



Sandal Castle VA Community Primary School

Together we **Learn**: Together we **Live**

Together we **Grow**: Together we **Give**

About our School and the area

Sandal Castle is a Voluntary-aided Church of England School, with a long established, close relationship with our local Church- St Helen's and our Vision; 'Together we Learn, Together we Live, Together we Grow, Together we Give', is grounded in Christian values. Larger than average, we have well subscribed 3-form entry, totalling c620 pupils and 85 staff, inclusive of 30 Teaching Staff.

Located in Sandal, Wakefield, we have the unique benefit of enjoying close proximity with motorway and rail links as well as open countryside. The school was established in 1686 and at its current site since 1747, more recently amalgamating with another local school in 2015 and extending to open new buildings.



The school is situated in an affluent area, close to the historic ruins of Sandal Castle (famous for its association with the nursery rhyme, 'The Grand Old Duke of York') and St Helen's Church. The catchment is wide, with pupil intake from the Sandal, Portobello and Agbrigg areas. In the main, our pupils go on to either Kettlethorpe High school or St Thomas a Becketts.

The school has a diverse catchment, including higher than average EAL (+30 languages) and higher than average Pupil Premium intake and has consistently been recognised by external practitioners and organisations for its excellent work in relation to supporting children with SEND, with subject matter leads sharing best practice across the district and our accreditation and achievement as an Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of Excellence.

Our Facilities

The school has a substantial and extremely well-equipped site, consisting of a blend of old, and new, bespoke designed buildings and a large outdoor provision. Within our excellent facilities, we are fortunate to have a swimming pool, 2 large halls, dedicated nurture and inclusion ('spark') rooms, large playing field and garden areas, which are utilised for our Forest School.

The school offers a breakfast and after-school club and we have recently collaborated with parents to open initiatives such as the stay and play group within our school space, for pre-school children and families.



Outside the Curriculum

We care passionately about offering breadth above the curriculum requirement and offering our children the access and opportunity to a wide range of exciting activities. We are fortunate to have an excellent Music specialist working with us, and with the support of the Local Authority, Ukelele lessons are available for all children (from Year 3) and Brass lessons are opened up from year 5. We support language lessons in KS1 (year 3) and a wide range of free after-school clubs, from dance to science, on a rotational basis.

We are extremely proud of our sports provision and the close associations we have with local professional sports clubs, recently benefitting from professional players from Featherstone Rovers joining us for some structured play.

The fantastic asset we have with our Swimming Pool, enables our children to access an enhanced Swimming schedule and results in us being able to put forward a swim squad for regional and national competitions.

Our garden areas allow us to run forest school -encouraging exploration and discussions on nature, the environment and our impact on the world around us etc.

We all thoroughly enjoy a good schedule of field trips, school trips and residential.

In addition to our Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of Excellence, we are proud to have supported 3 of our teachers to become 'Lead Moderators' for the local area and are keen to continue investing and building on staff professional development and are open to working with Teacher Training providers to offer quality placements. We are also advocates of self-care and offer wellbeing sessions for our staff members.



Our School Vision and Values

Sandal castle is a large but welcoming and inclusive School environment with a distinct feeling of kindness, pride and excitement. We are often complimented on how polite and well behaved our children are- and the familial feel despite the larger size.

Our School Vision; *'Together we Learn, Together we Live, Together we Grow, Together we Give'*, is grounded in Christian values and an appreciation for love and of learning and has served us well for a number of years – but we are open to a new Headteacher refreshing and shaping this with us as we move forwards.

Our Vicar, Hannah Smith serves as a foundation Governor and is continuing the established close relationship between the Church and School, supporting an underpinning of Christian teaching and values to benefit all pupils from a variety of faith and social backgrounds. The children enjoy regular visits to the Church and from Hannah and other governors into the School.

To further support the growth and understanding of our values with our children, we represent them through characters, which form an integral part of daily life in the School.

They are: Safe Daley, Lucy Learn, Katie Kind, Harry Helpful and Ruby Respect.



