

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

<b>St Matthew's Church of England Nursery &amp; Primary School, Cottenham Park</b>	
Address	Cottenham Park Road, West Wimbledon, London, SW20 0SX
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	Good
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision
St Matthew's is a school where children thrive academically, socially and spiritually, achieving excellence within a caring Christian community. Everything we do is inspired by the school motto, devised by the children: 'Friendship, Discovery, Prayer'. Our biblical grounding is 'Do unto others as you would have them do to you'. (Matt 7.12).
Key findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear and inspiring vision, encapsulated in the motto 'Friendship, Discovery and Prayer' drives everything that happens in this school. This ensures that both adults and pupils are flourishing in all areas of school life.</li> <li>• There are many opportunities for everyone to develop spiritually. Individuals speak powerfully about what it means to them although an agreed, shared understanding of spirituality is yet to be developed.</li> <li>• Great care is taken to ensure that each pupil is treated as a unique individual and their needs met. They have many opportunities to support charitable causes but are not yet initiating action to improve the lives of others.</li> <li>• Collective worship is highly valued by both adults and pupils. They speak powerfully about the impact these times have on them and how it inspires them to action.</li> <li>• Religious education (RE) is well led. Pupils hold informed conversations about a range of faiths and reflect on their own beliefs. However, a deeper understanding of how different beliefs and practices impact on worshippers is less clear.</li> </ul>
Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree a shared understanding of spirituality so that all have opportunities to enhance the spiritual aspects of their lives.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for pupils to initiate social action in the service of others to extend their experience of being agents of change.</li> <li>• Explore ways for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of beliefs and practices on those from a range of religious traditions.</li> </ul>

## Inspection findings

The inspirational vision for all to thrive academically, socially, and spiritually is powerfully lived out in this exceptionally caring and nurturing school. Real efforts were taken to include everyone in the developing of the vision. Parents, governors, staff, and pupils can all talk about what it means to them and how everyone is included. The values of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are skilfully woven into their motto of 'Friendship, Discovery, Prayer'. This means that even the youngest pupils quickly gain an understanding of the vision which is strongly developed as they move through the school. They proudly show their uniform badge to visitors explaining what the symbols represent. Leaders clearly articulate how the vision and values are rooted in a Christian narrative. Governors ensure that the vision is central to all strategic planning, to all decisions made and its impact monitored. Leaders use the vision to develop a cohesive community, united by shared goals. Staff and pupils talk about the vision in their daily school life, including embracing the values as tools to deliver that vision. Strong links with the Diocese ensure that staff and governors continue to improve their practice as church school leaders.

A focus on ensuring the learning needs of each pupil are met through the curriculum is a high priority. This is directly attributed to the vision, enabling all to thrive. Termly 'pupil progress meetings' have a strong focus on the emotional as well as the academic needs of each pupil. This results in all making the best possible progress, despite many challenges. Parents speak passionately about this individualised approach and highly value the strong community feel of the school. One stated 'we are located in London, but this school feels like a village school, with a great family atmosphere'. They particularly appreciate initiatives such as the 'sunshine circle' which provides emotional support in small groups. This is where their children have gained a real 'confidence boost' which has decreased their anxiety. Both adults and pupils speak freely about how they are developing spiritually, especially through collective worship. They are keen to discuss their thoughts and feelings in a clearer way by developing a shared understanding of spirituality.


Everyone in this community is valued for who they are, and pupils speak passionately about including all. Refugees are warmly welcomed and quickly become part of the family. Friendship, underpinned by generosity, kindness and love is the vision's driving force behind this. Powerful examples of this inclusive attitude are apparent. They stated: 'everyone is free to be who they really are'. Pupils behave well, again attributing this to the vision and values. They talk through difficulties which occur and resolve conflicts by referring to the values. Older pupils support younger ones in many ways, such as listening to them read and by reading stories to them. A cohesive programme of learning about and responding to important issues is planned through regularly sharing news items. Pupils record their responses in creative ways and are excited to look beyond themselves, sharing their understanding and insights. This encourages the community to be involved in supporting good causes. Opportunities for pupils to initiate social action are more limited.

Collective worship is very much at the centre of school life. Pupils and adults look forward to taking time out and coming together as a community. Local clergy are an integral part of worship both in school and at the church. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their contributions. A carefully planned programme of worship centres around the vision and values. It also intentionally includes opportunities for stillness and reflection. Pupils are clear that those present are invited to pray or reflect, as their personal views allow. One stated. 'I don't believe in God, but I like to sit quietly and think about what is said'. A group of 'Faith Champions' includes pupils and adults. They are proactive in developing opportunities for reflecting on spiritual aspects of life. For example, through an art project where pupils

decorated large pebbles to illustrate the vision and values. Clergy also serve on the governing body and support many school activities, such as running a lunchtime chess club. Pupils really appreciate this involvement. The church and the school are closely linked.

RE is given a high priority and pupils speak passionately about what they are learning. The curriculum is carefully planned, and staff are well-trained, clearly understanding that children are learning both from and about a range of faiths. Pupils particularly appreciate feedback from teachers who encourage them to explain what they have learned in different ways. Either: three key things learned, how these 'square up' to their own beliefs or what has remained 'circling in their minds'. This innovative approach is having a real impact on how pupils reflect on their learning. Pupils speak knowledgeably about a range of faiths including Sikhism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. However, they are less confident to articulate the impact faith and religious practices may have on different believers and wider society.

In this vibrant, inclusive, and reflective school everyone is cherished and valued for who they are. Families, pupils, and staff appreciate being part of a family which, more widely, includes the local church. Embedded systems ensure that the good practice built up over years continues to support and nurture all members of the community. Leaders take a long-term view and plan carefully for the future, ensuring that everything flows from their vision.

	The effectiveness of RE is		Good
	Through a thoughtfully planned curriculum RE is well-taught. Pupils therefore gain a good understanding of Christianity and a range of world religions. They make good progress overall, including those who are disadvantaged.		
Information			
School	St Matthew's Church of England Nursery & Primary School, Cottenham Park	Inspection date	19 June 2023
URN	102664	VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided
Diocese/District	Southwark	Pupils on roll	196
Headteacher	Julia Warner (Acting)		
Chair of Governors	Elizabeth Broad		
Inspector	Marion Standing	No.	971