

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

### Warberry Church of England Primary Academy

Cedars Road, Torquay, Devon TQ1 1SB

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Outstanding**

**Diocese**

**Exeter**

Previous SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Date of academy conversion

1 September 2015

Name of multi-academy trust

Learning Academy Partnership

Date of inspection

4 July 2018

Date of last inspection

10 July 2013

Type of school and unique reference number

Primary Academy 142287

Executive Headteacher

Emma Bone

Inspector's name and number

Revd David Hatrey 844

#### School context

Warberry Church of England Primary Academy is a larger than average school with 424 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to pupil premium support is in-line with national averages, whilst the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or a disability is below national averages. In September 2015 the school became part of the Learning Academy Partnership, a multi-academy trust (MAT).

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Warberry Church of England Primary Academy as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Pupils and staff share a rich and extensive understanding of being a caring family and consistently attribute this to the school's Christian character.
- A distinct and influential culture raises pupils' aspirations and attitudes to learning so they make impressive progress.
- Collective worship is inspirational, leading pupils to respond to ideas through imaginative fund-raising which shows their care and concern.
- Spirituality is creatively woven into religious education (RE) and collective worship enabling pupils to reflect on questions which challenge their thinking and have a relevance for their everyday lives.

#### Areas to improve

- Develop greater pupil ownership of collective worship by enabling them to plan and lead regularly.
- Utilise pupils' feedback to shape planning in RE and promote greater pupil ownership of their learning.
- Extend pupils' understanding of diversity within Christianity as a multi-cultural faith.

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

Christian values are a fundamental part of everyday life in the school. Pupils are immersed in a community where the language of values is understood and meaningful. Staff and pupils regularly review values to ensure they are relevant. Pupils recently agreed new values hope, creativity, friendship and courage, designing the symbol of a dragonfly to represent them. They talk about the creativity of God in making the dragonfly and how the values enable them to 'have life in all its fullness.' The school has an effective culture of raising pupil aspirations. This leads to pupils talking about being the best they can be, not just academically but in all of their God given potential. Pupils are able to make links between values and their achievements, talking about hope and aspirations. Pupils talk confidently about Christian values and what they look like and where they use them. They make links between values and Bible stories which reflect their distinctive meaning. Teachers refer to values in teaching so pupils recognise how they influence all aspects of life and learning. Staff are excellent models, sharing values in their own relationships with pupils and their families. Pupils explain the numerous links between values and their relationships, they talk about being a family where each is important. The standard of behaviour is impressive and bullying extremely rare. Older pupils naturally support younger peers and see themselves as role models of values. They attribute this to the school's Christian character. Standards have risen sharply with pupils now consistently achieving above national expectations in core areas. The degree of progress pupils make is particularly good. Effective interventions ensure vulnerable pupils make progress comparable with their peers. Spirituality is creatively woven into collective worship, RE and other subjects so pupils appreciate the relevance. Pupils' confidently use the approach of 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors' to support their thinking. There are regular times to reflect on questions which cover a broad range of experiences. For instance, these enable pupils to explore the importance of values or explore the relationship between science and religion. Pupils' responses show a growing depth of ideas making connections to previous learning. High quality experiences such as spiritual arts enable pupils to respond to questions such as, 'What is God like?' expressing their thinking in creative ways which they enjoy. Pupils say this helps them to learn from others. Stimulating interfaith days and visitors in RE extend pupils' understanding of other world faiths. Pupils make insightful comparisons between these faiths and their own beliefs, extending their understanding. This leads to pupils having a high degree of respect and empathy for those who have different views to their own. Pupils talk about similarities and differences in Christian denominations. They know Christians celebrate their faith in other ways in different countries, but their understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural faith is not as fully developed. Religious education provides imaginative experiences playing a major role in extending pupils' understanding of the school's Christian character and its relevance for them. Pupils deepen their understanding of Christian values in various contexts and their distinctive Christian meaning through RE.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

Collective worship is inspiring, challenging pupils' thinking. There are excellent examples where individuals respond to themes raised through fund-raising. Pupils' say, 'when I feel passionate about something the school encourages me to do something.' Pupils talk about a water pump for a village in Zambia and the difference clean water makes. Pupils show care for local individuals, fund-raising with great enthusiasm. Pupils recall acts of worship which influence their actions. One pupil shared how exploring trust had helped her to share her worries. Staff and pupils enjoy worship, talking of moments of calm, time to share together with others and God. Pupils speak enthusiastically of improvements to worship so they contribute more fully. Groups of pupils of all ages gather together as a family exploring values in greater depth. 'Open the Book' worship enables pupils to act out dramas which they enjoy. Singing is a strength, with an enthusiastic choir, using contemporary worship songs which pupils requested. The pupils' ethos team play a significant role in worship. Pupils' speak enthusiastically of improvements to worship so they contribute more fully. Together with the vicar they plan and lead elements of the major Christian festivals extending their understanding. They reviewed class prayer spaces and with peers' suggestions developed these so that pupils find these helpful. The pupils' ethos team visit other schools and bring back new initiatives, such as prayer stones. They evaluate worship considering whether the message is clear and how it could be improved, forwarding their ideas to governors. The pupils' ethos team have some opportunities to plan and lead worship, but at present this is not regular and only a few pupils have this chance. Pupils use 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors' to support their reflections during worship so they recognise what the meaning is for them. The development of opportunities for prayer is a strength with dedicated activity days. Each class designed a prayer experience which they shared. Pupils found this helped to explore the different approaches used by believers. Prayers written by some older pupils show a greater depth of maturity aware of the needs of others. Most pupils perceive the contribution prayer could make to their lives. Pupils explore the nature of the Trinity expressing their deepening ideas through art. Worship themes draw upon biblical stories so pupils talk about these in detail. Experienced worship coordinators empower staff to lead family group worship developing their confidence. A variety of leaders, including clergy bring different

