

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Matthew's High Brooms Church of England Primary School	
Address	Powdermill Lane, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9DY
School vision	
<p>At St Matthew's we believe that each of us is made in the image of God. God loves every one of us. We value every member of our community, and support them to do their best. "See how very much our father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are!" (1 John 3 v1).</p> <p>Fulfilling God-given potential</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The well embedded Christian vision is clearly lived out by leaders at all levels. This shapes both day to day and strategic decision making. • There is a tangible culture of kindness and focus on wellbeing, treating everyone a unique individual. This ensures all are nurtured within the school. • Collective worship is the heartbeat of the school and community. It provides all with moments of joy, stillness and an impactful opportunity for reflection. • The school is driven by the words of the vision that all are God's children and truly loved. Carefully planned support for pupils, especially those considered to be vulnerable, ensures all have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. • Leaders have implemented a thoughtfully planned religious education (RE) curriculum. It effectively challenges and broadens pupils' understanding of a range of world religions. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance strategic monitoring and self-evaluation of the impact of the school's Christian vision. This is to further strengthen the way it currently drives the work of the school. • Develop and deepen opportunities for courageous advocacy. This is to enable pupils to become more active agents of change in the community and the wider world. • Embed intentional opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum. This is to ensure a consistency of approach for all through a shared language around spirituality. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>St Matthew's is a school driven by the strong desire that everyone is supported to fulfil their God-given potential. Rooted in the teaching from St John's gospel, the vision celebrates that all are special to God. Leaders confidently speak of how the uniqueness and value of every person drives decision making at every level. There is a tangible culture that everyone is a 'child of God' ensuring a focus on the wellbeing of all. School values of respect, honesty, responsibility and kindness are intrinsically woven through the vision. Pupils rightly explain how these values support everyone to thrive. In words and actions, they celebrate their differences as well as recognise each other's strengths. Carefully planned monitoring of school improvement actions provides leaders and governors with evidence of impact and areas for development. However, there is a lack of focus on</p>	

the impact of the vision within this monitoring. This means that governors are not always clear on how this drives all aspects of school improvement. There is, however, absolute commitment in the way staff focus on everyone fulfilling their individual potential.

Leaders ensure that their curriculum supports the flourishing of all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Co-ordinators and leaders' regularly monitor, review and modify the learning on offer. This ensures the broad and varied needs of the pupils are met. There is a strong focus on providing a rich experiences in order to widen horizons. This was evident in the numbers of pupils who talked excitedly about visits to The Lion King and Drusilla's. Numerous opportunities are provided within the curriculum to celebrate difference and diversity. Carefully chosen texts celebrating a range of authors are embedded within the learning. Units of note include the year 6 focus on suffragettes and the year 1 work on notable people across history. This reinforces the vision that all have equal value to God regardless of race, gender or culture.

Wide-ranging extra-curricular activities provide opportunities for pupils to find what they excel at. Class reflection books afford chances to contemplate big questions, ponder on experiences and consider the messages from worship. Staff have worked on developing a shared understanding of and language around spiritual development. 'God's world WOW moments' have been identified across many subject areas. However, this work is not yet embedded across the whole of the curriculum. Partnerships with the church and other organisations provide all year groups with opportunities to tackle issues including plastic pollution and poverty. Pupils are eager to show they care for God's world. However, opportunities to develop their understanding of injustice and to create positive change are limited.

All members of the school community enjoy the sense of togetherness that comes from their uplifting acts of collective worship. Enthusiastic invitational singing from both pupils and staff provide notable moments of joy. 'I wonder' questions along with time for personal thought and stillness, ensure the spiritual flourishing of all. However, the lack of a shared language around spirituality means that some struggle to confidently articulate this. Strong support from the church for collective worship and church visits is valued by all members of the school community. Planning is adapted effectively by all who lead worship. This ensures the vision is lived out through the themes delivered each week. The care shown to those with SEND enables them to access worship. This clearly demonstrates the inclusive nature at St Matthew's. Pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have thought about in worship. They recognise that this positively impacts their actions both at school and home. High quality training from the diocese empowers a growing number of staff as leaders of worship. Pupils from all year groups form the 'Leading Lights' group. They confidently lead opening and closing responses knowing that their role will develop as the academic year progresses. Anglican tradition forms the basis for worship at St Matthew's. Pupils speak confidently about the Christian calendar and demonstrate a deep understanding of the meaning of each season. Leaders use evaluations of collective worship to support improvements in this aspect of school life. However, this is in the early stages of development.

There is an unwavering focus on the uniqueness of the individual as a child of God. This underpins the culture of kindness throughout the school. Pupils' play well together and enjoy collaborating in their learning. The recently introduced 'zones of regulation' provides all pupils with the understanding and language to manage their emotions and behaviour. This is at an early stage but is already having a notable effect. Pupils understand they are cared for and confidently talk about how they can share their worries. They know that someone will help them. Driven by the vision, the strong pastoral team are proactive in their determination that every child will reach their potential. Monthly needs meetings plan out the use of school-funded play therapy, speech and language support, and counselling. Individualised support plans ensure the needs of all pupils, including those who have SEND or are vulnerable, are fully met. Governors and leaders are deeply mindful of



the importance of good wellbeing for everyone. Both groups actively work to achieve this.

RE is valued by staff and pupils alike. The ‘big question’ at the start of each unit provides a focus for idea development. As pupils move through the school, they demonstrate a growing understanding of worldviews. Learning is further enhanced through visits from those with lived experiences of a wide range of religions. Pupils are enthused by their work in RE and eagerly share their learning with their peers and staff. ‘Golden sheets’ at the end of the topic enable them to reflect and share their knowledge. Leaders continually work hard to adapt and improve the curriculum to meet the varying needs of all. Governors, with leaders, are active in their monitoring of RE. This ensures that the curriculum is thoughtfully planned and well-resourced in meeting the needs of all pupils. Leaders access relevant diocesan training which ensures staff have current knowledge in RE. Regular staff development further enhances knowledge and confidence.

The inspection findings indicate that St Matthew’s High Brooms Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	12 October 2023	URN	118709
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary controlled	Pupils on roll	348
Diocese	Rochester		
MAT/Federation			
Interim Headteacher	Carolyn Pollard		
Chair	Karen Stevenson		
Inspector	Sarah Alexander	No.	2108