



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

High Ham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Vision

‘Discovering, Learning, Believing, Together’ (based on John 15:5-7) is lived out through the school’s values of thankfulness, friendship, hope, joy, courage and creativity (fruits that will last). All are encouraged to flourish: believing in themselves and others; growing in wisdom and knowledge; discovering the joy of learning; the comfort of friendship; and the wonder of God’s world, whilst following the command to ‘love one another as I have loved you’.

Strengths

- The strong Christian vision, expressed through values, empowers this school. It is passionately driven by leaders and permeates all aspects of school life. This enriches the lives of pupils and adults, enabling them to flourish.
- Inspired by the vision of wanting all to flourish, leaders actively create a nurturing and highly inclusive learning environment. Staff are ambitious for all pupils and work tirelessly to break down barriers to learning. This enables those pupils who are vulnerable, and/or those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), to thrive.
- Relationships throughout the school are very strong. A genuine sense of love, driven by the Christian vision, enfolds all members of the school community. People are treated with respect, dignity and compassion and supported in both good and challenging times.
- Through the application of its vision, leaders are committed to encouraging pupils to think about issues of justice and courageous advocacy. This has created a culture of responsibility and justice within which pupils care for God’s creation.

Development Points

- Develop a deeper, shared understanding of spirituality, ensuring that pupils and adults are equipped with a range of language and tools to express their spiritual awareness. This will enhance the way that pupils and adults flourish spiritually.
- Develop pupil’s knowledge and appreciation of Christianity as a vibrant, diverse, global faith so that their understanding of Christianity as a living faith is deepened.



Inspection Findings

High Ham is a happy, caring, inclusive school where pupils and adults flourish. The strong Christian vision is a living reality for members of the school community. Leaders, including governors, passionately ensure that the vision guides decision making and everyday practice, responding to the needs of its whole community. Pupils and adults are warmly welcomed to High Ham in the belief that everyone should receive love as an expression of God's love. A powerful sense of togetherness, value and nurture runs through the school. Pupils and adults talk enthusiastically about the Christian love which enfolds them. Through the carefully selected values of thankfulness, friendship, hope, joy, courage and creativity, pupils and adults are empowered to thrive and 'bear fruits that will last'. Harmonious and respectful relationships permeate throughout the school. New pupils, and their families, welcome the kindness of the school community. Parents speak avidly about the way pupils and staff care for each other and how this is reflected within the wider community. Lives are transformed as a result of the school's commitment and compassionate approach.

The school's broad and balanced curriculum is carefully planned to enable pupils to gain knowledge and skills in a systematic way. Great care is taken to ensure that the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of pupils. This enables them to discover the joy of learning, whilst growing in wisdom and knowledge. The school knows its pupils very well and actively creates a nurturing and highly inclusive learning environment. Staff have a clear understanding of where barriers to learning lie and work relentlessly to make pupils feel safe, respected and successful. As a consequence, pupils who are vulnerable and/or those with SEND are very well supported. This ensures that they learn well alongside their peers and thrive. The school's determination to ensure that all feel welcome and loved has proved transformational for some pupils. Carefully planned learning enrichment and extra-curricular experiences broaden pupils' understanding of their locality and the world beyond. For example, a local windmill is used to inspire creativity in art, but also used as a focal point to consider the wonder of God's creation.

Collective worship is central to life at High Ham and a powerful driver for the Christian vision and values of the school. Through a thoughtfully planned programme of song, scripture, prayer and reflection, worship meaningfully enhances individuals' spiritual development. Pupils talk about feeling calm, peaceful and still as they reflect upon aspects of collective worship and their place within the world. They value having the opportunity to record their responses to worship within 'reflect and respond' books, often returning to them to recapture special moments. Adults also appreciate the coming together of the whole school community, valuing a quiet moment of thought and reflection within the busy school day. However, there is not a shared understanding of what is meant by spirituality. Collective worship is inclusive and invitational and pupils clearly articulate the impact that worship has on their lives. It often inspires them to take action, for example, making sure that extended family members feel valued and loved by 'checking in with them'. High Ham's partnership with the local church is strong and enhances the spiritual life of the school and the wider community. Collective worship is held in church on a monthly basis and led by Year 6 members of the school's ethos group. Services for key times within the Christian calendar, such as Easter and Christmas, are also celebrated within church, contributing to the whole school and wider community flourishing together.

As an expression of the school's Christian vision, staff and governors are determined to ensure that every member of the school community is supported with respect, dignity and compassion. Nurturing relationships support members of the school community in both good and challenging times. Pupils describe their school as being a place where everyone is welcome and where they feel respected and safe. They talk about loving one another as God loves them. This is echoed by parents who refer to the school as 'a special place' where care 'extends to the whole family'.

Through the school's vision, members of the community are enabled to live well together. Pupils and adults understand that they are unique, but equally the same and created in the image of God. Through a newly implemented positive relationships and behaviour policy, a shared language around restorative justice has been developed as an expression of the school's vision. Pupils are proactively encouraged to consider issues around justice through a carefully planned, whole school approach. Through collective worship, RE, personal social and health education (PSHE) and the wider curriculum, pupils explore issues such as being a refugee, having a disability or being a marginalized member of society. Pupils enthusiastically talk about there being 'no outsiders' and that 'everyone is different and everyone is welcome'. Parents value this approach and the inclusivity that it encourages beyond school. Additionally, pupils proactively take responsibility for God's world through self-led



initiatives. For example, the eco group campaigned to improve recycling within the school and raised funds to purchase new recycling bins. Pupils talk with conviction about justice and responsibility, directly relating it to the commandment to 'love one another as I have loved you'.

Religious education (RE) has a high profile within the curriculum and makes a significant contribution to the Christian character of the school. Leaders ensure that RE is carefully planned to sequentially develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. The RE lead keeps up-to-date with national developments through the diocese and shares this knowledge effectively with colleagues, ensuring they are well-equipped to deliver high quality RE. The RE lead and governors effectively monitor the implementation of the RE curriculum. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their RE learning. They consider it important as it helps them to understand their own beliefs and to respect the beliefs of others. However, opportunities for pupils to learn about Christianity as a vibrant, diverse, global faith are limited.

High Ham is a school with Christian love at its core. Lives are transformed by the work of this school.

Information

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| Address | High Ham, Langport, Somerset, TA10 9BY | | |
| Date | 23 rd September 2024 | URN | 123761 |
| Type of school | Voluntary Controlled | No. of pupils | 160 |
| Diocese | Bath & Wells | | |
| MAT/Federation | N/A | | |
| Headteacher | Ann Edwards | | |
| Chair of Governors | Sally Roy | | |
| Inspector | Jayne Peacock | | |