

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

### Ashington Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

‘Love never fails.’

All decisions and actions will come from love. Three main values are evident within this: trust, forgiveness and hope. All in our community know they are loved, we build their trust, we forgive and we move forward with hope and perseverance enabling everyone to flourish in a safe, inclusive environment.

Our vision has its basis in the following passage: Corinthians 13:4-8.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

We believe our Christian values give our children strong foundations to know how to treat others, make good choices and contribute positively to society when they leave us.

Ashington 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 Christian vision is clearly articulated and lived out by leaders and staff. It is at the heart of decisions to enable pupils and adults to flourish.
- Rooted in the vision of ‘Love never fails’, highly positive relationships exist. This creates a culture where the uniqueness of individuals is valued, and pupils and adults are treated well.
- Collective worship is an important expression of the Christian vision. It is central to the school’s spiritual life and is enriched through the strong partnership with the church.
- Curriculum experiences are shaped by the Christian vision, enabling pupils to have a love of learning. Pupils considered vulnerable are supported effectively.

#### Development Points

- Ensure leaders robustly evaluate the effectiveness of the vision to drive the strategic direction of the school. This is to ensure that opportunities for adults and pupils to flourish are strengthened.
- Embed the revised religious education (RE) curriculum. This is so that pupils develop a comprehensive understanding of a range of religions and worldviews.
- Ensure the curriculum equips pupils with knowledge of global challenges and offers opportunities to make a positive change.



## Inspection Findings

The Christian vision 'Love never fails', rooted in Corinthians 13, is the guiding principle at the heart of the school's ethos. Following a period of change, new leadership has brought a renewed sense of purpose and clarity. A fresh expression of the school's established vision is encapsulated in four pillars. These are known as love of ourselves, of others, of learning and of God. Embraced by the united staff team, this vision shapes an environment that fosters flourishing.

The new leadership swiftly identified key areas for improvement, using the vision as the foundation for the strategic direction. This clear alignment is raising expectations. The Christian vision is guiding decision-making, providing pupils with both a personal and academic framework. It fosters a culture of improvement, inspiring staff and pupils alike to be the best they can be. New systems to monitor the impact of the vision have been introduced. However, some evaluation activities lack the rigour required to understand clearly its impact on flourishing.

The school's culture is deeply rooted in the Christian pillars of 'love of ourselves' and 'love of others'. This foundation fosters an environment where the uniqueness of the individual is valued. Both pupils and adults are treated with kindness and respect. As a result, highly positive relationships are evident throughout the school community. Pupils consistently demonstrate respectful behaviour towards one another and staff, contributing to a sense of harmony and mutual support. A calm and purposeful atmosphere pervades the school. Older pupils are active in supporting younger ones to feel happy and be included in school life. They take pride in being role models and Ace Ambassadors where they help others to live out the Christian vision.

Pupils are motivated by the practical approaches provided within the curriculum. Shaped by the Christian vision, it fosters a genuine love of learning. Pupils are inspired by the wide range of outdoor opportunities, which significantly enrich their educational experience. They speak with enthusiasm about being trusted with responsibilities such as using tools and lighting fires. This nurtures a sense of independence and confidence. Their strong love of nature is further developed through hands-on activities like feeding lambs, tending plants, and exploring pond life. These experiences not only deepen their connection to nature but also make a meaningful contribution to their spiritual development. Pupils reflect on the wonders of creation and develop a sense of awe and respect for the environment around them. This sense of curiosity, along with a problem-solving approach, is integrated into the main curriculum. It helps to build pupils' resilience and perseverance when they encounter challenges in their learning. Recently introduced pupil progress meetings play a key role in raising expectations across the school. They ensure that each pupil's needs are addressed so that they flourish. Pupils who are considered vulnerable are supported effectively through targeted interventions and the nurturing environment prioritises their wellbeing. The extra-curricular offer has recently been enhanced. It provides a wide range of enriching opportunities. Activities including sport, music, languages, and construction allow pupils to explore new interests and develop skills outside the classroom. In turn, they help to strengthen a 'love of learning'.

The pupils' love of learning in the outdoors provides them with an understanding of global challenges. For example, themed eco days encourage them to reduce, reuse and recycle. Combined with topics explored in collective worship, pupils are inspired to envision a better future. They have hope for a future where plastics are recycled, and people are treated fairly. When speaking about injustice, pupils reflect on the life of Martin Luther King. They recognise that racism remains an issue in society today. Based upon the pillars of the Christian vision, pupils understand that they are called to show respect. Pupil leadership roles in school empower them to make a difference within the school community. For example, supported by the church youth leader, the church council



made meaningful changes to the school's prayer garden. However, opportunities to explore issues that promote engagement in social action within the curriculum are under-developed. As a result, pupils have limited occasions to respond to injustice and fully live out the vision to 'love others'.

Collective worship reflects the school's vision in a deeply meaningful way. It enables pupils to have a strong understanding of God's love for the world and everyone in it. Worship is a special time in the day when the school community comes together. This creates a tangible sense of belonging as staff and pupils listen, reflect, and pray. The uplifting singing enhances the experience, supporting pupils and adults to flourish spiritually. Collective worship is enriched by the school's strong partnership with the church. Lively and memorable explorations of biblical teaching help pupils understand how Bible stories are relevant to their lives today. For example, when reflecting on the story of Abraham and Sarah, pupils explained that trust and patience lead to good things. Parents are welcome to join services held at the church for occasions such as Harvest, Remembrance, and Christmas. This enables them to be included in the spiritual life of the school community.

RE effectively expresses the school's vision, particularly in exploring the pillars of 'love of ourselves' and 'love of others'. Leaders ensure that RE has a high profile within the curriculum, with the subject being a central focus for development. The curriculum has been thoughtfully redesigned to ensure that learning is well-sequenced. Training and quality resources support staff in their professional development to teach new areas of learning. Diocesan expertise makes a valuable contribution. RE provides pupils with opportunities to explore a range of religions and worldviews. This prompts respectful discussions amongst pupils as they reflect on what is important to them and others. They appreciate that different beliefs make people unique and special. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of Christianity. However, the new curriculum is in its early stages of implementation. As a result, pupils' knowledge of a range of religions and worldviews is currently less-developed.

## Information

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| Address            | Foster Lane, Ashington, Pulborough, West Sussex. RH20 3PG |               |        |
| Date               | 20 January 2025   | URN           | 125971 |
| Type of school     | Voluntary Controlled                                      | No. of pupils | 182    |
| Diocese            | Chichester  |               |        |
| Headteacher        | Adele Buck  |               |        |
| Chair of Governors | Dan Powell  |               |        |
| Inspector          | Susan Costa   |               |        |