

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

High Ash Church of England VC Primary School	
Address	Pound Hill, Great Brickhill, MK17 9AS
School vision	
<p>Our vision is that our children 'grow together, shine forever' through 'letting your light shine'. (Matthew 5:16) They follow the message of the Good Samaritan in showing compassion and care to others and being inclusive, no matter who you are and expecting nothing in return.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole school community lives out the vision enthusiastically. It underpins policies, planning and decision making. This effectively promotes flourishing. • The school curriculum is designed around the needs of individual pupils so that they shine as learners. Leaders and teachers ensure that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive. • Collective worship is planned carefully to allow time for reflection and response. Meaningful experiences inspire spiritual growth for pupils and adults. • Motivated by a deeply rooted Christian vision, the school has a strong culture of care and support. Good mental health and wellbeing are prioritised. This enables members of the community to live well together. • An improved curriculum for religious education (RE) promotes diversity and respect. This inspires pupils and enables them to apply what they learn to their own lives. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an agreed understanding of spirituality. This is to ensure that experiences are treasured and the impact of spiritual growth is effectively evaluated. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>The Christian vision of High Ash is rooted in the Gospel of Matthew. Supported by a set of values, it encourages pupils and adults to shine in the school community and beyond. A deep awareness of the parable of the Good Samaritan leads to a culture of care and compassion. Good Samaritan awards are presented to celebrate these values. Consultation by leaders with pupils, governors and parents ensures that the vision drives and motivates pupils to be the best that they can be. Leaders, including governors, are aware of the rural setting of the school and the increasingly diverse catchment it serves. The vision influences decision making and policies are inclusive. As a result, learning and growing together are priorities. The development of good mental health and wellbeing is a key to success for pupils. This raises aspirations and ensures that they thrive in their learning. The Christian vision has effectively sustained the school through a challenging time of change in leadership and staffing. Dedicated monitoring and evaluation of the school by governors ensures that they understand the needs of pupils and adults and contribute to improvements. Fruitful partnerships exist between the school, the local churches and the Oxford Diocesan Board of</p>	

Education. These relationships have a positive impact on spiritual growth in worship and strengthens the unity at the heart of the vision.

Shaped by its vision, the school curriculum is designed around the needs of individual learners. Personal values and skills are promoted by staff so that learning is meaningful. This enables pupils to show determination and resilience in lessons. Motivational 'hook days' are used to encourage moments of awe and wonder at the start of topics across the curriculum. For example, a planetarium visit raised deep questions about the start and meaning of life. Teachers use the outdoor environment to spark imagination. As a result, pupils are motivated to share their thankfulness for creation in prayers. Provision for those with SEND is a strength of the school. Nurture programmes and specially chosen visits ensure that they shine within this inclusive community. SEND pupils were inspired by a literacy theatre trip to write imaginative stories. The inspirational support they receive enables them to flourish. Care is taken to encourage diversity throughout the curriculum. Textbooks include a variety of cultures. House names are carefully chosen to represent inspirational role models that promote tolerance and unity. Leaders, including governors, undertake regular monitoring of learning. As a result, improvements to the curriculum are made to increase challenge and understanding. At the end of topics, practical and creative 'innovate' activities allow time for reflection on what is learnt. Whilst these reflective activities provide spiritual moments, a shared understanding of spirituality is not embedded. This means that the impact of spiritual growth is not clearly evaluated.

The provision of collective worship is well planned and delivered by leaders, teachers and pupils. A weekly theme is developed each day, so that everyone reflects and responds, promoting spiritual growth for pupils and adults. 'Reflections' include meaningful times of stillness and prayer that builds respect for worship. Bible stories are explored and are then related to daily experiences. As an example, pupils correctly share the meaning of the story of the Good Samaritan. This empowers them to care for each other as they reflect on the teachings of Jesus. Discussions and debates are held in mixed age groups which promotes growth in confidence as they learn together. Connections are made between the Christian calendar and global themes. For example, linking the period of Lent to environmental issues deepens pupils' responsibility as they appreciate the sacrifices Jesus made. Visits to local churches ensure celebrations of festivals, such as harvest, involve the wider community. Worship leaders work closely with the diocese to stimulate new ideas for weekly themes. Governors visit worship regularly and support change through their evaluations.

Through living out the Christian vision, caring relationships amongst pupils create a culture of support and unity. They are encouraged to 'shine their light' in working and playing together. Key values such as respect and forgiveness are understood by pupils and they show maturity in resolving their own conflicts. Staff are well supported in their roles by caring leaders. They initiate wellbeing activities where colleagues support and care for each other. This reflects the vision of growing together. In creating a positive school culture, weekly reward celebrations are linked to school values. These rewards are nominated by staff and fellow pupils, raising the importance of being role models. Parents correctly praise leaders and staff as role models. They appreciate an 'open door' approach where they can communicate effectively so that pupil needs are met. These actions foster a sense of belonging within the school community.

Inspired by the vision to shine, pupils seek opportunities to serve others and improve the school environment. An eco-council promotes recycling on site through competitions. A response to food wrappers on the playground inspires the younger pupils to make positive choices in caring for their area. A gardening club grows vegetables which are then used by the school restaurant. This strengthens an appreciation of the value of God's creation and the need to sustain it. Leaders develop themes including stewardship which raise awareness of the local community. Local farmers visit and share challenges faced so that pupils appreciate their own responsibilities. Issues of

injustice are raised through worship and the wider curriculum. Pupil voice groups consider how to be agents of change. They support a range of charities through fund raising and gain an awareness of issues of need across the world. Sharing these actions with the whole school community encourages others to shine too.

RE at High Ash is respected by pupils as a key subject on their timetable. The introduction of a new curriculum is managed well by leaders. Partnerships with the diocese and local churches support imaginative teaching. Diversity is woven into unit planning and is relevant for the school's changing community. Pupils thrive in lessons where they build on their previous learning and are challenged to explore deeper meaning. However, the delivery of the new curriculum is not consistent across the whole school. There is a lack of challenge in some classes. The teaching of the Christian faith is linked to the school's vision and values. For example, learning about the crucifixion of Jesus leads to a deeper understanding of forgiveness. A range of faiths and worldviews are explored and pupils enjoy sharing their knowledge at home. Big questions are frequently used so that they reflect on their own beliefs. For example, questions about Hindu Karma support an understanding of honesty and responsibility. Pupils enjoy respectful discussions and grow spiritually by reflecting on the views shared.

The inspection findings indicate that High Ash Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	11 June 2024	URN	110419
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	281
Diocese	Oxford		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Kate Goodger		
Chair	Kathryn Middleton		
Inspector	Keith Farquhar	No.	2143