

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

### Eastergate Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

“Learn, Grow, Achieve Together in God’s Love.”

Our vision is to provide a learning environment in which each child can grow academically, spiritually and socially, so that they can experience ‘Life in its fullness.’ John 10:10

In order that we can experience ‘life in its fullness’ we ‘Learn, Grow and Achieve Together in God’ by learning to trust one another. To show compassion towards our friends and to forgive them when we fall out. We learn to take care of God’s creation and look forward to our future with hope, knowing God’s love for us endures forever.

Eastergate 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

- Leaders have refined and adapted their Christian vision over time so that it better reflects the ‘togetherness’ they are building. They have done this in a reflective and considered manner involving a wide range of community groups. Because of this, the vision is well understood and is being used to build strong relationships.
- Staff go above and beyond to support and advocate for their vulnerable families. They are committed to including pupils and show high levels of care and compassion. By working closely and considerately with families, parents and their children are made to feel welcome and valued.
- The school have used productive and purposeful partnerships to help them. These outward-looking collaborations have enabled exchange of good practice and supported school improvement.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of well-chosen and engaging curricular and extra-curricular experiences that help them to learn, grow and achieve.

#### Development Points

- Plan explicit opportunities for spiritual development that are threaded throughout the curriculum. This is so that pupils can use a shared language to understand and articulate their spiritual journey.
- Ensure that collective worship is consistently engaging and inspiring for adults and pupils. This is so that pupils and adults are spiritually enriched through their experiences.
- Support staff in the delivery of religious education (RE) including through the use of appropriate professional development opportunities. This is so that pupils experience the full challenge of the RE curriculum.



## Inspection Findings

Eastergate school has a well-embedded and purposeful vision that guides their work and actions. Over time, leaders have refined and adapted their school vision so that it better reflects the 'togetherness' they are building. They have done this in a reflective and considered manner involving a wide range of community groups and with diocesan guidance. As a result of this, the vision is well understood and is being used to build strong relationships. Mutual respect is central to Eastergate life. Pupils can talk about learning, growing and changing in their time at school so that they can become the people they want to be. Some are able to articulate that God's love is guiding them through their journey. The school vision is also meaningfully expressed through Eastergate's Christian values that are proudly displayed and 'carried around' on their school badge. They are the everyday language of school life and influence behaviours within and beyond the school day. Flourishing is considered holistically through the development of the body, mind and spirit.

The vision has played a central part in the planning of the school curriculum. It enables pupils to 'live life to its fullness' through stimulating and varied experiences that ignite a love of learning. Spiritual development has been explored through consideration of self, others, the beautiful world, and beyond. A newly-created policy has captured this approach and defined a common spiritual language with associated images. However, this is not fully embedded across the school. Explicit opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum are not fully in place. This means that pupils cannot articulate their spiritual journey. Pupils benefit from a wide range of well-chosen and engaging curricular and extra-curricular enrichment experiences. They are able to develop their interests and talents in many directions through the variety of clubs on offer. Leaders have ensured that vulnerable pupils have equal access to these opportunities. The recent Year 6 residential provided a powerful opportunity for children to bond and come together. Pupils expressed the closeness they felt and the support they received, even when they felt vulnerable and anxious.

The school vision drives a growing sense of community. The values guide pupils and adults through difficult times. This means that they are able to live well together and navigate the challenges that come their way. Adults communicate what it is to be human and model kindness, empathy and forgiveness. When things go wrong, adults and pupils share, care and repair. They work to resolve and mend relationships with talk and understanding. The school has prioritised good mental health through a range of professional development opportunities. Leaders have listened to what staff and pupils say. They have put in place a range of initiatives that have improved wellbeing and made staff feel valued. Staff go above and beyond to support and advocate for their vulnerable families. They are committed to including pupils and show high levels of care and compassion. They work closely and considerately with parents, making them and their children feel welcome and valued. Their advocacy work gives some families a sense of belonging and hope and makes them feel that their children can achieve. Uniqueness and difference are embraced through the 'I am unique' approach. This allows pupils to celebrate their own individuality and show understanding and compassion to those who are different. Pupils are clear that it is 'ok to be different'.

The school vision supports the creation of a culture of responsibility and justice. Learning opportunities within the curriculum enable pupils to consider social and justice issues. For example, they explore learning topics such as 'careful climate' and 'should everything be fair and just?' Pupils also engage in some social action projects such as litter picking and collecting food to donate to a local foodbank. Through these and charitable support, they are



beginning to develop an understanding of injustice and the needs of others. This has included pupil-led fundraising and discussion that has been shared more widely and started important conversations at home. Leaders facilitate opportunities to raise awareness of some relevant differences and issues such as diabetes, neurodiversity and loss. Most notably, the pupil-led support for the Sussex Snowdrop Trust helped families to manage serious illness. As a consequence, pupils have been able to make positive changes to the experiences of those living with these differences and challenges. The school uses productive and purposeful partnerships to help them. These outward-looking collaborations have enabled exchange of good practice and supported school improvement. Pupils are proud to hold leadership jobs and take them seriously, knowing that they will influence how others experience their day. Although there are some good examples of pupil-led work to change the lives of those around them, they are currently underdeveloped.

Collective worship is recognised as a time to come together, pause and think. Adults and pupils enjoy singing and celebrating and value the opportunity for prayer. It is planned well and inclusive, with adaptations made to support those pupils who find it harder to participate. Worship is most powerful during significant events such as the death of Queen Elizabeth II or in times of conflict and remembrance. In smaller class groups, it allows reflection and consideration of current news topics. The good relationship with the local church has enhanced the prayer and worship life of the school. The vicar leads weekly school worship times and celebrations in the church throughout the year. These are appreciated across the school community. However, collective worship is not consistently engaging and inspiring for adults and pupils. Although children have opportunities to be involved in worship, this is not fully developed to maximise spiritual growth.

Religious education (RE) is a valued part of the curriculum at Eastergate. Pupils understand that it helps them learn about themselves and others. It is led by a passionate and experienced staff member who is implementing a clear plan for improvement. The RE curriculum makes good use of appropriate materials and takes into consideration the local context. It is sequenced well and progression in knowledge and skills is mapped across the school. Pupils explore beliefs and practices of faiths including Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Staff teaching RE receive some training and support, but this is not happening consistently enough to ensure that pupils explore the curriculum to its full depth. More recently, pupils have been invited to express their understanding in more creative ways as well as in their writing. This development is a result of reflection after some collaborative work with another local school.

## Information

Address	Church Lane, Eastergate, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 3UT		
Date	29 November 2024	URN	125981
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	195
Diocese	Chichester		
Headteacher	Catherine Ward		
Chair of Governors	Hedda Wells		
Inspector	Paula Bliss		