

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. Matthew's Church of England Primary School			
Address	High St, West Drayton UB7 7QJ		
Date of inspection	05 March 2020	Status of school	Academy inspected as VA. LDBS Frays Academy Trust
Diocese	London	URN	139302

Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Good
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Good
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Good

School context

St. Matthew's is a primary school with 447 pupils on roll. The school population is ethnically diverse with no majority group. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. Along with three denominational schools and two non-denominational schools, the school is part of the Frays Academy Trust.

The school's Christian vision

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

At St Matthew's we enable children to become aspirational citizens. Our curriculum is enhanced by our **deeply Christian ethos**, empowering children and enabling them to flourish. **Worship** is the heart of the school and our **Christian values** teach children to value themselves: they are **courageous advocates** for the Christian message.

Key findings

- The school's leaders are clear about their vision to give the pupils of their community '...a hope and a future' through raising standards of teaching and learning.
- Collective worship is a safe, calm space for pupils to draw closer to God and focus on their spiritual development. Prayer is a real strength of the school.
- In the spirit of enabling pupils and adults 'to prosper', the new leaders are reflective; they face up to difficult situations, they learn from them and they act to improve things.
- Parents recognise that the school's leaders are working to give all pupils a better future. They are positive about recent improvements and particularly about the way that leaders respond quickly and effectively to issues that they raise.
- The RE leader has done much to improve standards of teaching and of learning. It is clear that standards are rising and pupils are flourishing as a result of creative and investigative teaching in the subject.

Areas for development

- In the light of the school's vision that all pupils should have 'a hope and a future', improve teachers' understanding and practice around more challenge and depth for the abler pupils.
- Develop and build a common vocabulary so that pupils can speak confidently about religious and philosophical ideas.
- Use established and new overseas links to deepen pupils' understanding of the diverse and multi-cultural nature of Christianity.

How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

Inspection findings

St. Matthew's school leaders have created a warm, welcoming, church school where everyone, regardless of faith, ability or background, is accepted and loved. In line with their Christian vision, staff work to ensure that all pupils learn to value themselves as God values them; that they all have hope and a future. Parents speak positively about how the school builds confidence, encourages independence and a 'self-starting attitude'. This is because staff know the pupils well and believe everyone is worthy of their time and effort. Parents recognise the school has recently undergone difficult times and significant changes in leadership. However, they are extremely positive about recent changes, especially about how the current Head of School responds quickly and effectively to concerns and comments.

Staff morale is high despite recent changes. They feel well supported and valued by leaders. They are confident to express their views to school leaders and feel that feedback is very much a 'two-way thing'. Being part of a multi-academy trust (MAT) provides them with helpful networking and staff wellbeing opportunities. Adults flourish and so do the pupils.

School leaders constantly monitor how their distinctively Christian vision, illustrated by a verse from Jeremiah, places 'a hope and a future' at the centre of the community. Relationships with a range of local and global partners stem from this. For example, in order to give the school 'a hope for the future', the new leadership team access very effective diocesan training. Mutually beneficial links with Kamwezi School in Uganda have taught staff and pupils about social and economic similarities and differences between the schools. Now, leaders need to use international links with Christian organisations to deepen pupils' understanding of the diverse and multi-cultural nature of Christianity.

The trust's distinctively Christian vision also shapes the curriculum. Leaders have taken the bold decision to incorporate spiritual reflection into the weekly timetable. This time, through which Christian values are threaded seamlessly, is integral to learning and questioning across the curriculum. Pupils appreciate this because: 'it is calm', they can 'really think deeply' about current affairs, issues affecting the school or even 'about how grateful we should be for everything we have'. A wide range of extra-curricular activities give pupils the opportunity to flourish both academically and also through sport and creative activities. Vibrant learning displays in classrooms and corridors celebrate the rich, and distinctively values based, curriculum. Values are taught about in lessons, referred to during collective worship and spoken about, often, by pupils, staff and parents alike. The impact is seen in pupils' very positive behaviour and relationships with one another. In national assessments, outcomes, particularly for more-able pupil are not sufficiently strong. In order for all pupils to have the best possible hope and future, the school's leaders need to improve outcomes for more-able pupils. Parents of pupils with special educational needs speak passionately about how pupils are welcomed and loved by adults and pupils alike and well supported in their development. One parent stated '... with all his quirks, he is not tolerated by the community, he is a loved and central part of the community.' Bullying is rare; parents say this is because pupils are taught to embrace difference and to respect each other. It is also because school leaders respond quickly and effectively to concerns raised by parents.

St. Matthew's is a calm, harmonious Christian community. Behaviour is excellent because pupils know and use Christian friendship and forgiveness in daily life. They treat others respectfully, regardless of difference, and consider each other's feelings. Pupils explain their responsibilities to each other, easily using the language of Christian values. Staff see it as an unequivocal part of their role to model the standards that they expect pupils to develop and display. For example, personally welcoming every child, every morning, by name and a with a handshake. Attendance is very good because pupils enjoy attending school. Pupils learn about disadvantage and deprivation, at home and abroad through their curriculum studies, worship and reflection times. Learners clearly feel gratitude for what they have but also empathy for others less fortunate. Compassion spurs them to do what they can so others have 'a hope and a future'. Pupil initiated fundraising activities support a range of charities and are a common feature of school life. Recently, the school raised money for a partner school in Uganda to buy their first laptop.

Daily collective worship is a real strength of the school. Understanding that pupils' lives today are busy and chaotic, leaders have taken highly effective steps to ensure that worship is a calm, safe place for pupils to explore their spirituality. As a result, pupils say that they 'love' the sense of peace that daily worship brings. During worship, pupils are highly engaged, enthusiastic and happy to share their thoughts. They clearly understand the messages behind the stories they hear. They talk about how teaching values such as 'hope' helps them in their

work and how 'forgiveness' assists them in day-to-day friendships. Worship, led by a variety of clergy and staff, enables pupils to experience a range of Anglican practices. Every act of worship is distinctly Christian in character, deepens theological understanding and provides participants time to reflect on how it will impact their daily lives. For example, one boy talked about arguing with his friend. He remembered the messages about forgiveness from collective worship and made a conscious, if difficult, decision to forgive rather than fight. Whilst students speak enthusiastically about their thoughts, they do not always have the vocabulary to discuss intangible, theological and philosophical ideas such as the trinitarian nature of God. Adults say that they benefit from collective worship at school and from joint collective worship opportunities for all staff within the MAT. Worship is planned and monitored by staff, clergy and a highly effective team of RE Explorers. This team of pupils also help prepare the hall for worship and act as role models and encouragers.

Pupil's good progress in religious education (RE) is evidenced in written work and oral responses. The RE leader monitors thoroughly using observations, book-scrutiny and cross-checking of standards. This monitoring ensures that all pupils are experiencing creative and challenging RE and, as a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. He has benefitted from diocesan training and provides informed and valued support to colleagues. Through RE, pupils develop a good awareness of diversity through the study of major world faiths and have a very good knowledge of Christianity. RE contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Statutory obligations for RE are met and leaders ensure the subject has a high profile.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

Teaching and learning in RE is consistently good. Using available data and looking at examples of pupils' written work, attainment is at least in line with other subjects within the school. This has been developed through the use of new resources and staff training. Lessons are creative and engaging, teacher's subject knowledge is secure allowing for big questions to be explored. Pupils express their views and opinions in a safe and secure environment.

Headteacher

Lisa Barr

Inspector's name and number

Jan Matthews 855