

A beacon of education



St John's Church of England First School celebrates a glowing SIAMS inspection report. Headteacher Katharine Anstey (second right) is pictured with Kevin Metcalfe of St John's Church, WAT Chair of Trustees John Dickson, Wimborne Academy Trust CEO Liz West, Rev Peter Breckwoldt of St John's Church and pupils.

A Wimborne school has been declared a beacon and pioneer of church education in a glowing inspection report.

St John's CE First School, part of Wimborne Academy Trust, has been judged excellent across the board in a SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection.

After giving the top possible rating, the inspector Lizzie McWhirter said that St John's was "a beacon Church school and a pioneer within this field".

She also praised the school's dedicated and robust leadership and the supportive culture of care it offers to both pupils and staff.

Headteacher, Katharine Anstey, said: "We are absolutely thrilled to receive such a stunning testament from an independent inspector.

"This is no more than the staff and pupils deserve for their tremendous hard work and efforts throughout the year and every year."

The report praised the school's partnership with its neighbouring church as integral to the life and work of the school.

Pupils eloquently articulate what the school's vision and values mean to them, the inspector noted, and the school has a "loving atmosphere".

The quality of teaching and knowing every child was also praised for ensuring the school is meeting pupils' needs – with children achieving results above the Dorset and national averages.

Staff are relentless in supporting all pupils and especially those who are most vulnerable, enabling them to flourish.

And the report highlighted the support St John's receives from Wimborne Academy Trust (WAT), citing that WAT clearly knows the future direction of the school and offers robust monitoring.

The inspector concluded that St John's not only leads the way in what a distinctively Christian school can be, it is also a family "where absolute joy shines through".

CEO of Wimborne Academy Trust, Liz West, said: "I would like to say huge congratulations to Katharine and her team plus every single pupil at St John's for such well-deserved praise.

"The school is most definitely a beacon that shines very bright and we are very proud it is a member of our family of schools."