually promote the 'be your best' flourishing for all.

When thinking about building strong foundations we have made the bold decisions around placing teachers in all of our classes, despite budget constraints, as we truly believe that this is what will enable our children to be the best that they can be.

Decisions have been made to increase the amount of representation on the Governor board, this enables more voices to be heard and represented across our stakeholders and opens more opportunities for challenge- enabling a wider group of people to be part of the decision-making process and the right decisions to be made. The spiritual mandate of all governors and Trustees is made clear in Code of Conduct and Induction paperwork whilst those who take on the Christian mandate for the school/ Trust understand they have a deeper commitment and role to play in sustaining the Christian foundation of the school.

A layer to governance is added through our Christian Ethos Committee (CEC) group. CEC group members take a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the school as a church school. There is termly monitoring in the areas of Vision and Values/ RE and Collective worship that, through a triangulated approach, looks at planning & practise, book looks and stakeholder voice. This allows CEC members to know strengths, next steps in their area, and allow their challenge to have the impact of ensuring 'best practise'. Governor voice in monitoring, especially around the RE curriculum and the development of assessment has been strong and members have been fully involved in the rewriting and development of the curriculum and the RE assessment. See CEC group monitoring sheet 25-26.

Further to this is our Church School Flourishing Trustee, a representative on the Trust board and the Church School Flourishing Lead who is working on the ground with church schools and CEC groups within our Trust. Thoughts, actions and challenge raised by our CEC members are taken through the Church School Trustees report to the Trust Board so that information is shared and future church school work can be shaped and tailored for the needs identified.

Actions/next steps:

The vision of the Trust needs to resonate more with the school's theologically rooted Christian vision in a way that enhances the work of the school and its Christian foundation. In particular, Church school lead is looking at ways that Trust wide policies can better support our church schools and allow their foundation to be better represented.

IQ2 How does the curriculum reflect the school's theologically rooted Christian vision?

The school has recently adopted a Trust wide curriculum that has rolled out across academic year 25-26. The school have worked across the year to make the choices necessary to take ownership of this and ensure that the curriculum is best suited to the children attending St James'. For example, as a school set in a rural location we place great value on children being enabled to work and play in outdoor spaces, we have chosen to ensure that all of our children benefit from forest school sessions rather than just early years and this is offered to all of our children throughout school.

The curriculum has been enhanced to support and encourage all children to 'Make great choices and be their best' with the intent statement for each subject area re-written and grounded in the school Christian vision and values.

Staff have made conscious decisions to speak up and challenge the curriculum in areas where they feel practise could be reshaped in order to allow learners to be their best e.g. avoiding repetition of skills and making sure content is age-matched and appropriate. St James' staff are championing the rewriting of the EYFS curriculum.

The assessment supporting the curriculum offers children and staff opportunities to be self-reflecting and evaluate their learning. Using the wise builder as their role-model- where have they made great decisions, where could they listen and be guided further to make improvements.

Our school enrichment opportunities further cement our vision and values into our curriculum. Enrichment opportunities have included a wide range of skills and activities determined through pupil and staff consultation, including: school trips, Trust wide sporting events, Sparkly Starters/ Fabulous finishes for every topic, forest school, library visits, local community event involvement, music lessons, after school clubs, home learning projects. These experiences aim to build character, foster friendships, explore new skills, build trust and respect for others, give opportunities for awe and wonder, deepen a love of learning and enable children's holistic flourishing.

Spiritual development is a natural part of daily life, going beyond worship and planned curriculum moments. Displays up in classrooms ensure it is visible as a part of children's daily offer and encourages children and staff to refer to it/ use the language as a regularity. Staff and pupils are confident when discussing moments that explore self-others-beauty-beyond (our school language and structure).

Leaders know that the curriculum is having the intended effect for pupils- feedback from children state that they enjoy their learning opportunities and recognise that learning helps them to be their best. Parents recognise the hard work that has gone into planning and providing a curriculum that inspires children and enables holistic growth.

Children feel ready and prepared for their next stage of learning- they leave our school confident in themselves, the decision they can make and know how to be their best. The governor Year 4 exit interviews identify how the curriculum has the intended outcomes, pupils feel well –prepared for the next phase of their education; 'I feel confident and ready for Year 5. I have become much more resilient and more courageous in my choices. I know this will help me at secondary school.' Additionally, academic outcomes are broadly in line with national averages. This demonstrates how fully pupils flourish here and how governors evaluate the vision effectiveness.

