

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Upton Noble Church of England VC Primary School

Vision

At Upton Noble Church of England VC Primary School, we aspire to be: “A nurturing community of aspirational learners who flourish and grow together; building wisdom, knowledge and skills within a Christian ethos.”

“Let your light Shine” Matthew 5:16

Jesus taught that we can be the light and encourages us to let our light shine for all to see, reflecting the light of God.

We believe that by working together, we can grow the very best version of Upton Noble Church of England VC Primary School and “Our light will shine”.

Upton Noble Church of England VC 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

- Driven by the vision to ‘let your light shine’, leaders demonstrate a wholehearted commitment to embedding this ethos into daily school life. Their inspirational leadership fosters an environment where both pupils and adults are empowered to flourish.
- Love, care and compassion are deeply embedded in relationships throughout the school community. This nurturing culture supports pupils and adults to feel genuinely welcomed, valued and celebrated for who they are.
- Pupils benefit from a rich variety of opportunities for reflection, both within and beyond the curriculum. A shared language and approach to spirituality enables meaningful moments for spiritual development to emerge spontaneously and through planned activities.
- The religious education (RE) curriculum is thoughtfully designed to promote rich, meaningful learning. It offers high levels of challenge and encourages deep exploration of a wide range of faiths and worldviews.
- Innovative, vision-led school development, rooted in relationships and individual inherent worth, actively removes barriers to learning and participation. This ensures an inclusive culture where both pupils and adults are empowered to confidently ‘let their light shine’.

Development Points

- Enhance opportunities for pupils to explore diversity within the RE curriculum. This is to deepen their understanding of the broad and diverse ways that Christians live out their faith.



Inspection Findings

At Upton Noble, the Christian vision, rooted in Matthew 5:16 is clearly expressed and permeates through the school community. 'Let your light shine' drives leaders' actions and resonates with the school's rural hilltop setting, inspiring and guiding school life. Consequently, strategic decisions are grounded in Bible teachings, reflecting a deep commitment to inclusion, wellbeing and flourishing. Leaders empower staff and pupils to live out the vision in practical and purposeful ways. Staff are encouraged to use their skills and passions to enrich the lives of others. They willingly share the stories that make 'their light shine' which enthuses pupils. This reflects their belief that flourishing adults are better equipped to nurture confident, passionate and flourishing pupils. Through impactful and effective evaluation, governors play an active and informed role that strengthens the school. They ensure the vision drives their work through policy review, building and site development and resource allocation. Training from the diocese enriches the intent and work of governors. The result is a cohesive, values-driven community where the vision is not only understood but lived with integrity and purpose.

Leaders ensure that the Christian vision meaningfully shapes both the curriculum and extra-curricular life of the school. The six Christian values are intentionally woven through each area of study, guiding pupils' learning and personal development. This supports them to grow and learn with resilience, love, friendship, respect, trust and honesty. This holistic approach develops confident, articulate and compassionate pupils who care about themselves, each other and their learning. Staff passionately support pupils to shine, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or who are facing personal challenges. Creative and collaborative planning removes barriers and delivers impactful support for pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the school's provision. They value the personal growth fostered by a well-rounded curriculum and aspirational enrichment opportunities. The diverse range of trips and visitors brings learning to life and offers pupils valuable experiences beyond the classroom. Spiritual development is respected by staff as a shared journey integral to the flourishing of both adults and pupils. Consequently, a rich variety of planned and spontaneous opportunities enable pupils and staff to engage meaningfully with spiritual experiences. A common language for spirituality supports reflection across the curriculum and wider school life. Pupils explore thought provoking questions such as 'what makes me the person I am?' and 'does God care for me?'. These experiences offer time to encounter moments of awe and wonder and to reflect on life's deeper questions.

