

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

All Saints' Academy, Cheltenham

Address Blaisdon Way, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 0W

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	Excellent
The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Good

School's vision

We serve as a beacon of hope. Founded on a Christian vision for Cheltenham and with the Diocese of Gloucester, we provide excellence in learning, achievement and fulfilment for all so that every member of our extended family realises their God-given potential, inspired by John 10:10. Jesus said, 'I have come so you may have life in all its fullness'.

Key findings

- All Saints' Academy welcomes all students and provides for them holistically, leading them to experience, as the academy's vision states, 'life in all its fullness'.
- Inspirational and relentless leadership produces creative partnerships with a wide range of organisations. These partnerships lead to students thriving in many areas of their lives.
- The academy's vision is lived out practically through its associated values and is tellingly reinforced through collective worship. The daily academy prayer is a focus for unity across the academy and is an effective reminder of the importance of the vision and the values.
- Adults in the academy are role models and have a tangible impact on individual students and on the functioning of a cohesive community.
- There has been much progress in the provision of Religious Education (RE) recently through clear leadership, curriculum development and student engagement. Students are not so aware of the development of the Christian Church worldwide.

Areas for development

- To produce an academy-wide working definition of spiritual development and to explore opportunities to raise student confidence in articulating their understanding of spirituality both for themselves and for others.
- To widen the opportunities across the curriculum and in collective worship to develop student understanding of and engagement with the implications of the exploitation of the natural world and the value of stewardship.
- Ensure that the RE curriculum covers the development of the Christian Church so that students achieve a deeper understanding of Christianity as a living world faith.

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

All Saints' Academy is a real source of hope for its students and for the local community. The vision of 'life in all its fullness' drives the academy forward in its particular service to the disadvantaged and is aspirational for both students and adults. Students in all years talk movingly about how the academy is giving them positive life choices and how their expectations of themselves are constantly being raised. The vision galvanises staff into 'going the extra mile'. This was particularly seen in the response to the pandemic when staff looked after the bodies, minds and souls of students and families in the academy and in the community. The academy did many surveys to ensure families were confident with its online learning provision. Staff delivered food parcels and produced collective worship which helped bind the community together. The admissions policy prioritises the local community, meaning that the academy is using its Christian vision to inspire many students who have not had contact with a vibrant faith previously.

The vision is lived out practically through its associated values of love, service, respect, reconciliation, justice and peace. Leaders apply each of these in guidelines for everyday life in the academy and beyond. Students talk confidently of how respect, for example, leads to students debating well in class and to understanding how those of faith and no faith can contribute to worship. Transgender students feel proud of their identity as a result of being respected for who they are. Peace is reinforced by liturgical call and response at the start of lessons. Students and staff are sure that this contributes to calm and focused classrooms.

Collective worship is fundamental to furthering the understanding and application of the vision. Staff and students are invited to recite the academy prayer at least once per day. This reminds all in the community that commitment to Christian values is a daily engagement. Staff look out for students demonstrating values in and out of the classroom and record these on large displays which, in turn, inspire other students. To demonstrate further the Christian vision in action, all students have the chance to achieve a 'Bishops' Award' each year. This gives students challenges that include leading collective worship and demonstrating school values. The awards ceremony, even held virtually during the pandemic, is the public acknowledgment of the efforts of students, encouraged by adults and is a real source of pride. It demonstrates well how Gloucester Diocese and the academy are mutually supportive.

The principal gives inspirational leadership to the academy and is passionate about knowing and assisting students and staff. Governors and school leaders are similarly enthusiastic about their roles and the difference they can make. Many partnerships are key to the academy's successes. Collaborating with an independent school broadens the range of opportunities open to academy students, such as in extending the curriculum. Academy staff also benefit as they share their good practice, for example on how they identify and respond to the pastoral needs of students. The academy shows genuine hospitality in its extended hours of community use and in offering its chapel, and music, for services.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and staff are effective at challenging and supporting students of all abilities. All students who want to study beyond Year 11 are welcomed and creative solutions for appropriate courses are always found. The Life Centre gives structure to those who particularly need it and skilled assistance is always available. The Life curriculum enables students to reflect meaningfully on the academy's vision and values in the context of their own personal, moral and social development.

Spiritual development is taken seriously across the curriculum but there is not a simple definition of spirituality that all share. Spiritual development is sometimes misunderstood as the same as faith development. Students are not so confident in articulating orally the various elements of spirituality they meet in the academy.

Students can develop their talents, in line with the academy's vision, through an emphasis on the performing arts. Students are passionate about the environmental crisis and show good awareness of the perspectives of Geography, Science and RE. There are further opportunities to be taken to enable students to engage with these issues and to deepen their understanding of the value of stewardship.

The values of love and service prompt a deep sense of compassion. Students and adults engage willingly in social action and charitable giving. The academy's vision effectively promotes strong relationships, a sense of belonging and

respectful behaviour. The term 'family' is used by many to emphasise the intention and the practices of the academy. Students recognise that sometimes wrong choices are made. They are aware that justice, forgiveness and reconciliation are exercised in the academy. Leaders invest well in emotional wellbeing. Supportive interventions for pupils and families are having a positive impact. The chaplains offer a welcomed 'open door' policy for students and staff.

Collective worship gives life daily to the academy. It is very varied, accessible to all but with depth as well. Imaginative chaplains make the most of the chapel, called the 'backbone' of the academy by a new post-16 student, and lead worship with skill and clarity. Students respond well, acknowledging that worship is highly appropriate for them as it is contemporary in theme and it provides good space for prayer and reflection. The chaplains, leadership team and visiting clergy help students and adults to learn about and to learn from the marking of Christian festivals. There are nearly 150 skilled student worship leaders who lead extended worship in tutor groups, assemblies and in places outside the academy. They, along with the chaplains, leadership team and governors constantly monitor and evaluate collective worship. Most importantly, all students, through their Life journals, reflect on the impact of worship each week. Adults flourish through the academy's programme of worship, which also includes a variety of opportunities for prayer, teaching, Eucharist and reflection in the chapel and in the staffroom.

Inspired by the academy's vision, the subject leader of RE and her team have enabled much improvement over recent years. They use the locally agreed syllabus as a starting point and add suitable material to reflect the school's vision and to extend student skills. School leaders monitor the subject's effectiveness well and offer practical encouragement, including generous resourcing. World faiths are taught sensitively. Students consider their classrooms to be safe spaces where all views are respected and where they develop their discussion skills. Student interest in the challenging GCSE and A-level topics is high and the staff choose stimulating learning resources. Students are not so certain in lower years about the global nature of the Christian Church and do not always understand the context of key Bible teachings.



The effectiveness of RE is Good

At all Key Stages, students make good progress due to consistently good or better teaching and clarity of expectation in written tasks. Tasks are helpfully structured and are appropriate to age and ability. Consistent challenge and support to improve are hallmarks of every classroom. Students enjoy their learning. Staff have created an RE curriculum particularly suited to the school's context and which also prepares students well for life in wider society in the future.

Contextual information about the school

Date of inspection	09 and 10 November 2021	URN	306016
Date of previous inspection	22 and 23 May 2013		
School status	Single Academy Trust	NOR	999
Name of MAT/Federation	n/a		
Diocese	Gloucester		
Headteacher	Mr Dermot McNiffe		
Pupil profile	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 above with national averages.		
Additional significant information	The Academy is now solely sponsored by the Diocese of Gloucester and, since September 2020, is under a new funding agreement.		
Inspector's name	Simon Stevens	No.	953