Recognition from our external challenge partner states: "positive approach to ensuring positive and sustained attitudes to learning is evident in all classes and in all year groups. This is both something to celebrate and of which to be proud. You have a committed and enthusiastic team of staff. At all times they strive to deliver their best."

Our inclusive Trust curriculum aims to capture all learners and offer children success despite their starting points. One parent stated how they love the fact; the vision teaches children that "just trying their best is good enough". Teachers are experts in adapting learning to suit individuals and planning and preparation allows them to consider 'ways-in' to learning for all children in all areas. This is further exemplified in our SEND documentation where children are identified as needing a higher level of support.

One particular child with higher-level needs expressed a deep dysregulation with being in class and found being around other children very overwhelming. We made the decision to create an internal alternative provision for this child where he has his own workspace with his own dedicated adults. The impact of this has been transformational for him. He went from reading 2 words in the phonics test to reading 17 and he now regularly completes his adapted curriculum tasks without upset. The relationships he has formed with adults has seen him come out of his shell and shine!

In line with our development and whole staff training in therapeutic thinking and relational practise, we recognised that some children really did not like being publicly celebrated or struggled when others did. Decisions were made to change the way children were celebrated in school and this was made far more personalised to a discreet moment of celebration through a child's day. Rather than the weekly celebration certificate worships children are now given small tokens of celebration within their class setting or individually through stickers and shout-outs. Staff feedback has been positive around this change in helping children celebrate others but on a smaller, safer scale.

Where children need adaptations to our behaviour management routines we have found individualised approaches that work for each child. This has often been done in collaboration with parents so that a strong united approach is evident to help the child feel safe within their boundaries and celebration of achievements can go beyond the classroom. Through discussions with parents who have been a part of this process, they have shared their utmost thanks to staff who have 'gone the extra mile'.

Growing wisdom of adults including parents is important to us. Staff state, "plenty of training offered to staff to gain the knowledge needed to better themselves". They also appreciate opportunities for reflective practise. Parents are kept informed of their children's learning on a termly basis, they are actively encouraged to learn alongside their child at home and take part in home learning projects. We also offer discreet opportunities for parents to be upskilled in their child's learning e.g. phonics workshops.

Actions/next steps:

Thinking about how our most vulnerable/disadvantaged pupils are flourishing in their learning, developing ways in that enable this group of children to have choices over how they access their learning based on their specific needs and learning styles- impact of which will see them being championed to be their best.

Work will continue in our spiritual development to highlight and plan opportunities where our spiritual language can be more explicitly taught within the curriculum.

IQ3 How is daily collective worship (CW) enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

Exploring the theological vision is grounded in our worship planning and enhances pupil understanding of what our vision and values look like in practise. We have spent time reworking the story of Wise and Foolish builders so that children see the clear links within the story and the message (vision) and values we are teaching. Monitoring conducted by our CW CEC lead found that “worship helps them (children) to learn about the world and people so they are better equipped in life and relationships outside of school”. A child pointed out how “worship inspires us to be our best!”

Our worship, Anglican in its foundation, follows a Gather- Engage- Reflect- Send format and children know the structure and what to expect. During the ‘gather’ stage children hear and sing along to music and a whole school refrain is spoken to signal coming together for a special time. ‘Engage’ offers children the opportunity to explore a new concept, hear a story and is Biblical in its rooting. ‘Reflection’ offers children the opportunity for stillness and prayer thinking about how and why a concept resonates with them. Our ‘send’ is always the big question of the week- a question the children and adults are left to further deliberate and discuss through the week to come back together and discuss. Fantastic examples of children responses to big questions can be found in their class floor books.

With a range of coverage through the week and pitching the worship from different angles, we aim for it to be as inclusive, invitational, and inspirational as possible. Through our pupil questionnaires it is evident that children raise a variety of aspects that they particularly enjoy e.g. some like singing worship, some mention Window of Wonder, many children like the Open the Book and visiting clergy workshops.

As a school in a village with two main denominations- Church of England, Evangelical and families that attend both settings, we are careful to value the input that clergy from both can offer us. On a fortnightly programme clergy member offer biblical stories and teachings, that link to our weekly theme, that enrich our worship with a further understanding of theology in a simplistic and child-friendly approach. Clergy members are mentioned repeatedly through questionnaires as an aspect they particularly value in worship time.

