

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Church of England Infant School

Vision

A caring community, courageously learning, inspired to live life to the full.

Jesus says, 'I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.' John 10:10. This vision is embedded in all aspects of school life, from supporting vulnerable children and families to the school's strong partnerships with the local church and other schools. It is supported by the values of friendship and compassion, courage and perseverance and thankfulness and respect.

Christ Church Church of England Infant 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 creates a culture of exceptional compassion and support. All are encouraged to be part of a caring community. Consequently, adults and children are treated very well.
- Collective worship is central to life at Christ Church Infant School. It provides meaningful moments in which all may grow spiritually. This is due to the way that worship creates a powerful sense of belonging within this Church school community.
- Staff have embedded a clear understanding of spirituality which is shared by children and encourages all to thrive. This is enhanced by the way the vision is fully woven into the daily life of the school.
- The mutual support of the church and school has a profound impact on the whole school community. This is evident in the broader contribution to family life that church and school are able to make together.
- Very effective leadership in religious education (RE) has established a relevant and challenging curriculum which enhances children's learning. As a result, children enjoy learning in RE. This has a beneficial impact on their understanding of a range of faiths and worldviews.

Development Points

- Secure the high-quality ethos by ensuring that ongoing plans continue to be implemented. These include strengthening the school's profile of excellence in spirituality. This is so that the school sustains its high focus on the school's Christian character.



Inspection Findings

A deeply Christian vision is embedded at Christ Church Infant School. Jesus' words are the unifying force at the heart of this exceptionally caring community. Children speak with passion and animation about their vision and values and how they impact on their learning and behaviour. They interpret Jesus' promise of a 'full life' as one that will be 'a fun life'. This is evident in their self-confidence and enjoyment of learning. Professional development provided by church leaders and the diocese is very effective. The school plays a leading role amongst its neighbouring group of community and Church schools, sharing good practice. The substantial partnership with the local church has a significant impact both on families and the wider life of the school. It embodies the Christian values at the heart of the vision. The governors' ethos committee is given a prominent role. Governors know the school extremely well. As a result, they have deep insights into the way the vision impacts on adults as well as children. This is due to the robust self-evaluation process which accurately identifies areas for development.

The school's curriculum provides broad, rich and creative experiences which enable the vision to be a living reality. A set of well-chosen values embed the Christian vision seamlessly into the daily life of the school. For example, children understand that when learning becomes tricky they should use the values of courage and perseverance. Exciting enquiry questions in the curriculum prompt children to approach learning with wonder and curiosity. Challenges such as 'How do things move around us?' engage children's imagination. Their fullness of life is enhanced by enriching activities such as walks in nature and to Bristol's special places. There is a clear focus on providing a stimulating, relevant and engaging curriculum which meets the needs of children including those identified as vulnerable. Bold decisions are made by leaders to maximise individual learning ensuring barriers can be overcome. Consequently, children enjoy their learning and value their time at school. The vision enables staff and children to articulate a well-developed understanding of spirituality. Thought provoking questions such as, 'Should everyone be treated the same?' are embedded in the curriculum. In this way, children are encouraged to think deeply and listen respectfully to the views of their peers.

Collective worship is central to the school day, providing a calm and peaceful setting which has a significant impact. It promotes a deep sense of spirituality which sustains and inspires all aspects of school life. It sets the school's vision in its biblical roots, creating a caring community of friendship and compassion. For example, to better understand the value of courage, children enjoy the Bible story of David confronting the giant Goliath. In turn, this supports their positive attitudes to learning. Children enjoy worship and readily engage with activities. They confidently share ideas, singing spontaneously and joining in with the actions. They willingly lead worship alongside staff and feel empowered to encourage their peers to make a difference in the world. Visits from church leaders help anchor the school in biblical understanding and Anglican tradition. The parish community warmly welcomes children and families to a termly school service, cementing good relationships. Reflective classroom spaces are used well by pupils, often inspiring wonder about the natural world. A focus on prayer, led by church leaders, has enabled children to think deeply and reflect with sensitivity on their lives. School leaders regularly seek and address children's views on the impact of worship. This ensures that worship encourages all to flourish spiritually.

Warm, caring relationships, inspired by the vision's strong sense of belonging, are central to life at Christ Church. This is due to the exceptional level of support for the children and adults. High priority is placed on the mental health and wellbeing of all. Inspired by the values, children behave well and show friendship. This ensures that the school is an inclusive community where all are valued. Heartfelt positive comments from children to others, who show caring behaviour, are displayed in classrooms. In this way, children's feelings of self-worth and self-confidence



are enhanced. Staff, particularly comment on the valued support they receive from families. Time for personal and professional growth provided to staff by leaders is generous and much appreciated. Consequently, staff say that 'it makes you feel you want to give more'. As a result, both adults and children feel cared for and cherished.

The school's vision creates a culture of justice and responsibility. Therefore, interactions are based on mutual trust and respect. Older children, in particular, understand the need to take responsibility for their behaviour in school and beyond. They volunteer for leadership roles such as for worship and the eco team, which have a high profile. The vision encourages children to seek justice and make changes that will benefit others. Children feel empowered to 'stand up for what's right'. Consequently, as well as supporting local charities for the homeless, they eagerly support a school community in Uganda. They lead the school's actions to reduce single-use plastic, to recycle and to pick litter around school. Children's artwork is regularly shared and displayed in church, sustaining the school's presence within the parish. Effective partnerships are enjoyed with groups and places in the local area. These include a retirement home and action for homelessness and are of mutual benefit.

RE is a high priority at the heart of this Church school curriculum. In particular, this is because children show curiosity and respect a diverse range of faiths and worldviews. The subject leader ensures that the curriculum is well planned and effectively balanced. It is fully focussed on meeting the needs of all children as they progress through the school. This includes children with additional needs. Relevant training is undertaken from the diocese for leaders and shared with staff, who are well supported. As a result, the curriculum inspires learning that is motivating, challenging and relevant. It has a very positive impact on life at school. This is because it reflects the community where all beliefs and faiths are valued. Visits to church and those from church leaders promote a deeper understanding of Christianity. Children are encouraged to understand the diverse nature of the world-wide Christian faith. Parents also visit to share their own faith and beliefs with children. This promotes the Christian value of respect and enhances learning. Spirituality is developed very effectively often by a 'spiritual starter' question. This encourages discussion and provokes insightful comments.

Information

Address	Christ Church Avenue, Downend, BS16 5TG		
Date	28 January 2025	URN	109166
Type of school	Voluntary Controlled	No. of pupils	225
Diocese	Bristol		
Headteacher	Anna Martin		
Chair of Governors	Chris Douglas		
Inspector	Daphne Spitzer		