

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Low Trenchard Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary Academy	
	Cross Roads Lewdown Okehampton Devon EX20 4DP
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Exeter
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 June 2017
Name of multi-academy trust	An Daras Multi Academy Trust
Date of inspection	24 January 2018
Date of last inspection	04 March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 144384
Executive Headteacher Head of School	Joanne Callow Sally Powell
Inspector's name and number	Patricia Morris 626

School context

Low Trenchard is a smaller than average sized primary school with 90 children on roll. The school became an academy in April 2017 when it joined the Cornish An Daras Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The Trust consists of six primary schools, two of which are Church of England schools. The head of school has been in post since September 2017, after teaching at the school for five years. The majority of children are of White British heritage. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average as is Pupil Premium. Attendance is in-line with the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Low Trenchard as a Church of England school are good

- Christian values are made explicit and clearly expressed, successfully impacting on children's good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- The inclusive Christian ethos ensures that every child is nurtured and valued as an individual.
- The rapid progress in implementing new initiatives, since joining the MAT, is ensuring that all members of the school community embrace and promote the school's Christian distinctiveness.
- The dedication of the leadership team, supported by very committed governors, ensures the school's capacity for development in continually moving forward as a church school.

Areas to improve

- Explore opportunities to engage in a wider range of faiths to enable children to gain first hand experiences of the diversity of other beliefs and religions.
- Strengthen links with the other church school in the MAT in order to support the development of more rigorous and formal monitoring systems.
- Extend opportunities for children to have a greater role in planning and leading worship so that they develop a sense of ownership.

- Develop a shared understanding between all members of the school community of what spirituality means so that more clearly defined opportunities to engage children in spiritual experiences that can be identified across the curriculum.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners

Since joining the An Daras Multi-Academy Trust, the new leadership team have made impressive progress in re-evaluating and promoting the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The thorough consultation process to review the school's vision and values involved all members of the school community, which is reflected in a sense of ownership and the way they underpin every aspect of school life. Three distinctive core Christian values of kindness, responsibility and respect are articulated confidently and make a positive impact on children's lives and achievements. Children understand their importance saying, 'they show us how to treat others' and 'values help us to respect the world that God made'. Values are based on the teachings of Jesus and they are very much a natural part of children's lives. Children talk enthusiastically about values seen in action and they are proud of the weekly values certificates that are awarded. Good behaviour is underpinned by the school behaviour policy that is firmly established on Christian values, encouraging children to reflect on their own actions and resulting consequences. Relationships across the school are very strong with everyone working together as a team. The Christian character consistently informs the school's approach to attendance and the extent to which the school provides support for individuals is inspirational. The inclusive community is a strength of the school, celebrating difference and diversity in every individual. Christian values contribute to children's spiritual development with children being encouraged to ask questions and explore their feelings and beliefs. However, there is a limited understanding of what spirituality means and opportunities for spiritual development are not always clearly identified across the curriculum. Religious education (RE) promotes the Christian distinctiveness of the school and children realise its importance saying, 'RE is fun but it really makes you think.' Respect for diversity and difference in other faith communities is evident. Children are particularly enthusiastic about work on Hinduism and confidently reflect on similarities and differences with Christianity. The school are beginning to encourage visitors from other faiths to come in, to enable children to have first hand experiences of other cultures and beliefs. There is some understanding of Christianity as a world faith and this is further developed through an established partnership with a school in Germany.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship has a high profile in the life of the school and its impact is seen in the positive attitudes and behaviour across the school community. Worship has a clear Christian message and is very strongly underpinned by distinctive Christian values and their links to the Bible. Children are totally engaged and very respectful in worship, confidently linking values to the teachings of Jesus and to their own experiences. Their understanding is confirmed through such confident comments as, 'its not about what people look like, but what they are like inside' and 'just because you don't like someone doesn't mean you can't help them'. This is supported with examples from Bible stories such as The Good Samaritan. Worship regularly ends with a challenge for children to actively seek out their current value in action, both in school and at home, encouraging them to naturally 'live out' values. Children are keen to contribute to worship although they have not yet been involved in planning and leading their own worship. The introduction of an ethos team, involving various members of the school community, is successfully giving children opportunities to improve worship and is already starting to impact positively on their confidence and enthusiasm. Prayer is an important part of the school day and is highly valued by children. They have opportunities to write and share their own prayers, say prayers at lunchtime and at the end of the school day. There is a good understanding of the meaning of The Lord's Prayer. They talk excitedly about how they wrote their own school prayer and how important it is to them. Their appreciation of times for quiet prayer is shown in such comments as, 'it is important to be able to say thank you or to ask God things'. Worship makes a good contribution to children's spiritual and moral development through opportunities to reflect on their own behaviour, have empathy with others and think about the wider world. Reflection times are a natural part of worship and are extended through well-used class reflection books where questions such as, 'What has Jesus done for us?' show thoughtful responses like, 'He sacrificed himself to save us' and 'His wisdom is shared through the Bible'. This has encouraged children to suggest to their ethos committee representatives that individual reflective journals be introduced to enable them to have personal books to express their private thoughts and feelings. The partnership with the local church is increasingly strong. Children regularly visit the church for special celebrations in the church year. They have a good knowledge of Christian festivals, which are often seen as a way of promoting service to others, such as collecting for the local food bank at Harvest. Children have a developing understanding of the Trinity, explaining that, 'It is three parts that make one God'. Planning of worship is detailed and more robust monitoring now identifies future ways to develop worship in order to move it forward.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

Leaders consistently articulate and promote a clear vision based on distinctive Christian values. They acknowledge that joining the multi-academy trust (MAT) has made a positive impact on the school and the new leadership team are making remarkable progress in all areas. The head of school provides effective leadership and governors recognise that her commitment and hard work are already making a positive impact in moving the school forward as a church school. Occasions to work with the other church school in the MAT have been identified to ensure good support as well as wider experiences for all children. Self-evaluation by leaders is accurate and informed by core values, ensuring a good understanding of how the Christian distinctiveness of the school impacts on children's lives. Governors are dedicated to supporting the school and being involved as much as possible. Since reviewing the vision and values of the school, they feel more informed and have a clearer understanding of their role, enabling them to increasingly challenge leaders. Governors are very positive about the future of the school and feel well supported by the MAT. The relationship between the school, the church and the local community is becoming progressively stronger, contributing to children's growing understanding of local, national and global communities. This is evidenced through opportunities to sing at events in the community and fundraising for charities such as the local food bank, as well as national and global charities, like Children in Need and Water Aid. The partnership with parents is very strong with questionnaires showing that the majority of parents are extremely supportive and very positive about the school. Parents particularly appreciate the nurturing ethos that gives children confidence in themselves and they fully acknowledge the impact of being a church school saying, 'good, Christian values are setting our children up for life'. They say the welcoming atmosphere means that children are enthusiastic about coming to school and 'they thrive here because they are given a thirst for learning.' Leadership of worship and RE is given a high priority. The increased focus on teaching and assessment has led to considerable improvement. Standards of attainment in RE are in line with national expectations, with both RE and collective worship meeting statutory requirements.

SIAMS report January 2018 Lew Trenchard Church of England VC Primary Academy Okehampton Devon EX20 4DP