Christian celebration opportunities are always a highlight on our calendar for clergy guests and all parents, carers, volunteers and community members. Parent questionnaires state how these events are always “welcoming, enjoyable for all and inclusive”. We are always mindful of the fact that many of our stakeholders are non-religious and feedback implies that parents/ carers appreciate the fact that worship is “perfectly balanced” as well as “thoughtful and inclusive”. Leaders are assured that collective worship is broad, diverse, and relevant to all.

Pupils take great pride in being involved in CW through whole school exploration of topics/ pictures, discreet leadership opportunities such as being a Pilgrim and/ or being a year 4 worship monitor. Pilgrims are commissioned into their role at St James’ Church and are given a range of opportunities through their year in ‘office’ to lead, guide and be involved in worship. Parents comment, “it’s always lovely to see the ambassadors with the candles, hearing them lead prayer and songs”.

Children have been particularly inspired by worship themes that have highlighted injustice and the actions that we can take to make our mark and action change. Throughout the year, children have created worship content, delivered on topics that they feel passionate about, and then run various campaigns to bring attention to their cause and show support for it. Linked to worship coverage on creation, some children in year 4 spoke enthusiastically about how people were destroying our planet. With the support of our Forest School teacher, the children sourced support from the Woodland Trust and secured 105 trees for our children and families to plant on school grounds!

In the context of the school as a Church school, all adults and pupils now have a common understanding of spirituality in our school, “how I explore, share, reflect and grow into the person I want to be.”

Spiritual flourishing has been the main focus of worship for this academic year. Having agreed a definition and language, staff have been dedicated to modelling this and enhancing CW and classroom practise by exploring pictures and questions through the lenses of ‘self- others- world and beyond’. Explicit time has been set aside to explore these concepts and teach children how they can develop themselves as a spiritual being. Children state they enjoy our spiritual workshops and in particular reflection opportunities. Looking at the class floor books it is overwhelmingly evident that children have improved in their ability to reflect spiritually.

All adults are invited to join workshops that they wish to attend- singing worship is always popular! Staff see the link between concepts, stories and shared moments in worship and how these are lived out in reality through school. They comment on the support they receive from colleagues, staff going ‘above and beyond’ to help each other and the compassionate approach that underpins the ethos.

Actions/next steps:

Between church schools within the Trust, create a cycle of evaluation and planning that maps collective worship across a year. Through this, collective worship will offer a broader understanding of diversity within the Christian religion as well as being further supportive of British values and protected characteristics. There will be discreet, planned opportunities for children to be more heavily involved in leading worship.

IQ4 How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision create a culture in which pupils and adults are treated well?

The deeply embedded vision and values have created a culture where all can flourish. Pupils feel safe, are happy and parents recommend the school. Our pupil survey 2026 revealed 100% of pupils feel safe and happy with the majority citing teachers and friendships help them to feel this way. 100% of parents completing the survey 2026 recommend our school, "it's a very nurturing school with excellent staff who have always been friendly and approachable. Our children are thriving here!"

Stakeholders recognise the emphasis of the school-based values in creating our culture and ethos. Parents state how they are particularly impressed by the emphasis on kindness, sense of community and positive relationships between staff and children.

Policies are carefully constructed to create a culture in which people's wellbeing is enhanced. Policies such as SRE, behaviour, anti-bullying/ discrimination/ harassment, intimate care, menopause and maternity (for staff) ensure considerate responses and practise- all stakeholders are assured dignity, equity and individualised approach to ensure flourishing for all. Co-regulation underpins our approach prioritising warm and responsive interactions that provide the support and coaching for children and adults who need to understand, express and modulate their learning, thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Enabling good mental health for all is central to the school's work. Half-termly focused staff meetings allow our pastoral lead to gather names of children who need a level of intervention with their emotional literacy and support intervention groups are then run by trained staff in our programme Hamish and Milo. Surveys and session notes that track the emotional and mental health profile through the programme reveal that there has been a marked improvement for our children who have been through these groups showing improved emotional self-awareness, self-regulation and self-esteem to name just a few.

For those children who are deemed to need further support with mental health and or have a particular area of need such as being on a child protection plan very specific programmes of work can be conducted in order to address specific issues. For one child who had experienced domestic violence in the family home and was very withdrawn, a bespoke SEMH plan was put together and delivered by our trained teaching assistant. The class teacher for this child has noticed a transformational difference in the child's self-confidence.

