THE HEATH ACADEMY TRUST

Church School Flourishing

inspire transform together

The Heath Academy Trust
Registered Address: St James' CE First School and Nursery, Park Lane, Alderholt, Dorset, SP6 3AJ

The Heath Academy

Growing Excellent Learners

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet. Whether you are a parent, governor, staff member, volunteer, or community partner, your connection to our family of schools is deeply valued.

This guide is designed to help you understand more about what it means to be part of our Church school within the context of the Academy trust. How Christian vision and core values shape our school's daily life, and the shared responsibilities we all have in upholding and nurturing this foundation and heritage.

At our academy trust, we are proud of the unique character and history that each of our schools brings to our community. We are united by a powerful, shared mission: to **inspire, transform, together**. We believe that every child has the potential to flourish, and we are deeply committed to cultivating an ethos of growing excellent learners. This means supporting our children to thrive not just academically, but socially, emotionally, spiritually and well beyond the classroom.

As a smaller academy trust, we offer a distinct and powerful advantage. We champion school autonomy, ensuring that each school retains its local identity, close-knit community feel, and the flexibility to meet the specific needs of its pupils. At the same time, we find immense strength in unity. By working closely together, our schools share outstanding practices, provide robust mutual support, and collaborate to create exceptional opportunities that no single school could achieve alone.

We work in close partnership with the Diocese of Salisbury, whose support plays a vital role in strengthening and enriching our family of schools. Through high-quality training, thoughtful guidance, and a shared commitment to nurturing both children and adults, they help our communities flourish in every sense.

As part of this collaboration, we are an active participant in the Church Schools Flourishing Programme. This purposeful initiative celebrates and deepens the distinctive character of our church schools while seamlessly aligning with our trust's core mission to **inspire, transform, together**. With a strong focus on leadership, governance, and academic excellence, the programme supports us in **growing excellent learners**. It empowers our schools to live out their unique vision with autonomy, while providing the strength in unity needed to serve our communities with compassion, excellence, and integrity.

As a stakeholder, you play an important role in upholding the supportive, ambitious ethos that lies at the heart of our trust. We look forward to working alongside you as we inspire our learners, transform lives, and grow together.

With sincere thanks for your support,

Laura Crossley
Chief Executive Officer

The Heath Academy

Growing Excellent Learners

A welcome from our Church Schools.

As a Leader for Church School Flourishing (LCSF), trained through the Programme for Church School Flourishing (PCSF), by the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE), my role is to promote, nurture, and protect the Christian distinctiveness and foundational vision of our church schools within the Trust.

Aims of the programme intend to enrich Trust expertise by:

- building internal capacity and strategic leadership so trusts can independently champion their church schools' Christian character.
- promoting holistic growth within our church school; working together as church school leaders to foster environments focused on wisdom, hope, community, and dignity.
- grounding everyday ethos, teaching and learning in a distinctively Christian vision where every child and adult experiences life in all its fullness.
- offering deep collaboration, mutuality, and shared expertise across the educational network.
- serving the common good by welcoming children and adults from all backgrounds and faiths while holding fast to our Anglican foundation.

As an active LCSF, ongoing work between our church schools enable constant evaluation for improvement and impact on our learners. Regular QA sessions with Diocesan advisors and SDBE-led networks offer ongoing mutual support, innovation, and professional growth. It is an honor to undertake this role within the Trust and be a part of enabling all our children, families and staff to genuinely flourish.

With kind regards,

Jo Hudson

Leader of Church School Flourishing and Church Flourishing Trustee

The Heath Academy Trust

On 1st December 2015, six schools in East Dorset formally joined together to create The Heath Academy Trust, providing education for pupils from nursery up to the age of 11 in East Dorset. These successful schools had worked collaboratively for several years and combined in order to capitalise on the benefits of being in a multi-academy trust in enhancing the learning experience for all pupils. The schools within the Trust are committed to improving teaching and learning.

The six schools are:

St Ives Primary and Nursery School
Three Legged Cross First and Nursery School
St James' CE First School and Nursery, Alderholt
Oakhurst Community First and Nursery School, West Moors
St Mary's CE First School and Nursery, West Moors
Sixpenny Handley First School & Nursery

Our Vision

The Trust aims to provide a high quality, inclusive and effective learning environment producing an excellent performance from our children, and to engender a love of learning and a passion for excellence in all areas of school life. We will define a culture of high aspiration, to champion equality for all children and support clear lines of accountability, underpinned by strong, tailored school improvement and management systems within a professional learning environment. Children are at the heart of our work. The Trust's role is to enable school leaders to focus on their core business of ensuring that every child thrives.

The inclusive nature of the Trust allows each individual school to live within their own context and therefore the Church schools' are actively enabled to live out a deeply rooted Christian vision with supporting core values. This embodies the Church of England vision for education- describing life in all its fullness.

Our Values

At the heart of our work are our Trust values: **Inspire, Transform, Together**.