The school's Christian vision underpins an inclusive, nurturing ethos, fostering a strong sense of belonging. Relationships are built on compassion, trust and mutual respect, creating a culture of flourishing together. Pupils proudly demonstrate kindness and compassion, with one reflecting 'we don't walk away from someone needing help, we stop and care'. These meaningful and affirming relationships are at the heart of school life and contribute to a safe, joyful and supportive environment. Wellbeing and good mental health are prioritised and central to the school's vision and daily practice. Formal policies and federation-wide support networks enhance staff wellbeing and cultivate a cohesive, supportive professional community. As a result, staff feel trusted, valued and respected, which sustains their energy and joy in their work. This fosters deeply caring connections and feelings of togetherness which enables adults and pupils to 'let their light shine'.

Collective worship is a cherished and transformative part of school life, effectively rooted in the school's Christian vision and values. Welcoming and invitational in approach, worship offers space, without compulsion, for pupils and adults to reflect, respond and grow. Thoughtfully planned worship celebrates Anglican traditions, biblical narratives and provides calm, reflective moments. Strong parish partnerships enhance the experience, bringing



Bible stories to life. The engaging and dramatic retelling, along with time to reflect, has significant impact. This is highlighted by a pupil stating 'listening to the story of Joseph made me remember to be compassionate before being angry'. Leaders of collective worship are supported by purposeful planning, clear structures and appealing resources. Class-based worship encourages pupils to think deeply about themselves and others, with their reflections carefully recorded in big question books. Their insightful responses demonstrate positive engagement, growing confidence and maturing thoughtfulness. Pupils' courageous openness to questions which encourage them to think about themselves lead to thoughtful discussions, which naturally emerge in classrooms. This rhythm of daily, inspiring and engaging worship enables both pupils and staff to flourish spiritually.

Pupil voice lies at the heart of school life, empowering their influence and decision making. As a result, they are ambitious to further enhance the school and make a positive difference in the wider world. Pupil leaders effectively chair and direct school council meetings ensuring their opinions have a positive impact. This is clear through initiatives they champion, such as buying books for a local hospital, which demonstrates their compassion for others. Through themes such as environmental sustainability and animal care, pupils explore real-world issues with local and global relevance. This deepens their understanding of justice and making ethical choices. The school's vision-led culture further inspires them to act responsibly and support one another. The open referral system, which enables pupils to seek help for themselves and for their peers, exemplifies this ethos.

The RE curriculum is effective and intentionally designed to promote rich, meaningful learning experiences. Creative and inclusive planning ensures that pupils are actively engaged and barriers to learning are removed. They benefit from the deliberate use of art, discussion and outdoor learning to deepen their understanding. Building shelters in the natural school environment to better understand the Jewish festival of Sukkot perfectly illustrates this approach. The well-sequenced, balanced and appropriately challenging curriculum enables pupils to hold confident and accurate conversations. They are knowledgeable about a range of world religions and non-religious worldviews. However, opportunities for pupils to explore the rich diversity of Christianity as a living global faith remain limited. RE holds a high profile throughout the school. Staff and pupils recognise its contribution to personal growth, particularly through the school values of respect, compassion and friendship. Knowledgeable subject leadership and active monitoring and evaluation by leaders, including governors, inform changes. Leaders actively gather views from strategic discussions, surveys and pupil leaders to shape development. For example, informed by pupil feedback, the RE curriculum has been restructured to improve progression in key skills and knowledge. Further enrichment is evident through the thoughtful inclusion of a non-religious worldview to broaden their perspectives of the world around them.

Information

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|---------------|--------|
| Address | Chapel Street, Upton Noble, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 6AU | | |
| Date | 15 July 2025 | URN | 123782 |
| Type of school | Voluntary controlled | No. of pupils | 158 |
| Diocese | Bath and Wells | | |
| MAT/Federation | East Somerset Federation | | |
| Headteacher | Rachael Bisset | | |
| Chair of Governors | Susan Simpson | | |
| Inspector | Steve Cowdery | | |