

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

### The Deanery Church of England Academy

#### Vision

'A tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season' Psalm 1:3

Wisdom – Hope – Service – Resilience

At the heart of the academy's vision are the core values of **wisdom, hope, service, and resilience**. In alignment with the Church of England's education strategy, the academy promotes an education that empowers children, young people, and adults to live out 'life in all its fullness.'

The Deanery Church of England Academy is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Strengths

- The carefully crafted Christian vision of the school has enabled its rapid improvement. This means that students and adults can thrive in its supportive and caring environment.
- The effective planning and delivery of religious education (RE) ensures that the subject is valued by students. This has a positive impact on their personal development and understanding of the world around them.
- Collective worship provides an important foundation to the school day. It underpins the sense of togetherness and community, providing opportunities for the spiritual development of students and adults.

#### Development Points

- Strengthen the way spirituality is embedded across the curriculum and how its impact is evaluated. This is to enhance the opportunities for students and adults to flourish spiritually.
- Evaluate the way the Christian vision shapes the impact of the behaviour policy. This is to enhance the sense of justice and fairness in the life of the school.



## Inspection Findings

The Deanery Academy has been through a time of rapid improvement. This is because the clear Christian vision has driven leaders to be ambitious for their school after a time of significant instability. Trust leaders are successfully using the momentum of the vision to generate change. They are pivotal in ensuring that effective staffing and resourcing is in place, as well as support and challenge. This has established direction and purpose. Leaders, including governors, know the school well. Rigorous monitoring by them ensures that decisions taken are clearly linked to the vision. School leaders have established high expectations and clear policies and procedures across school life. Students rightly recognise the difference this makes to their learning and personal development. They understand how developing the values of wisdom, hope, resilience and service prepares them for life beyond school. As a result, there is no doubt that this is a place where students and adults thrive.

In line with its vision, the school's curriculum is carefully shaped to meet the needs of its students. A wide range of enrichment opportunities enable them to develop their individual gifts and talents. Careful planning, in partnership with parents, is used to meet the needs of individuals. Effective development work with the trust ensures that innovative approaches are in place to support students who are considered vulnerable. Remarkable outcomes stem directly from this, including supporting effective transition to secondary school and improving persistent absence rates. There is a common language for describing spirituality across the curriculum and some planned opportunities for its development. However, there is not a formal mechanism for measuring the impact of this provision.

Collective worship forms an important foundation for each day. The carefully planned programme includes a range of Christian teaching and perspectives. It is enriched by visiting speakers and encourages students to reflect on their own views and beliefs. Time for quiet and reflection is provided in both the morning and afternoon tutor sessions. This provides meaningful moments of calm for those who are anxious about school to feel confident about the day ahead. Larger groupings for worship occur on a weekly basis. These opportunities to gather are open and welcoming. Students are invited to take part in prayer and responses. Great care is taken to ensure that the atmosphere is inclusive, recognising the diversity of the student population. Collective worship, in its varied forms, makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of students and adults. Support from the local church, when the school was established, enabled the recruitment of a school chaplain. The breadth of this role has a significant impact on the spiritual life of students and adults. It includes supporting collective worship and smaller group activities in the school chapel such as morning prayers and Youth Alpha. Personalised encouragement to students and staff is highly valued. Training sessions for staff begin with a time of fellowship. This contributes significantly to their feeling of teamwork and spiritual flourishing.

As a result of the way the Christian vision is lived out, the atmosphere throughout the school is one of kindness and respect. Relationships between staff and students are positive and pleasant. Students are known and valued which enables them to feel confident when seeking help if they need it. They are proud of their school and the progress it has made. High priority is given to supporting the mental health and well-being of students. Effective use is made of emotional development support work (ELSA) in the school as well as input from external agencies. Students are clear that incidents of bullying are rare and are swiftly dealt with. Embedding the values of wisdom and hope, there is careful use of a restorative approach to dealing with relationship issues. Parents are rightly confident in the school and how it recognises the needs of their children. As a result of the support provided across the school for students, attendance rates have improved rapidly. Staff are well-supported and encouraged in their career



development. Being part of a strong, loyal team enhances their wellbeing. The school's behaviour policy, grounded in its vision, sets very clear expectations for students. The clarity of the policy, and its implementation, has been instrumental in its rapid improvement. The reward system is appreciated by students and contributes to their sense of belonging and self-worth. Consequences for poor behavioural choices are clear and rooted in restorative practices. Suspension rates are high but have been reduced significantly. Leaders do not take the decision to suspend lightly, ensuring consideration of the personal circumstances of each student. However, there is no formal evaluation of the impact of the vision on the sense of dignity, justice and fairness within this process.

Throughout The Deanery Academy students are provided with meaningful opportunities to act as leaders and advocates. The vision inspires them to want to make a difference in their school and the wider community. Ensuring students feel they have a voice is valued by leaders, including governors. Consequently, they feel heard and have an appropriate influence in decision making. Relationships across the school are strong and students recognise the importance of fairness and equity. The eco committee actively promotes care for the environment in the school and local area. As the locality grows, during the ongoing construction, close links have been forged with new facilities such as care homes. This provides valuable opportunities for students to make a local impact.

RE is well-led and given high status in the school. It is seen as a core subject at Key Stage 4 with the vast majority of students completing GCSE RE. Most teachers are subject specialists, this provides a real depth of expertise and enthusiasm in the departmental team. Non-specialists are provided with high quality support to ensure they are confident in their practice. The well-planned and resourced RE curriculum is carefully balanced and appropriate to the context of the school. As a result, students value their learning and recognise the significant difference it makes to their understanding of the world around them. They develop a respect for a range of world faiths and opinions, recognising Christianity as a global faith.

RE lessons are engaging and motivating. They have a respectful atmosphere in which students feel confident to share their views and listen carefully to others. Planning of the RE curriculum ensures that students are provided with the opportunity to revisit and reinforce key concepts. Time is given to consider, in depth, big questions. This develops reasoning skills and embeds knowledge. Innovative use of assessment and feedback enables tracking of student progress and intervention as necessary. As a result, most students make good progress. A comprehensive programme to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning is in place across the school. In this way leaders ensure that the RE curriculum is regularly reviewed and developed to meet the needs of students.

## Information

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|-------------------|---|---------------|--------|
| Address           | Peglars Way, Wichelstowe, Swindon SN1 7DA |               |        |
| Date              | 13 and 14 May 2025                        | URN           | 151305 |
| Type of school    | Academy                                   | No. of pupils | 765    |
| Diocese           | Bristol                                   |               |        |
| MAT               | The Park Academies Trust                  |               |        |
| Headteacher       | Jon Young                                 |               |        |
| Chair of Trustees | Catherine Dampney                         |               |        |
| Inspector         | Nicki Edwards                             |               |        |