We strive to **inspire** a love of learning in every child, nurturing curiosity, confidence, and ambition. We are committed to **transforming** lives through high-quality education, ensuring that every pupil—regardless of background—can achieve their full potential. And we work **together**: as schools, as professionals, and with our families and communities, because we know that collaboration is key to success.

Church Schools within Heath Academy Trust

Working in a Heath academy Trust Church of England primary school means joining a community dedicated to academic excellence and spiritual depth. We have two church schools in our group:
St James' CE First School and Nursery, Alderholt
St Mary's CE First School and Nursery, West Moors

Rooted in their Anglican foundation, our church schools build their own vision and values whilst embodying the trust's core statement of **inspiring** minds, **transforming** lives, and working **together** so that every child and adult can flourish.

Through the Salisbury Diocesan Programme for Church School Flourishing and guided by the SIAMS inspection framework we ensure our church schools are deeply connected. They use a variety of self-evaluation methods to ensure their Christian visions are woven inclusively and authentically into every aspect of school life.

Inspire: Vision & Learning

We encourage our communities to look outward and aim high. We support this by:

- **Curriculum Innovation**: Partnering with leaders at all levels to design an exciting, engaging curriculum tailored to the specific context of every learner.
- **Visionary Leadership**: Hosting network meetings three times a year to dynamically develop and embed Christian vision and values across school life.
- **External Collaboration**: Working with other Church schools beyond our Trust to share inspiring practices and fresh perspectives.

Transform: Growth & Impact

We believe education should change lives and shape character. We drive this through:

- **Holistic Excellence**: Preparing governors, leadership, and staff for SIAMS inspections, explicitly supporting schools to achieve highly.
- **Targeted CPD**: attending network meetings that offer high-quality professional development for SIAMS, RE, and Collective Worship leads.
- **National Standards**: Engaging fully in the Church of England Programme for Church School Flourishing to transform institutional practice.

Together: Community & Support

We are stronger when we collaborate and serve one another. We build unity by:

- **Inclusive Recruitment**: Supporting values-driven recruitment across all areas of school life, including foundation governorship.
- **Trust-Wide Governance**: Guiding schools through the Christian Ethos Committees, which advocates for their distinctive ethos and reports directly to the Trust Board.
- **Humble Hospitality**: Ensuring every school remains a hospitable, central pillar of its local community, welcoming to families of all faiths and none.

The Heath Academy has been a part of the Church School Flourishing since September 2023.

Key leaders across our Trust have completed a modular training programme to fulfil their strategic roles within our Church School Flourishing Programme

Key Roles within Church School Flourishing Programme

Leader for Church School Flourishing (LCSF)	Jo Hudson	Headteacher- St James'
Champion for Church School Recruitment (CCSR)	Laura Crossley Jo Hudson	CEO Headteacher- St James'
Leader for Church School Governance (LCSG)	Laura Crossley Jo Hudson Jessica Pugh	CEO Headteacher- St James' Clerk to Trustees
CW Faculty Lead (RECWFL)	Jo Hudson	Headteacher- St James'
RE Faculty Lead (RECWFL)	Jo Hudson	Headteacher- St James'

Members of The Church School Flourishing Team come from both church schools and community schools- we believe this gives a holistic and balanced view when supporting our church schools to thrive. Schools will support with ongoing quality assurance ensuring that schools are maintaining the Christian foundation of a school and living out their school Christian vision whilst providing the highest standards of teaching and learning. In addition to this, training and support will be provided by trust leaders for schools in areas such as renewing a school vision, evaluating the impact of a vision and supporting leaders in self-evaluation in relation to SIAMS. Training for local school committee and for the Trust Board will also be provided.

Leaders will be supported with accessing further training through the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education.

All new Head Teachers will be assigned a mentor as well as being given support from the Church School Flourishing Lead.

The Trust Board

The Trust Board meets regularly to plan the strategic direction of our schools. An approved scheme of delegation details the responsibilities of The Trust Board, its committees and local school committee members within the schools.

Each school has its own Local School Committee (LSC) which is a committee of the Trust Board. Each LSC consists of parents and community representatives who support the Trustees and Heads by adding local context and challenge. Our church schools each have two Foundation committee members as well as members of the clergy.

All committee members on our church school LSC boards understand it is their spiritual duty is to uphold the Christian foundation of the school and ensure that decisions and direction are firmly underpinned by the school's chosen vision and values. Foundation committee members have an additional special responsibility to champion the religious character, ensuring it is preserved and developed and that the school is conducted in accordance with its trust deed.

Both of our church schools have a Christian Ethos Committee which meets 3 times a year and it is the expectations of the committee to support and engage with the Church School Flourishing Work within the Trust. This work is collated, discussed and shared with the Trust board, three times a year, by the Trustee for Church School Flourishing.

Committee Member	Role
Laura Crossley	CEO
Jo Hudson	Trustee for Church School Flourishing
Maris O'Brien	Foundation Trustee
Holly Jones	Foundation Trustee
Rev. Simon Woodley, Lynne Nash	St James' Christian Ethos Committee
Rev. Jeff, Malcolm Newell, Alison Butler	St Marys Christian Ethos Committee
Jessica Pugh	Clerk to Trustees, LCSG

Working at one of our church schools

Working in a Church of England school means being part of a community where a shared Christian vision and values underpin every aspect of school life. Purpose extends beyond delivering excellent education; they are committed to enabling every child to flourish academically, emotionally, socially, morally and spiritually. This ethos is firmly rooted in a strong vision and supporting core values.