As a result of the theologically rooted Christian vision, effective strategies are in place that help adults, including those deemed to be vulnerable and/or disadvantaged, at difficult times. Weekly staff meetings enable staff to discuss where needs of parents may be presenting and the senior leadership team and very quick to offer an open-door policy for parents to seek support and may be vulnerable. Staff are quick to respond to needs and work alongside professionals such as health visitors and early help advisors to get support to the families who need it most. One very appreciative parent comments, "I would also like to say how incredibly grateful and appreciative I am of yourself and the whole nursery team. You have all been incredible and so supportive and helpful when I've needed it". We recognise the vital importance of close supportive relationships with parents and carers and are committed to these relationships. The school is small enough for all staff and children to know each other very well; we nurture a 'family' atmosphere.

The vision of being our best firmly extends to all stakeholders across school. This, coupled with our spiritual definition of 'being the person I want to be' adds significantly to the development of a caring and trusting atmosphere where the teaching of key school values, consistent routines, praise, and fair consequences contribute to a positive and respectful school environment where all pupils and adults can flourish.

Staff feel valued and it has been a conscious choice for the SLT to allow staff a strong ethos of work/ life balance and make family a priority. For example, paying compassionate leave where appropriate for staff needing time off for dependants, actively reducing workload and ensuring breaks, considering term-time leave for all staff when needed. More recently we have had a couple of staff members whose children have been poorly in hospital, the decision to offer compassionate leave was taken rather than unpaid demonstrating our ethos is to support people in their times of need; "after going through something very traumatic recently the staff have gone above and beyond to support me and my family."

Staff CPD is championed and encouraged in order to continually promote the 'be your best' flourishing for all. Staff are encouraged to view themselves as life-long learners and new areas on the curriculum can be explored alongside pupils. Staff retention is high, staff know they are valued and will be offered the chances to better their careers and their own outcomes. Over the last couple of years, the SENDCO has achieved her qualification and 2 senior staff members have been offered opportunities to undertake National Professional Qualifications.

Local governors conduct termly learning walk with a focus on school ethos, standards and curriculum. In April 2026 it was noticed, "Overall, the atmosphere strongly supports both wellbeing and learning, creating a positive and purposeful culture across the school." Further, back in Dec 2025 feedback received was "The atmosphere was conducive to learning and pupils appeared very happy and confident, knowing what was expected of them."

Actions/next steps:

A Trust wide Inclusion document will further enhance how our vulnerable/disadvantaged pupils are flourishing in their learning.

IQ5 How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision create an active culture of justice and responsibility?

Our theologically rooted Christian vision and values balances individual freedom and rights whilst ensuring that pupils understand how this links to their responsibility towards others. In lived out terms, enhanced by our spirituality teaching, children understand that their thoughts and their choices can impact themselves, others, the world and beyond. Being considerate and understanding of this far-reaching effect enables you to grow into the best person you can be.

Responsibility is a focus within our Relational Practise Policy; we follow a restorative approach and place importance on emotional coaching- understanding both sides of a view and using our voices to both speak up for ourselves as well as listen respectfully and seek to understand others. Equally, our procedure of logical consequences helps children understand there needs to be justice restored where things happen that are unfair. Our safe and clear boundaries established right from our nursery setting ensure children know staff will be fair to all and that everyone in our school is treated well.

The theme of justice and responsibility is taught and experienced through regular themes in CW, PSHE, forms strands within our curriculum topics such as the invasions of Christopher Columbus and through some texts included on our reading spine. This ensures pupils build a knowledge of justice and injustice so that they can respond intellectually as well as emotionally. It is covered through looking at the work of charities, Fairtrade, and Harvest (where we focus on ethical choices) and aspects of human/ animal life where injustices occur.

There is a culture that has been created in school where children and adults feel empowered to speak up where they see injustice or where they feel we need to take further responsibility. This may be something small such as children requesting a greater variety of toys on the playground not just sports equipment right through to larger commercial charities they would like to support because they have a passion or an affiliation that is driving their need to seek change. Children regularly approach the headteacher's office with a cause they have a passion for and ideas of what they would like to do- all are welcomed, however small, it is our absolute ethos that when children see they can have impact on the small things they will be empowered to tackle the big things!

RSPCA is a favoured charity and one that our children and parents have supported over the last couple of years. As a rural community, many of our children have dogs in particular and with an RSPCA animal home on our doorstep it is a charity with high profile in our area. Fundraisers, toy donations and most recently a charitable stall at the school fete are all ways in which different children have spoken and acted courageously to show their support for animals who are not treated fairly. Pupils say, "I helped the RSPCA because I like animals and we should help them because they can speak so we should speak for them!"