approaches which pupils find helpful. Worship is regularly evaluated by governors and pupils leading to ongoing improvements. This excellent practice is shared with other schools.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding**

The RE coordinator and Trust RE lead bring considerable expertise and enthusiasm ensuring the subject has a prominent profile. Together they have made ongoing improvements which have raised the quality of teaching and learning. Standards are at least in-line with other core subjects. In a number of year groups attainment is high and there is a significant proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. Frequent assessments enable leaders to track pupil progress and take appropriate actions. Disadvantaged pupils are closely monitored ensuring they make at least comparable progress to their peers. Assessment strategies have been refined and embedded. Work scrutiny and moderation with other schools in the MAT ensure the accuracy of judgements. Leaders give additional guidance on what pupils should achieve in order to reach the expected or above average levels, so staff realise the higher requirements. The quality of teaching and learning is at least good and rising. There are many examples of outstanding practice, which are effectively shared with staff. The school invests time in preparing new staff to teach RE effectively. Leaders model good practice, working alongside colleagues raising the impact of teaching. Teachers' questioning is a strength, they consistently challenge pupils' responses and support them to use the higher order thinking skills. A variety of approaches engage pupils who enjoy being able to respond in different ways. Pupils are confident to share ideas knowing these will be valued. Big questions of meaning and purpose are explored such as whether science and religion are complimentary or conflicting. Pupils say they are challenged and wrestle with these ideas. At present pupils' thoughts about what they would like to explore are not used to inform planning. There is a strong emphasis on linking RE themes to daily life so pupils perceive their relevance. Time for reflections are an integral part of this. The introduction of 'Understanding Christianity' resources has enriched staff subject knowledge. The quality and depth of teaching in Christianity has risen significantly with pupils considering concepts such as incarnation and salvation. Pupils' responses show that they have a good knowledge of these ideas which they are confident to explain. Leaders trial new diocesan initiatives such as character education to enrich the provision. They are ambitious and further their expertise through national conferences. Leaders are well supported by the Trust with whom they share their regular subject reviews. This leads to ongoing improvements ensuring RE is a driving force in teaching and learning across the school.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding**

Leaders are passionate and dedicated to the work of a church school. They bring considerable expertise and enthusiasm. Leadership is extensively shared, so staff use their talents to enrich the work of a church school. A cohesive staff team share this vision and take responsibility for developing this. A clear MAT vision is established, 'Together We Empower Excellence'. Leaders confidently articulate biblical principles which underpin this. They talk about being special to God, being made in his image. The school perceives their role as enabling pupils to flourish, achieving their God given potential and having life in all its fullness. Pupils explain that the vision challenges them to have aspirational learning goals. Older pupils see excellence, not just in terms of academic success, but in using values. 'You can be excellent at friendship,' one pupil said. There is an overwhelming sense of being a community which stands out. Pupils feel they are part of a caring family. This includes others from the MAT with whom they share experiences. Staff share this rich sense of family. There are impressive examples where the school's Christian character influences pupils' and staff well-being. The school actively seeks to remove barriers which hinder pupils' learning. Focused support in and out of term time is valued, enriching parental relationships, with staff going beyond expectations. Staff well-being is given high importance so they feel valued. There are planned visits to monitor the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness each year. Governors are knowledgeable and focus on specific aspects. This addresses a target from the previous inspection. Together with astute evaluations from leaders and Trust members this leads to deep rooted initiatives and improvements. Examples include the introduction of 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors' and the review of values. The MAT has played an influential role in supporting the school, notably through leadership. The school now shares its outstanding practice with others. Staff gain experience by taking further responsibilities enabling them to move into leadership roles in church schools. Further professional training is well focused on identified needs and draws on diocesan expertise. Excellent links with All Saints Teaching School Alliance through in school support, provide quality training experiences. The church makes extensive contributions to school life through worship experiences in church and school and through governance. Parents celebrate the work of the school and the difference this makes to their children. The substantial contribution RE and collective worship leaders make to the life of the school is clear where they are well supported by leaders so that statutory requirements are fulfilled.

