

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Ash Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

Our school and Nursery are committed to nurturing and developing enquiring minds through an enriched curriculum that enables every child to achieve and progress, academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Every child's unique strength and abilities are recognised and celebrated. We ensure every child is prepared for the future in our ever-evolving world; supporting their individual talents, hearing their voice and maximising their learning potential. We want every pupil to leave us with a sense of themselves as lifelong learners, well prepared for the next stage of their education with a collaborative, kind and welcoming attitude to others.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.  
John 4:7

'As many hands build a house, so many hands create our school.'

Ash Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Strengths

- The school's highly relevant and deeply understood Christian vision underpins daily living and leaders' decision making. This enables pupils and adults to flourish.
- Inspired by the vision, this is an inclusive school where pupils and adults thrive, through feeling cared for and being celebrated as individuals.
- Leaders ensure that the school environment is reflective and inspirational. The Christian ethos of the school envelopes adults and pupils, enabling them to enjoy learning and living together in love.
- In line with the vision, the school enjoys strong and effective partnerships with the Preston Primary Academy Trust, the diocese and local parish church. These effectively support the school in the provision of a holistic education for their pupils.

#### Development Points

- Develop a language of spirituality to be used by adults and pupils so that they can articulate their own personal spiritual journeys.



## Inspection Findings

Ash Church of England Primary School is a vibrant school full of love and joy. The biblically underpinned Christian vision is the foundation of what the school is and does. Pupils are at the centre of decision making, as leaders and staff recognise that pupils are created in the image of God. Leaders ensure a holistic education for pupils so that they can enjoy life in all its fullness. Consequently, pupils and adults flourish in this caring environment. Knowing that staff are always there for them, pupils are happy and feel safe. This prepares them for their futures in education and beyond. As a result, pupils aim high and aspire to be the best version of themselves that they can be. The Christian vision is outworked by the school's six core Christian values of curiosity, commitment, gratitude, creativity, peace and empathy. These are lived out in positive relationships and provide the core language for rewards which celebrate the way that pupils meaningfully demonstrate these values. Governors and trust leaders know the school well and effectively monitor, support and challenge leadership. The school and trust visions complement each other and together are highly effective. This enables a strong partnership which works for the good of the whole school.

Reflecting the Christian vision, the school curriculum is broad and rich. This is enhanced by a variety of extra-curricular activities, enabling pupils to thrive. Access to learning is successfully achieved for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and for pupils considered to be vulnerable. Through targeted interventions and tailored learning support, lessons are made accessible. Learning is exciting and includes new, enriching experiences such as planned trips to the theatre or London. Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of the curriculum. Identified opportunities for spirituality are planned, and time is given to appreciate spontaneous moments of awe and wonder. Reception children's curiosity is ignited as they imagine who might live in a nutshell they have picked up on a walk. However, the school does not have a shared language to use when discussing spirituality. Consequently, this limits the way pupils and adults are able to express the impact of these experiences on their personal spiritual journeys. Adults make creative use of the school's extensive grounds and excellent outdoor facilities, including the forest and meadow. This significantly enriches the breadth of pupils' learning experiences. Lying on the grass, pupils enjoy listening to the stillness and the birdsong. This enjoyment of the outdoors demonstrates to pupils the beauty of God's world, inspiring them to look after it.

Daily collective worship is an important part of school life and pupils and adults value and enjoy coming together as one. It takes various forms, ensuring pupils experience a variety of styles of worship and always includes opportunities to pray and reflect. The local vicar regularly leads worship in school and in the church, adding to the range of opportunities for adults and pupils' spiritual development. Collective worship is inclusive and invitational. Pupils enjoy being present and actively engage, whatever their personal beliefs. Singing is uplifting and pupils enjoy the telling of Bible stories by local parishioners. These often include re-enactment and are fun to watch, meaning lessons from the stories are remembered. The parables particularly have a positive impact on pupils' lives. For example, the story of the good Samaritan encourages them to help their friends when they hurt themselves in the playground. The school enjoys a close relationship with the local church and celebrates major Christian festivals there alongside parents and parishioners. Prayer and reflection are important elements of the school day. Written thoughts are captured in wall displays and there are areas for personal prayer and reflection in classrooms, quiet rooms and outdoors. Spiritual development is supported by collective worship. Pupils often choose to go to the school gazebo or grassy bank, to think and reflect. Class prayers are read daily, and the school prayer is well-known with some pupils describing how they feel close to God through this.



Inspired by the vision, there is a strong culture of living well together creating caring relationships between pupils and adults. Staff are a closely knit team and enable each other to give their best for the pupils. A calm and relaxed atmosphere of focused learning permeates the school. Pupils and adults respect each other and their opinions. New members are welcomed to the school and valued as individuals for what they can bring to the whole. To support effective teaching and learning, leaders prioritise good mental health and wellbeing, benefitting adults both professionally and personally. Pupils' wellbeing is supported by a trained emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA). This creates in them a sense of being loved and nurtured, knowing they can turn to adults at any time. Consequently, pupils and adults thrive with the care given to their individual needs. This care also extends to families with external support offered for parent and child mental health. Parents feel a deep connection to the school and actively support through involvement with the parent teacher association (PTA). Pupils and adults are proud to belong to their happy and caring school.

The school vision of 'Let us love one another,' inspires pupils to act for the good of others. They have a strong sense of justice and want to make the world a fairer place. There is an advanced sense and awareness of looking after each other and God's world. From litter picking to supporting local and national charities, pupils want to be involved. They work hard to collect food to support their local food bank. Pupil voice is strong. They are encouraged to take positions of responsibility, eagerly taking 'pupil leadership' roles which make a tangible difference in their school. Pupils proactively raise money to support their projects, such as improving outdoor play equipment. They see this equipment as important for the mental health of some of their friends.

Religious education (RE) is effective. Pupils are encouraged to be 'curious learners' in preparation for life. The curriculum is balanced and spiral, meaning new lessons are based upon prior learning. The vicar supports the RE curriculum with demonstration Baptism and Eucharist services in church. Pupils learn about a range of faiths and worldviews, and RE is well-resourced. Pupils see Christianity as a relevant world faith and enjoy comparing it with other faiths and worldviews. Discussion around big questions such as considering creation alongside evolution, is relished. This results in young people being well-informed and tolerant. They can apply what they learn about others' beliefs to their own lives and start to make life choices for themselves.

## Information

Address	Main Street, Ash, Somerset. TA12 6NS		
Date	26 March 2025	URN	123814
Type of school	Academy	No. of pupils	118
Diocese	Bath & Wells		
MAT	Preston Primary Academy Trust		
Headteacher	Melissa Gibbons		
Chair of Governors	Georgina Griffiths		
Inspector	Alison Appleyard		