



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

## Esher Church of England High School

Address More Lane, Esher, Surrey KT10 8AP

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

**Overall grade**

**Good**

**The impact of collective worship**

**Requires improvement**

### School's vision

All members of our school **belong**. Every child and adult are welcome as a unique person and are unconditionally loved. **Being more** and **being Esher** gives ambition in every aspect of development so that they can flourish both now and in the future, embracing our responsibility to the wider world.

### Key findings

- Relationships are extremely strong at the school and are at the heart of its Christian vision. Pupils and staff truly 'belong' and are enabled to flourish as part of a fully inclusive community.
- Through strong pastoral care for pupils and bespoke professional development and training for staff, school leaders actively support all members of the school community. This is a significant priority for them.
- Leaders ensure that the taught curriculum caters for the diverse range of abilities of all students. Teachers know students extremely well and teaching is tailored to pupils' individual needs.
- Collective worship is invitational, but pupils do not fully understand its rationale and importance. They have limited opportunities to be involved with its planning and delivery. Pupils are given some opportunities to develop spiritually but they are unclear about the significance of prayer, stillness and reflection. The impact these experiences have on pupils' daily lives is therefore limited.
- Pupils are committed to raising money for charities but have limited opportunities to engage with global issues as courageous advocates.

### Areas for development

- Ensure that students become more involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship so that it becomes a central part of the life of the school.
- Provide more opportunities for stillness, reflection and prayer In order to develop a shared definition and understanding of spirituality for both students and staff.
- Encourage students to become courageous advocates and further develop their engagement with the wider, global community.

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

Esher Church of England High School is a joyful, flourishing community. All pupils and adults are inspired by the school's Christian vision, which is powerfully encapsulated in the motto 'Belong, Be More, Be Esher'. Lived out by all, this vision has created a learning environment that is fully inclusive. Pupils and adults feel safe, cared for and valued; positive relationships drive the school's vision. School leaders are dedicated to ensuring that each member of the community see each other as neighbours. 'All are different, all are equal and all belong', a school maxim, is affirmed and celebrated by all.

Student and adult wellbeing has a high priority at the school and is a central part of the vision. Leaders desire that every pupil and adult 'Be Esher' - part of a strong community. They want all to 'Belong' and 'Be More' within that community. They want them to thrive not only in achievement and progress, but also in feelings of wellness, safety and happiness. Students are nurtured pastorally by a well-resourced team of wellbeing coordinators, tutors, heads of house, and heads of year. Students are actively supported with their mental wellbeing and speak about being part of family, where support in and out of the class takes place 'each and every day'. Adults confidently share that 'kindness is the motivation' for every action school leaders take. Like students, staff are celebrated. Adults are encouraged to nominate a colleague each week who has shown 'Glimpses of Brilliance'. This helps staff to be 'more' and feel a greater sense of belonging. Staff stay working at the school for a number of years and are proud to be members of the school community. Staff are actively helped by the school during personal difficult times. Through an effective continuing professional development programme (CPD) for staff, adults truly flourish. Training for staff is professional and personal, research-based and purposeful.

The harmonious way in which pupils and staff behave towards each other is a positive reflection of the school's vision. Pupils treat each other with dignity and respect and will not tolerate any form of discrimination, prejudice or bullying. How the school has welcomed and is supporting Afghan and Ukrainian refugees is exemplary. When peer relationships do become challenged and at times break down, the school adopts a restorative approach. School leaders see the support of the 'most challenging and most complex' as an important part of the vision. The school maxim 'reflect, repair, restore' is at the heart of this approach. Unconditional love for the neighbour powerfully serves as the biblical foundation. The 'Be Esher' part of the vision – embracing responsibility to the wider world – is achieved with some success. Pupils do have a sense of compassion for those who may experience disadvantage or deprivation. They also engage in raising money for different charities. However, opportunities to go beyond this in becoming courageous advocates who have a concern for global justice are limited.

The school's broad and balanced curriculum supports the development of all learners, so that all can flourish. In line with the vision, subject leaders and teachers plan meticulously to ensure pupils can 'Be More'. Students thrive, regardless of their starting points. The Year 7 curriculum provision is pitched accurately through the effective partnerships that the school has with local primary schools. Leaders and teachers can identify gaps from Year 6 and respond accordingly, ensuring no young person is left behind. Teachers model the effective learning behaviours that they want students to display. Pupils are encouraged to be 'brave to fail' and 'brave to succeed'. As a result, students achieve more, as they are not afraid to try and keep trying. The school's provision for more able students is effective. Challenge and stretch tasks are consistently built in to all lessons and all pupils have an opportunity to complete them. In subjects such as GCSE English and mathematics, bridging courses are delivered to students who desire to study the subject at A level to support a successful study transition. In history, a library of degree-level texts are recommended for more able students. Students are encouraged to develop and deepen their wisdom, knowledge and skills at a higher level. Similarly, the provision for students with special educational needs and more vulnerable students is extremely strong. With individualised learning plans and a welcoming Inclusion Support Base (ISB), students who require additional support receive a tailored provision. The 'Be More' part of the vision also encapsulates the idea of 'trying something new'. This is exemplified through an intentional enrichment programme. Pupils enjoy the performing arts, a

wide range of sports and effective development programmes such as the Brilliant Club and the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Collective worship is invitational. Assemblies and the ‘Thought for the Day’ covered in tutor time explore the school’s values and current affairs. They strengthen pupils’ sense of belonging and contribute to the vision. During times of worship, pupils’ gifts, talents and achievements are celebrated. However, pupils have a limited understanding of the importance and rationale for collective worship. Pupils are unclear about the value of prayer, stillness and reflection and how their assemblies inspire them to action. Within collective worship, there are too few elements of the Anglican tradition or liturgy. Pupils do not significantly contribute to the planning and leading of collective worship. Pupils and staff are also unclear how collective worship supports spiritual development. There is no simple definition of spirituality that all share or a planned approach through which it can be developed.

Religious education at the school helps pupils to flourish. Although undergoing further development and improvement, the RE curriculum is structured and planned and reflects the school’s vision. The school leader for RE shares teaching resources at Key Stage 3 and 4 to ensure that all RE staff teach with confidence. As all pupils feel a strong sense of belonging in the school, they debate and discuss in a respectful way in RE. Pupils describe RE and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons as safe spaces where they can be open, share their points of view about faith and ask ‘big questions’.

### Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	12 <sup>th</sup> May 2022	URN	140650
Date of previous inspection	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2015		
School status	Voluntary controlled, Academy converter	NOR	1145
Name of MAT/Federation	Enlighten Learning Trust		
Diocese / Methodist District	Guildford Diocese		
Headteacher	Mr Andy King		
Pupil profile	The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is below the national average.		
	The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages.		
Additional significant information (if needed)			
Inspector’s name	Andrew Wignal	No.	C1917