Following a rainforest curriculum topic in KS2 a group of pupils were outraged when looking at the levels of deforestation our planet. The group approached leadership and asked to share this knowledge with the whole school as they recognised that more people needed to be made aware of the cause. The pupils ended the worship with much excitement when it was revealed that because of them speaking up courageously, our Forest School Teacher had contacted the Woodland Trust and a delivery of 105 trees had been gifted to our site for planting- a direct impact on them as agents of change, combatting the cause they were speaking out against.

Furthermore, children have taken it upon themselves, outside of school, to look at supporting charities. A year 3 pupil took the decision to support the Princess Trust and donated her hair to be made into wigs for children suffering with cancer. Following the 'Save the Planet' work the older children carried out (above) the year 2 class took it upon themselves to undertake a litter pick on the school grounds, "It is our responsibility to keep our planet clean!" Lunchtime staff recognised how they could do their bit and organised for Dorset Waste Service to carry out an assembly around food waste and recycling. They then made sure food waste bins were placed in every classroom, playground, and staff room and lunch hall to collect snack/ lunch waste. We now recycle all food waste on site. A year four child sold sweets through his summer holiday (July 2026) in order to raise funds for World Wildlife Fund and then presented a heartfelt worship on his cause. He wanted to speak out "because animals don't have a voice so we have to speak up to protect them as they can't!"

Parents note "children are more confident and have the courage to speak out". They have stated that, "it's fantastic they have the opportunity to speak up for issues they feel are important." Further support is always shown at fundraisers and events where many parents and families and local community, members show their support for the causes championed by our children.

Staff and parents lead by example and model how to be courageous advocates of causes close to them. In the last 18 months we have supported Salisbury hospice a charity very close to staff members heart and hugely supportive within our community; celebrated for 'Hello yellow' day raising awareness for children's mental health and most recently, when seeing a large amount of unused library books headed towards recycling, a staff member arranged for a donation to be gifted to the Great Big Read so that other local children and schools could benefit from the texts. Seeing the stance against injustice and watching others demonstrate their responsibility where this is witnessed inspires our pupils to take responsibility and act with justice.

Our school approach inspires character development opportunities in personal responsibility and enabling voice. All children in school, starting with our youngest children, are given age-appropriate responsibilities for the spaces they work and play in and how they live alongside those who are within those spaces. Children in nursery are encouraged to use timers when required to take turns with sharing equipment which in turn is the beginning of teaching them justice and fairness. Further through school, responsibilities increase and by year 4 children are leading play, monitoring lunchtimes and active participants in worship. After a fantastic sports day the school vicar was a part of the awards ceremony, he noted that the children who were awarded by their peers were those who had been recognised for ensuring fairness and equality throughout each event.

The school council, our Pilgrims, arranged a very successful walk to school week in May 2026, highlighting children's journeys to school around the world and the precarious trip some children make just to get to school. Alongside scooter and bike decorating, and a whole school day of walking the group also raised funds for UNICEF. They also chose to support the Shoe Box appeal believing injustices towards children were something particularly relevant to our age group supporting. Pupils, parents and staff contributed very generously and the Pilgrim were incredibly proud to send off many shoeboxes.

Ethical decision-making in education involves making choices that are fair, just, and respectful of all stakeholders. In a small school, where funding is very tight and numbers can fluctuate, wise decisions need to be made, particularly around staffing and resourcing. Over the last couple of years, we have been forced to undertake annual discussion between school, governors and Trustees around employing discreet class teachers despite being underfunded for this. Whilst directly affecting the school budget, it is a conscious choice made that providing good quality teachers for our children in discreet class groups greatly influences the educational experience of our children and directly allows our children to be their best.

Actions/next steps:

Add more structure and planning to stakeholder's opportunities to share their passions for causes. Pupils/ parents will have platforms where they can raise awareness of big issues which concern them, annually, invite pupils to present in 2 minutes a cause they wish to be considered- the school council then identify 3 causes to support and. This should help to grow awareness of a range of important causes and enabled pupils to act taking responsibility. It has also been suggested that each class chooses a cause to support and through the year they advocate for their chosen charity/ support group.

Using the emotional coaching script that forms a part of our Relational Practise Policy, we will look to train pupils to be relationship mentors, peer mediators and friendship buddies. This work enables pupils to feel treated well: Pupil survey October 2025; G8% of pupils feel treated well by other pupils.

