

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Saint Cecilia's, Wandsworth Church of England Voluntary Aided School

Sutherland Grove

London

SW18 5JR

**Diocese: Soutwark**

LA: Wandsworth

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> January 2006

School's Unique reference number: 132173

Headteacher: Mr Jeffrey Risbridger

Inspector's name and number: Ms Jan Thompson 92

#### School context

Saint Cecilia's, Wandsworth is a new Voluntary Aided Church of England secondary school in the Diocese of Southwark. It opened in September 2003 with 150 Year 7 boys and girls, and has grown year on year. Currently it has 450 pupils, who are drawn from the local area and primarily from the Anglican deaneries of Battersea, Tooting and Wandsworth. It is heavily oversubscribed and fills its 100 foundation places each year with students from the Church of England. The school specialises in music and is named after Saint Cecilia, the patron saint of music. Built on the site of the old Wandsworth Boys School in Southfields, it has excellent facilities, including a beautiful school chapel and specialist accommodation for music. The recent Ofsted report judged it to be a good school with outstanding provision for pupils' personal development.

#### Summary Judgement

Saint Cecilia's, Wandsworth is an outstanding Church of England Secondary school. The school has made an excellent start as a new Church of England school, having many good systems in place and others that are in the process of development.

#### Established strengths

- The Christian ethos that underpins the whole life of the school and values each individual
- The important status of Collective Worship and Religious Studies
- The many opportunities for spiritual development
- The support for the Church status of the school, led by the Head Teacher and Chairman of Governors

#### Focus for development

- A new RE syllabus should be developed for the school.
- Assessment levels should be fully used to promote high standards in Religious Studies.

#### How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners outstandingly. Grade 1

The school is a very friendly, caring Christian community that values the uniqueness of each individual 'as a person made in the image of God' (*school prospectus*). It therefore upholds high standards in everything that it does, and strives to give pupils and adults the best opportunities for their fulfilment as human beings, including their spiritual development. Of particular note is the school's mentoring system whereby adults, both teachers and support staff, take pastoral responsibility for just ten pupils throughout their school life. Behaviour in the school is excellent: adults and pupils treat each other with respect, accepting differences and disabilities. The population of the school is multi-cultural with ten per cent Muslims, who particularly like the school for its religious character and make use of the school chapel, where there is a carpeted section for prayer. The school building is simple and uncluttered, and the few Christian symbols around the school have been carefully chosen and strategically placed.

**What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?**

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding. Grade 1 Christian worship is given a high profile in the life of the school, with a formal act of worship to conclude each school day. Of particular note is the fact that all pupils and all staff, including support staff, attend this daily worship, and both staff and pupils lead it. Pupils and staff respond very well to opportunities for worship and quiet reflection. The voluntary Eucharists are well attended by pupils and staff; and regular prayer-groups before school enable staff and parents to bring before God the particular needs of the school community. The clergy on the governing body give good support to the worship of the school, particularly the chairman of governors and the newly appointed worship co-ordinator. She ensures that the school's weekly worship themes are supported with biblical passages so that the Christian teaching is always clear. She also involves the clergy from the three local deaneries in school worship, so that there is a helpful link between pupils' home churches and the school. She is also developing her ministry within the school, along with other members of staff and youth leaders who run Christian groups.

**How effective is the religious education?**

The religious education is good. Grade 2 Religious Studies (RS) is taken seriously by pupils and is a popular subject that contributes to their academic and spiritual development. Pupils like the interesting range of activities and resources used in lessons, but would like more visits and visitors. They respond well to opportunities to explore their own beliefs and values in an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect. The teacher has a good knowledge of religions so that she explains them very well; and pupils appreciate the importance of learning about their neighbours' religions. Good progress is made across Key Stage 3, especially in Year 9 where pupils have 2 hours of RS a week. Indications at this stage in the school year are that standards will generally be above average at the end of the key stage. However, lower and higher attainers are not always given work that enables them to achieve their full potential. Assessment is underdeveloped: not enough use is made of level descriptions, either by the teacher in planning or the pupils in self-assessment. The school plans to develop its RS syllabus now that it has a full-time RS subject leader and with the imminent introduction of GCSE courses. This is an ideal time for it, since the local agreed syllabus is being revised in line with the new National Framework for RE and there is new Church of England advice on RE syllabuses. This is an opportunity to ensure that there is suitable emphasis on Christianity and on Islam as the second religion represented in the school.

**How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?**

The leadership and management of the school, as a church school, are outstanding. Grade 1 The Head Teacher is an outstanding Christian leader of this school. Supported by the Chairman of Governors on behalf of the governing body, he is very focused in his promotion of the distinctiveness of this school as a Christian community that reflects the broad traditions of the Church of England represented in the school. He maintains good links with The National Society for Church of England schools, Southwark Diocese and the local deaneries. He values school worship and gives good support to Religious Studies, which ensures that both are taken seriously by everyone. The governing body is fully supportive of the church foundation of the school, but now needs to appoint a link governor for Religious Studies so that it takes more active responsibility for the syllabus and produces a more informative policy statement on it.