

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

The Bishop Wand Church of England School	
Address	Layton's Lane, Sunbury-on-Thames, TW16 6LT
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	Excellent
The impact of collective worship	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Excellent

School's vision
<p>'Realising God-given potential'</p> <p>Inspiring Minds; Nurturing Spirit; Respecting Difference</p> <p>At the Bishop Wand School, in the power of Christ's Love, we will make a community where all are learners and each one finds, grows and shares their gifts for the good of all.</p> <p>'Encourage one another and so build each other up.' 1 Thessalonians 5:11</p>
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's distinctive Christian vision is absolutely central to the whole life of the school. This is because of the determination of leaders, including governors, to live out a commitment to 'encourage one another and so build each other up' (1 Thessalonians 5:11) • The links leaders forge with local churches, with the diocese and with local Christian organisations add hugely to the provision for students. This promotes both their spiritual development and their wellbeing. • Students, including the most vulnerable and those with additional needs, flourish at the school because adults recognise the individual value of each of them. Staff are tireless in enabling each student to realise their God-given potential in the way that is right for them. • The chaplaincy team craft collective worship expertly, ensuring that all students and adults have a rich and varied experience. Collective worship offers all at Bishop Wand abundant opportunities to grow in their spiritual journeys, whatever their starting point. • Religious education (RE) is expertly led and taught. Students of all ages make excellent progress and are empowered to explore complex and sensitive topics in a safe environment.
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerate the existing intention to develop the school as a local hub of excellence. This will enable the school's expertise in providing excellent collective worship and RE to have a wider impact.

Inspection findings

There is a determination to live out the school's Christian vision that runs deeply through all aspects of the school's work. It begins with the school's leaders and governors. They prioritise a carefully considered and compassionate understanding of 'encourage one another and so build each other up' (1 Thessalonians 5:11) in all their strategic decisions. Governors have determined that maintaining a full time chaplain is crucial to the Christian life of the school. They consistently ring-fence funding for this purpose. They also support the school leaders' courageous, vision-driven, curriculum decisions to meet the learning needs of all students at the school.

The school's Christian vision dictates the rhythm of school life. Realising the God-given potential of all members of the school community by 'inspiring minds, nurturing spirit and respecting difference' is the strikingly normal culture of the school. God-given potential is understood in its fullest sense. It includes academic potential but is in no way limited to that. All members of the school community are invited, encouraged and challenged to be the best they can be.

Central to this culture is the work of the chaplaincy team and, in particular, the school's collective worship. Collective worship is planned by the chaplain in consultation with a team comprising students and staff. Termly themes are drawn directly from the school's Christian vision. Each week's theme is initially introduced to adults at the staff briefing. The theme is explored in larger collective worship gatherings and reinforced in form time. Both are uniformly inclusive, invitational and inspirational, with students participating actively through discussion and feedback. For example, the story of the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-31), was considered imaginatively in ways that prompted deep inquiry among students of different ages. All acts of collective worship for staff and students include an invitation to join in prayer or to reflect in silence. Often these prayers are written and spoken by students. Students and staff frequently refer to the deep impact that collective worship has on them. The whole school community is reflectively immersed, without compulsion, in the same rich Christian narrative. This contributes greatly to the spiritual development of both students and adults.

The Christian life of the school benefits greatly through exceptional, mutually enriching links. These include with local churches, with the diocese and with other local Christian organisations. Students support the work of the local food bank financially and as volunteers. Over 150 students each year engage in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme and, through this, provide valuable service in the local community. The local parish priest, who is also chair of governors, presides at Holy Communion services to which all staff and students are invited. Clergy and youth workers from local parishes and representing the breadth of Anglican traditions, support students' spiritual development and mental wellbeing. These links contribute excellently to the flourishing of the school community and its impact in the wider world.

The RE department is a beacon of outstanding practice in the school and beyond. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that all students grow in religious literacy and in the freedom to think for themselves. It is distinctly Christian but celebrates the diversity of world faiths and the diversity within the Christian faith. Students thrive in RE lessons which provide a safe space for the discussion of sensitive and controversial religious issues. All students complete a full GCSE in religious studies at the end on Key Stage 4.

The school's response to the legacy of the COVID pandemic has been imaginative and exemplary. Following the return to face-to-face teaching, school leaders set up a 'brighter futures' programme of additional activities at the end of each day. These address the social,



academic, spiritual and pastoral challenges resulting from the pandemic. Participation, which is routinely monitored, is strong even among the hardest to reach students. The programme, enthusiastically embraced by both staff and students, contributes significantly to students' thriving through the development of knowledge and skills.


The commitment to encourage each other is widespread throughout the school. Members of staff give numerous examples of how leaders invite and encourage them to develop their careers in ways they had not anticipated and support them through difficult times. Mutual care between all members of the school community is a striking feature of Bishop Wand. It contributes to a strong sense of family within the school and supports the thriving of all.

In this accepting environment where all are learners, students feel empowered to take on leadership roles and to exercise influence within and beyond the school. Recently, a group of Year 9 students worked with the school catering and business managers to address energy and waste issues. A Sixth Former challenged the way careers advice was given. Leaders responded by changing school policy as a result of both these acts of courageous advocacy. Students take charitable giving very seriously. They choose the charities that they support and raise large sums of money by organising successful events. Students feel empowered to take initiatives in their school. These include starting a school newspaper, volunteering as mentors and taking leadership roles within the 'brighter futures' programme. These activities equip students to understand the power they have to continue as agents of change into adulthood.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is characterised by friendliness and mutual respect. These stem directly from the deep but unconscious way that the school's Christian vision is lived out. This is particularly evident to the students who join Bishop Wand in the Sixth Form from other schools. They speak of their surprise at the warmth of the school community, marked by co-operation rather than competition. They find the school's willingness to use restorative justice and offer fresh starts as welcome as it is unfamiliar.

Students who are vulnerable for whatever reason know that they are cared for, encouraged and challenged. The school chapel offers a safe space for all. In it, students can receive support from the chaplaincy team, access specific programmes to promote their mental wellbeing or simply spend time when they need to. Additionally, the school ensures that the whole community has a deep understanding of equality and diversity. As a result, students thrive because they are respected and cherished as uniquely individual and made in the image of God.

The school's Christian vision permeates all areas of school life and makes it into a genuinely transformational community. It has much excellent practice to share with others, particularly in terms of the deep impact of its collective worship and RE.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Excellent
	<p>The quality of teaching and learning in RE is excellent. The curriculum in all key stages is boldly imaginative and academically rigorous. Progress in religious studies GCSE has been very strong across all abilities for many years. Religious studies is a popular A level subject. The head of RE and another member of the department provide widely accessed curricular support to practitioners both locally and nationally.</p>		
Information			
School	The Bishop Wand Church of England School	Inspection date	2 February 2023 - 3 February 2023
URN	138491	VC/VA/Academy	Academy
Diocese/District	London	Pupils on roll	1143
Headteacher	Daniel Aldridge		
Chair of Governors	Reverend Andrew Downes		
Inspector	Andrew Wilcock	No.	2112