

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Saint Cecilia's Church of England School, Wandsworth	
Address	Sutherland Grove, London, SW18 5JR
School vision	
<p>'I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.' John 10:10 Our aim is to fulfil the words of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, so that our school community glorifies God through enjoyable and outstanding education.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saint Cecilia's community is united by an aspirational vision which informs strategic decisions and daily life. Dedicated leaders and staff collaborate well for the good of the community. Governors are effective in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the academy's vision. • Saint Cecilia's rich curriculum promotes students' academic, creative and spiritual development. It provides well for vulnerable students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). • Collective worship, supported by rich partnerships and highly effective chaplaincy, enables students and adults to flourish spiritually. • As a result of the vision, behaviour throughout the school is cheerful and courteous. Interactions between adults and pupils are characterised by affirmation and respect. Pupils' understanding of diversity and others' freedom and rights supports harmonious relationships. • Student leadership deeply embeds an ecosystem of participation and mutual support. This boosts students' wellbeing and strengthens their sense of community. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop opportunities for students' positive engagement in social action projects to enhance their advocacy for change nationally, and globally. • Enhance the core religious education (RE) programme in the Sixth Form through deeper exploration of religions and worldviews. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>Saint Cecilia's deeply held Christian vision powerfully drives its strategic direction and daily life. Every policy is grounded with reference to a specifically chosen biblical quotation. Governors have clear processes for evaluating the impact of the vision, drawing upon the views of students, staff and parents. In addition to formal evaluation, governors witness the impact on adults' and students' spiritual life through occasional attendance at worship. Leaders are attentive to staff wellbeing and training, to ensure that they are professionally fulfilled. Parents and carers welcome and speak strongly of the impact of Church school leadership. They offer examples from their own children's experience, such as worship in the community.</p>	

The school's stated aim is to foster and develop the fruit of the Holy Spirit in all those within the school community. The focus on character development is rooted in the values of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Spiritual development embraces the awe and wonder of God in learning, extra-curricular activities, events and workshops. Staff training provides skills for the planning of rich spiritual reflection in authentic subject contexts.

Examples include selecting texts in English to challenge students' thinking on social questions, such as the nature of masculinity. In art, students' work on portraiture helps them explore their understanding of representation of the self. Students appreciate that reflection on their spiritual responses helps their personal development and strengthens their sense of self-worth. Leaders invest in a comprehensive extra-curricular programme, which nurtures students' interests and talents. They experience fulfilment and joy in their individual pursuits and performing with others. The school's ambitious approach to the curriculum boosts staff development through, for example, a teacher innovation group. Nurturing staff expertise demonstrates how they are valued. As they are fulfilled professionally and spiritually, so they are better placed to provide for students.

All are invited to grow spiritually through encountering the person of Jesus through the teachings of the Bible. Students are highly involved in worship through discussions in their mentor groups and interactive assemblies. The chaplain supports house captains and students from different year groups in planning and leading worship. Each house participates in termly 'Worship in the Community'. These strong partnerships offer experience of the diversity of worship found in various denominations of the worldwide Anglican Church. Chaplaincy nurtures spiritual development through Christian Union meetings, student prayers, and 'Bible and breakfast' gatherings that welcome adults and students. Pitched invitationally to meet students' interests and needs, these enrich their spiritual journeys. Extending beyond the school campus, such enrichment includes a youth club at a local church. Assemblies conducted online with clergy in other countries has a deep impact. For example, discussing 'Lent across the world' with them strengthens students' understanding of Christianity as a global religion.

Relationships are harmonious because students' encounters with adults are rooted in mutual respect and dignity. The house system and positions of responsibility enable mixed age friendships, recognised positively by parents and evident in the playground. Shaped by the vision, each student is valued and provided for as a unique child of God. A minority of students have low attendance, which is rightly a strong focus for the school's leaders. They recognise that attendance is key to enabling students to flourish in their learning, socially and spiritually. Leaders pay particular attention to the needs of the most disadvantaged students. They conduct focus groups to understand their perspectives on how they are treated and what they need to thrive. Extensive training enhances teachers' skills in ensuring that the needs of students with SEND are appropriately met. This is strengthened by highly trained specialist staff offering support in wide ranging areas such as mental health, dyslexia and occupational therapy. Personal development programmes enable students to discuss the challenges of living in a complex, diverse society. This includes the impact of social media, in which they consider why issues of identity can be difficult to speak about. As a result, students talk respectfully and debate, teasing out challenges. Such a comprehensive and inclusive approach ensures that vulnerable students and those with SEND flourish at Saint Cecilia's.

Extensive leadership opportunities build a strong culture of participation in the student body. From house captains through prefects to librarians and sports coaching, roles of responsibility enable all to build confidence and character. Roles such as buddy mentor or wellbeing champion provide emotional or personal support to other students. Students are trained for these sensitive roles and understand how to refer to the school's professional support services. This comprehensive leadership programme deeply embeds an ecosystem of students supporting each other. They say, for example, 'everyone brings their own background and culture. It benefits everyone working together.' They recognise the deeper impact on their own development, commenting, 'it makes you socially aware, it makes you appreciative.' Students explore questions of justice and acting courageously through the language of being an 'upstander'. They are taught how important it is to speak up for what is right. As a result, they feel confident in challenging instances of prejudiced behaviour or bullying. Many students' social conscience is developed further through volunteering as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Charitable fundraising provides a further focus for social action. Leaders are building lasting connections with local charities to enable students to make a difference in their local community. Support for local food banks is one example. Experience in taking action to improve the lives of others beyond the locality is mostly gained in the Sixth Form. Leaders correctly identify social action projects nationally and globally as the next step.

RE is planned effectively and taught well, so all students can enjoy success and make positive progress. The Key Stage 3 curriculum enables students to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding. They compare similarities and differences between Christianity, a range of other religions and other worldviews. As a result, they demonstrate a high level of understanding and respect for the beliefs of others. All students in Key Stage 4 study the full GCSE course. Subject leadership is effective, capitalising on collaboration with other schools and support from the diocese. The core RE programme in the Sixth Form has many positive aspects, including further in-depth study of Christianity. However, there is less emphasis on further exploration of religions other than Christianity. Students consider ethical, philosophical and sociological questions alongside religious beliefs, and prepare a formally assessed extended study. This fosters the development of their personal worldviews. Discussions with older students show that they appreciate the breadth of religions, beliefs and worldviews that they study. In this way, RE contributes significantly to the appreciation of diversity and positive culture of this inclusive Church school.

The inspection findings indicate that Saint Cecilia's Church of England School is living up to its foundation as a Church school.

Information			
Inspection date	29 February – 1 March 2024	URN	141808
VC/VA/Academy	Academy	Pupils on roll	1079
Diocese	Southwark		
MAT/Federation			
Headteacher	Renata Joseph		
Chair	James Ewins		
Inspector	Rachel A Jones	No.	2237