Individual School Vision Statements and Biblical rooting		
St James' CE First School and Nursery	"Make Great Choices. Be our Best."	Wise and Foolish Builders (Matthew 7: 24-27)
St Marys' CE First School and Nursery	"Believe in better. Grow together"	Noah's Ark (Genesis 6-9)

All staff play a vital role in creating and sustaining a culture that reflects the school's Christian foundation. Through relationships, teaching and decision-making, they seek to model the vision and values that shape their school community. They are committed to creating an inclusive, welcoming environment where every child and adult is valued, respected and able to thrive, regardless of their faith, background or beliefs.

As church schools, they recognise that education is about nurturing the whole person. Staff are encouraged to support children as they explore life's big questions, develop spiritual awareness, build meaningful relationships and grow into thoughtful, responsible citizens. This includes fostering opportunities for reflection, curiosity, compassion and personal growth throughout school life.

Their work is strengthened through collaboration with families, the local church, the Trust itself and their wider community. Together, they seek to build a caring, purposeful school culture where children experience a strong sense of belonging and are supported to flourish in all aspects of life.

While all members of staff contribute to the Christian distinctiveness of the school, the Headteacher has particular responsibility for leading, articulating and sustaining the theologically rooted vision and values. As a spiritual leader, the Headteacher plays a central role in shaping the culture, direction and ethos of the school; fostering an environment where reflection, questioning and spiritual growth are encouraged for both pupils and adults and the whole school community.

These responsibilities are not carried out in isolation. Church school leaders work in partnership with a range of colleagues and stakeholders who support the school's vision and development. This may include The CEO, LCSF, Foundation Trustees, Local School Committee members, representatives from the Diocese, local clergy and wider parish members and colleagues from across other Heath Academy Trust schools.

Ultimately, working in a Church of England school is about contributing to a community where Christian vision and values inspire learning, relationships and personal growth, enabling both children and adults to flourish and fulfil their potential.

The Heath Academy

Growing Excellent Learners

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS)

Church schools undergo SIAMS inspections as well as government OFSTED inspections. On a five yearly cycle, SIAMS explores ways in which each school's theologically rooted Christian vision drives its work and enables the school to live up to its foundation as a Church school. It judges the effectiveness of this provision in enabling all pupils and adults to flourish. It is a key element of the life of all Church of England and Methodist schools in England. SIAMS inspectors seek their evidence against seven key questions:

Q1: How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision enable pupils and adults to flourish?
Provision includes theology behind vision narrative, a clear journey of vision and an obvious link to core values.
Impact seen may include the lived reality of vision woven throughout the setting; strategy and policy connection; innovative, bold, brave, ethical decision making and a clear connection to the Trust.

Q2: How does the curriculum reflect the school's theologically rooted Christian vision?
Provision includes a curriculum shaped by the school's vision and values as well as a curriculum for spiritual development; choices made are intrinsic, deliberate and confident.
Impact seen will be a growing wisdom among pupils and adults alongside holistic; school is inclusive and inspiring for all children and for adults also.

Q3: How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?
Provision ensures that collective worship is of Anglican Foundation with bible readings, prayer, stillness, song, reflection; it is vision rooted, underpinned with theology and promotes spiritual flourishing for all.
Impact seen can be worship that Inspires, motivates, transforms, deepens knowledge, engages, interests; children can and want to lead worship and the impact reaches adults as well as pupils.

Q4: How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision create a culture in which pupils and adults are treated well?
Provision ensures there is vision led intent for living well, encouraging belonging for all, relationships lead to community building; policies reflect this and schools strive to promote highlight personal worth
Impact is seen through pupil and staff flourishing; parental engagement is high and relationships are strong; support is embedded for vulnerable/disadvantaged individuals.

Q5: How does the school's theologically rooted Christian vision create an active culture of justice and responsibility?
Provision seen includes a vision connection to justice and responsibility; everyone understands and celebrates difference; worship is a key driver in the modelling of advocacy, ethical decisions and highlighting injustice.
Impact seen focuses on social justice seeking; empowered, pupil led courageous advocacy; Pupils and adults make ethical actions, serve others throughout the school and community.

Q6: Is the religious education curriculum effective (with reference to the expectations set out in the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education)?
Provision comes through a deep and rich curriculum; that's is challenging and a balanced critical reflection of Global Christianity and World views
Impact sees pupils building their knowledge and engagement as well as their ability to think critically about new concepts.

Each church school will produce a School Evaluation Form that allows them to evidence the key work carried out under each heading and evidence each strand. These will be found on their website. in the run up to their inspection window. One overall grade is awarded reflecting the contribution of these strands to the flourishing of pupils and adults in a Church school.