Our Governance, Relationships and Network

The Governing body has evolved over the last 18 months and is a dedicated, stable and committed group with a broad span of educational and professional experience – who are passionate about supporting the school to deliver the best for the children and wider school community.

Local Authority; Over the last 12-18 months (post covid) we have developed our relationship with the Local Authority and are grateful to have strong support, benefitting greatly from their support and guidance, both from a curriculum perspective as well as the Governor support service

Hubs and Best Practice: We are currently working with the Yorkshire and Humber Maths Hub and with the Jerry Clay English Hub to enhance our core curriculum provision. Our ECTs are currently registered with Wakefield LA as the appropriate body and are accessing the UCL Selby and Wakefield teaching school hub for their Early Career Framework. This hub will be the relevant body for their second year.



We are currently working with **Wakefield Families Together**, providing support for the **Castle Family Hub**. Recent feedback from the hub acknowledged the value of this;

"The family hub connects to a wide range of multi-disciplinary partners and relevant services, including those co-produced by parents, carers and families themselves. Our partnership has promoted development of a needs-led service that has valuable outcomes for both the Education and Early Help agenda. I really appreciated your idea and initiative in gaining feedback from parents, and the outcomes they documented recently were phenomenal. I have shared their feedback with our EIP Partnership Manager and she is keen to ensure this group is championed and best practice in terms of partnership with education is recognised."

We have established a reputation as a strong provider in safeguarding and SEND with our subject leaders regularly being asked to share best practice and we are keen to further widen our relationships with local schools and associations.

What our Children and Parents Say

We strongly encourage parents and carers to feel welcomed and valued as partners in their child's education, and the school runs pupil voice, staff voice and parent voice to gather insight and feedback and to strengthen relationships and output. As well as education themed drop-ins, such as Phonics coaching for parents, our parents and carers have been hugely positive about the family-accessed days we have offered around the Queen's jubilee, sports days, themed days (ie. Fairtrade) harvest festival and Christmas concerts.

"I like to read in the reading area because then we can get nice and cosy"

"I like getting my book bag books best"

"I like story time the best because we read together"

"I like reading more in the areas because I have favourite books in the areas"

'Pupil Voice' quotes regarding Year 2 reading

"The books in class really make you think about things, like big, proper things... one is about a girl with dwarfism and how it affects her, it's really interesting"

"Reading takes me to a different world"

"I like the wide selection of books we have"

"I would like more scary book and more picture books to make you think"

'Pupil Voice' quotes, regarding Year 6 Reading

'Parent Voice' quotes regarding the opportunity for parents to work with their child in the classroom

"It's lovely to see M's classroom, staff, friends and parents, and do different tasks with her each day. I think this is such a wonderful opportunity!"

"We think Miss J and Miss T are fantastic and coming on each morning is absolutely amazing. It's such a special time and we are so happy we can finally do it after missing the opportunity for two years"



Ofsted and SIAMs

Rated GOOD; Our 2019 OFSTED report states: There is a real family feel to the school. Staff know pupils and their families well. Many parents who talked to us said that the pastoral care across the school is superb. Pupils are happy. They say that they feel safe and that teachers do all they can to help them learn more each day.

Ofsted
raising standards
improving lives

 **THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND**
EDUCATION OFFICE

The SIAMS report from 2019 states that: The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners Sandal Castle is a welcoming and caring school where children are proud of their learning, their friends and their teachers. There are close links with St Helen's Church which are seen as central to recognising the Christian foundation of the school.

Words from our Children on “What Our School means to me”



Together We Give

Collaborating with parents /community, we run a ‘Uniform swap shop’ and more recently have shared our space to run a stay & play group for pre-school children and families.

The school featured in the regional news when the extent of our own foodbank provision was discovered. Using a ‘low key’ approach we are able to support families going through difficult times and the help is much appreciated. Where appropriate, we welcome links with businesses for additional support.



*Thank You for reviewing this summary and we hope to
welcome you for a visit to our School, to learn and see more*