

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

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School			
<b>Address</b>	Langley Road, Surbiton, KT6 6LW		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	29/03/2019	<b>Status of school</b>	VA primary
<b>Diocese</b>	Southwark	<b>URN</b>	102592

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Good
How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?		
<b>Additional Judgements</b>		
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Good
<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Good

<b>School context</b>
St Matthew's School is a primary school with 388 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of British heritage. The school has a low level of religious and cultural diversity and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is just below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below national averages.
<b>The school's Christian vision</b>
To provide an inclusive environment where all children learn and flourish in a setting shaped by Christian values. We nurture the children in living out the Christian values by emphasising the Fruit of the Spirit being love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control and the importance of forgiveness.
<b>Key findings</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's Christian vision is known and lived out by the school community. Its theological underpinning is understood and articulated by the headteacher, but it is not fully understood by all leaders and governors.</li> <li>School leaders place high importance on the wellbeing of both staff and pupils as a result of the school's vision which seeks to provide 'an inclusive environment' where pupils and staff can 'flourish'.</li> <li>The school provides some opportunities to support and develop pupils' spirituality, particularly through aspects of the religious education (RE) curriculum and collective worship.</li> <li>Collective worship is inclusive, invitational and in the main reflects the school's Christian vision.</li> <li>High profile is given to RE which means pupils enjoy learning about Christianity and a range of other world faiths which is enhanced by teaching outside the classroom. Pupils find the lessons interesting and exciting, although staff subject knowledge limits the impact of provision.</li> </ul>
<b>Areas for development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable all school leaders and governors to confidently articulate how the school's Christian vision is underpinned by biblical teaching and to describe how this shapes school policy and practice.</li> <li>Encourage pupils to take a more active role in planning and delivering aspects of worship to enable them to 'flourish'.</li> <li>Deepen teachers' subject knowledge in RE in order that greater challenge is provided in lessons and that assessment practice is sharpened.</li> </ul>

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

### Inspection findings

St Matthew's, at its heart, provides an 'inclusive environment where all children learn and flourish'. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and disability (SEND), speak with enthusiasm of the nurture they receive. The pupil's faith team, a development from recommendations in the last SIAMS report, and Bible club draw a wide range of pupils to the safe space of the prayer room. Collective worship reflects the inclusivity of the vision and pupils report feeling comfortable in this time of personal learning and reflection. Parents of faith and those with no religious affiliation speak of the distinctively Christian support being the 'ongoing thread' through the school. The Christian distinctiveness is held closely by all leaders and one governor spoke of it being the 'essence' found within every aspect of school life. The school greatly benefits from the interconnectedness with the local parish church and enthusiastically builds partnerships with other local organisations as a result of the Christian environment they nurture. Training from the diocese updates staff on current educational practice. The vision is grounded in the theology of Galatians 5.22 and John 10.10 and is understood in depth by the headteacher. Consequently, it is beginning to shape school improvement. However, at this early stage of development, the theological underpinning of the vision is not fully articulated by all leaders and governors. Despite this, the governors provide a supportive system of evaluation through regular visits to the school.

The vast majority of pupils 'flourish' academically. Where there are gaps, school leaders work effectively with the special educational needs and disability coordinator to devise clear programmes of intervention to close the gap of progress. The shared vision of 'inclusion' and 'flourishing' means that the spiritual development of both staff and pupils is found within many aspects of the school. This is particularly true of collective worship, where the school's '5Gs' are signed, religious language is boldly explored and all attending are offered the opportunity to personally reflect, learn and flourish. Teachers do not shy away from 'big questions' and pupils in turn tackle their own understanding of spiritual and ethical issues in this 'inclusive environment'. Depth of exploration within the foundation subjects has been enabled by a decision to teach in curriculum blocking. Non-teaching staff confirm that pupils' enthusiasm has increased as a result. Spirited Arts and 'Pause Days' provide further opportunities for spiritual growth.

St Matthew's is an outward looking school. Pupils speak warmly of the help they receive and see their role as courageous advocates beyond the school as a natural next step. The varied school partnerships with the local special school, nearby sheltered accommodation, a school in Malawi and collaboration with the diocese give pupils the opportunity to grow in the Fruit of the Spirit. Pupils describe with passion the innovation and perseverance needed as they worked on the mini-market. Pupils see themselves as autonomous agents of change whether that be through their suggestion of a charity to support or writing their thank you, sorry, please prayers. Spending decisions are driven by the vision, ensuring that staffing is secure and consistent for classes to flourish.

Pupils are secure in voicing their opinions eloquently with consideration of how others might feel. Forgiveness and reconciliation are a reality in St Matthew's, the complexities of which are explored through the life of Jesus in RE lessons. Parents endorse the effectiveness of the daily practice of 'wiping the slate clean' and the clear boundaries the behavioural traffic light system provides. Pupil interaction is exemplary. Both pupils and staff live out the Fruit of the Spirit, demonstrating patience and love for the individual, evident in the bespoke provision for acute behavioural needs. The headteacher leads by example in pastoral care, supported by the local vicar and a self-nominated member of staff. Staff feel listened to and valued, sharing openly of the care they have received at times of personal challenge. New staff feel welcomed with one explaining that since joining the school she 'hadn't stopped smiling'.

The friendship week reinforced the school's vision of inclusion, enabling pupils to recognise difference and diversity as they took part in the odd sock day. In addition, the multiple trips to different places of worship lead pupils to recognise the value of their own faith and those of others. Whilst the adult's faith team are in the early stages of tackling the imminent relationships and sex education (RSE) requirements, pastoral guidance from the Church of England has not been fully explored collectively to enable the school to confidently ensure, through its policy and practice, the protection of all members of the school community.

Collective worship is the focal point of the day for both adults and pupils. It is richer and more fruitful owing to the relationship of mutual support from the local church. Pupils recognise the invitational opportunity to grow

spiritually through prayer, reflection, song and celebration. Adults value collective worship for the benefit it brings to the pupils' and their own spiritual growth. Complex concepts such as the trinitarian nature of God are tackled. This growth continues into the classroom and for some to the church. Prayer is of central importance to the worshipping community with private connecting to public through the prayer bears Matthew and Grace. Pupils really enjoy opportunities to play an active role in the delivery of collective worship, however these opportunities are limited.

The RE curriculum reflects the school's vision of inclusivity as it is broad, balanced and appropriate, meeting the Church of England Statement of Entitlement. The programmes of study ensure pupils learn about the Christian faith and explore what they can learn from Christianity through exploration of scriptural text and broad and deep questioning in world religions. However, the precision with which the lessons are adapted from the diocesan syllabus are not always tightly suited to the age and stage of the pupils' development. The RE lead is supported in her proactive drive to bring a coherent approach to assessment, collaborating with other local schools. This is still in development. Similarly, RE subject knowledge is improving, helped by training from the diocese, input from the organisation Insight and bespoke guidance from the vicar and a theologically trained member of staff.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

Teaching and learning is good across the school and there are some examples of excellent practice. This enables pupils to flourish in the subject, including the vulnerable and those with learning difficulties. Some progress has been made in response to the previous area to improve the quality of marking. Consequently, a more consistent approach is now evident. Deeper subject knowledge in RE is required to ensure that greater challenge is provided in lessons and that assessment practice is sharpened.

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