



Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Matthew's Church of England VA School & Nursery, Westminster	
Address	16-18 Old Pye Street, London, SW1P 2DG
School vision	
<p style="text-align: center;">‘You are the light of the world.’ (Matthew 5: 14) Belonging Believing Achieving</p> <p>Deeply rooted in our foundation scripture: ‘You are the light of the world’ our mission and aspiration is to create a special space where children shine whilst here and beyond. This conscious creation of a sense of belonging provides safety and self-worth in our nurturing community. Respect, empathy and understanding reflect koinonia – communion and fellowship. Faith underpins all that we do and belief is lived out every day through the great potential we know each and every St Matthew’s child has. Inspiration and dedication ensure they navigate life’s challenges with resilience and grace, empowering them spiritually to grow in wisdom.</p>	
School strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deeply inspired by its Christian vision, St Matthew’s is a welcoming and joyful community. It is a beacon of hope, enabling pupils and adults to flourish and aspire to be the best versions of themselves. • Times of worship are life-affirming and inspire pupils to action. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply. Prayer and reflection are highly appreciated. • As a result of the vision, pupils and adults experience very positive relationships with each other at the school. They respect and celebrate the God-given ‘light’ in each other. • Pupils have a strong sense of what is ethical and just. They seek to ensure that their experiences as pupils, and others around them, are fair. • Religious education (RE) is greatly valued by the school community. The RE curriculum is well planned and allows pupils to engage with a wide range of faiths and worldviews. 	
Areas for development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a rich shared language of spirituality so that pupils and adults can further flourish in their spiritual development. • Embed more opportunities for pupils to develop as independent agents of change and see themselves as global citizens. 	
Inspection findings	
<p>The Christian vision of St Matthew’s Church of England Primary School is life-affirming. Leaders ensure that the values of belonging, believing and achieving are truly lived out. Pupils and adults understand their God-given responsibility in letting their ‘light’ shine and they flourish in doing so. No matter what their starting point, pupils of all abilities achieve and flourish holistically. Their light</p>	

of learning shines bright. Leaders, including governors, are driven by the vision in their decisions. They ensure the taught and wider curriculum is full of rich experiences so that all pupils can flourish. Leaders actively remove barriers that may exist in hindering pupil progress. They ensure that the school's most vulnerable pupils are not left behind by facilitating tailored support for them. These pupils experience and have access to the same learning and enrichment opportunities as their peers. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) flourish particularly well. Adults develop well at this school and see it as a family. They are trained well through continuing professional development. Training sessions such as 'addressing misconceptions' and 'joy and wonder' allow them to support pupils to develop academically and spiritually. Adults and pupils believe that when each shine their light, their individual lights shine brighter and, collectively, this is even more powerful. This then impacts positively on the current and future achievements of all.

Grounded in the vision, the curriculum is aspirational. Pupils learn well together, through play and discussion. This produces fruitful results with pupils achieving well, regardless of their ability. Pupils with sensory needs have specialist intervention to access the same curriculum and they learn well. Adults link learning effectively and cross-curricular planning helps to embed and build on the knowledge pupils acquire. Effective questioning is used by adults to foster pupils' curiosity. 'Big questions' help to develop pupils spiritually and give pupils the space to reflect deeply. A shared language for spirituality, however, is not yet fully developed. There are multiple opportunities to pray and reflect which pupils take advantage of and are enriched by. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as choir, netball and chess clubs. These help pupils to recognise and develop new talents and gifts they may have. Pupils access rich experiences through meaningful partnerships. For example, a Science Fair supported by a local independent school enables pupils to flourish in their learning. Through it, they gain high level knowledge and practical experience in scientific activities. Pupils understand that they make a valuable and unique contribution to society through various trips and visits. Visits to art galleries, Westminster Abbey and singing at the Home Office develop pupils' appreciation of cultural experiences.

Collective worship is highly invitational and allows the community to affirm its Christian vision. Themes explored in worship are age appropriate and encourage pupils to think deeply about questions that develop their spirituality such as: 'Who do I trust?' Pupils are able to see themselves through a biblical lens of being uniquely and wonderfully created by God. Worship is celebratory and inclusive. Prejudice and racism is addressed and tackled effectively through worship, which is proactive as well as responsive. Parents are able to join worship weekly. The school's relationship with the local church is fruitful and further deepens the impact of the vision. The local church offers a great source of spiritual support for the community. As well as providing services at the church, clergy lead Mass each week at the school. This helps pupils understand that, through worship, all spaces can be sacred, not just the church. The Guild of St Nicholas is run to help children deepen their understanding of the Church and its connection to the local community. For example, children are taught how to serve at Mass. This means the church, and its practices, are made inclusive and welcoming for all. Pupils flourish musically through the weekly choir rehearsals led by the choirmaster of St Paul's Cathedral.

As a harmonious reflection of the vision, difference and diversity is actively celebrated at the school. The community takes care of one another. Members of the community feel valued and affirmed as being made in the image of God. A diverse community, the school ensures that representation and appreciation are commonplace. A highlight for the entire school community is the school's International Day. Pupils learn about and from different cultures and traditions which in turn helps to affirm and strengthen their own identity. The most vulnerable members of the school community are nurtured and supported to flourish and overcome any challenges. Pupils have access to art and drama therapy to improve mental wellbeing. Adults are educated with specialist sessions on sleep and wellbeing to improve their physical, emotional and spiritual health. Pupils talk about the benefit

of praying and playing together. They see the ‘light’ of the vision helping them to be joyful and happy instead of being sad and depressed.

The responsibility each member of the community holds for justice and fairness is affirmed by the Christian vision. The school’s ‘Going for Gold’ behaviour system enables pupils to conduct themselves with compassion and fairness, using Christ as the example. Pupils support local causes such as reducing anti-social behaviour and improving conditions for the homeless. Their awareness of the needs of their local community is strong and pupils are passionate about this. Opportunities for pupils to engage in more global focused work as independent agents of change are, however, limited.

RE is a core subject at the school and is a powerful expression of the vision. Teaching and learning in RE is particularly strong and is well led and monitored. Teachers are supported and continuously developed to ensure that pupils receive high level RE provision. Pupils learn about and from a range of world faiths and world views. Their religious literacy is very strong and their engagement with religious texts is confident and meaningful. The use of a whole school biblical timeline raises their biblical knowledge. Pupils are challenged with deep, reflective questions about God and faith. They produce reflective responses in class. Feedback that is given to pupils on their written and verbal responses is specific and personalised. This helps pupils to achieve in ways that surpasses expectations. Assessment is robust and is used effectively to monitor pupils’ progress and inform future planning. Pupil voice is particularly strong in RE. They enjoy discussions and debates. Parents also support the RE curriculum and regularly come in to speak about their faith in lessons. Creativity media are used to consolidate learning in RE. Stories such as creation in Genesis and the Last Supper are brought to life through ‘Godly play’. Pupils see RE as a vehicle of celebration and appreciation of their school’s diverse beliefs. This therefore means that in RE pupils engage with enthusiasm and a marked maturity.

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

Information			
Inspection date	14 March 2024	URN	101138
VC/VA/Academy	Voluntary aided	Pupils on roll	159
Diocese	London		
MAT/Federation			
Executive Headteacher	Sarah Maltese		
Chair	Philip Chester		
Inspector	Andrew Wignall	No.	2118