IQ6 Is the religious education curriculum effective?

School and Trust leaders ensure that the provision, profile, and priority of religious education is upheld by all staff and the importance of RE and World Views is supported and promoted at all levels. The RE and World Views Policy states how RE upholds the Statement of Entitlement and Locally Agreed Syllabus.

At the heart of our Religious Education curriculum is our Christian vision: “Make great choices. Be your best.” Through RE, pupils are equipped with the knowledge, understanding and reflective skills they need to flourish as thoughtful, compassionate and informed individuals in a diverse world. RE offers children the opportunity to engage meaningfully and fully appreciate the complexity and diversity of world views.

RE leaders have worked to ensure clear curriculum architecture using the approach of Theology (beliefs), Philosophy (big questions) and Sociology (lived practice) to plan each unit. Substantive knowledge is based on the foundational elements of RE and world views. It refers to the established facts, concepts, beliefs, and practices of religious and non-religious traditions. Our disciplinary concepts are based on the broader teaching and learning of emotional intelligence, empathy, personal reflection of world views and critical thinking skills. This gives our curriculum real disciplinary rigour, not just topic coverage.

Through a thoughtful and reoccurring planning process leader have ensured a refinement of the religious education curriculum. Knowledge of religions build from a root of Christianity, including global Christianity, move into knowledge of other Abrahamic religions and then build in wider Religions and World Views. The curriculum is age-appropriate but challenging, balanced and diverse. The Trust wide curriculum, is well-resourced and supported by the Emmanuel Project. It has been uniquely developed to meet the needs of our learners. Units are well-sequenced and well-balanced. The CEC visit in summer 2026 saw how the rearranging of certain units, so that religions studied were sequential, enabled children to have a deeper and richer understanding.

The curriculum is enquiry question led which builds in and encourages flourishing and spiritual development in RE; as well having philosophical questions to consider throughout a unit. Questions are open-ended, philosophically rich and age-appropriate which allow children to grapple with questions that have meaning and purpose. This drives critical reflection, exploration and broad thinking, not just content recall.

Bridging concepts at the beginning of each unit provide opportunities to broaden children’s understanding of the concept/ religious teaching by rooting it in something very familiar. To further support familiarity and solid starting points, the school values are woven through chosen units in areas such as reconciliation, stewardship, compassion and dharma.

There is clear, age-appropriate development from concrete to abstract; personal to comparative; gaining knowledge to evaluation. This ensures our children build opportunities to compare religions, evaluate beliefs and engage with abstract ideas (e.g. Trinity, moksha). This secures progression in RE and World views over time. During a CEC visit, monitoring the impact of RE plans as they went through their second year, the year 4 teacher stated, “the pupils in his class were beginning to notice links between some of the religions studied.”

RE is inclusive, enjoyed and impactful on our children. In our recent questionnaire children say, “RE helps us to understand others and to be tolerant.” “I’ve learnt lots about other religions and I love how it inspires me to find out more!” Children also highlighted that they could see and know some Bible stories that support school vision and values. This newly produced Trust curriculum has been transformative to the way that RE and World Views are led and taught across our entire Trust. Leaders and staff have increased confidence in their teaching of the subject, enjoy its variety and find the curriculum resources supportive.

RE is monitored effectively by staff, subject leaders, and Diocesan advisors and by the Christian Ethos committee. Staff and pupil conferencing and book looks provide evidence of quality provision, engaging and creative RE opportunities and allow stakeholders a good insight into the impact the curriculum is having on enabling our children to flourish. Collated evidence is fed back at local school level as well as Trust level to ensure impact is evaluated and next steps are planned for.

RE monitoring has identified a need for staff CPD in particular to World Views. The Emmanuel Project gives a summative over view of each religion and the key concepts staff will need to know in order to deliver the unit effectively. Whilst this gives staff confidence, further work could take place.

Assessment of pupils learning is provided by assessment enquiry questions, vocabulary checks and an end of unit piece of work. This is newly introduced, September 2026, after CEC monitoring of book looks in Spring 2026 suggested a more consistent approach for whole school assessment would be beneficial.

Actions/next steps:

Trust RE leaders will work alongside the RE Diocesan advisor to add case studies to each RE unit where examples of religion in reality can add an additional layer of breadth and depth. These may be story based and/ or visitors and real-life experiences.

Subject leaders for RE should seek ways of enhancing RE with physical resources and artefacts, and that continuing professional development for staff has an impact on the effectiveness of the curriculum.