

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### Derby Cathedral School

#### Vision

Derby Cathedral School is a Christian community that welcomes students, families and visitors of all faiths and none. The diversity and richness of such a family brings depth and a vibrancy to our core.

Students of Derby Cathedral School are given every opportunity and challenged to be the best that they can be, demonstrating FAITH in all they do.

**Fellowship, Aspiration, Integrity, Tenacity, Humility.**

All students will be well prepared for their next step into future education, training and employment. They will be happy, healthy, confident, life-long learners who 'experience life in all its fullness.' (John 10:10)

Derby Cathedral School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Notable Strengths

- Compassionate leaders ensure that the Christian vision drives decision-making, is inclusive and serves the community well. Leaders are deeply committed to ensuring that students and staff are enabled to experience 'life in all its fullness.'
- The broad curriculum has been carefully developed to provide rich experiences. This includes for students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are deemed vulnerable and disadvantaged. This reflects the school's vision and purpose.
- Underpinned by the vision, leaders have established a cohesive community where students and adults are treated with kindness and respect. It is a dignifying, equitable and nurturing environment.
- The school promotes the importance of justice and responsibility. This is evident in the school's partnerships that enrich provision and in the ways students demonstrate leadership and care.
- The high-quality religious education (RE) curriculum comprehensively explores a wide range of faiths, fostering respect for others. It thoughtfully equips students with an understanding of beliefs and worldviews.

#### Development Points

- Extend the opportunities in collective worship for students to experience a wider variety of ways in which worship is celebrated. This is so that students and staff are consistently given rich, inspirational provision that enables further spiritual growth.
- Deepen the whole school understanding of spirituality, so that students and adults are confident in discussing it. This is so that opportunities for spiritual development are not missed.



## Inspection Findings

### Vision and Leadership

Derby Cathedral School is driven by its values. It is an aspirational community where students and staff are enabled to flourish. Supported by the trust, leaders model integrity and care, enhancing outcomes. The Christian vision, aligned with that of the trust, is well understood and embedded in policy and practice. Through monitoring and evaluation, reflective leaders and governors ensure that the school's Christian foundation compassionately and robustly serves the community. This is so that staff and students experience 'life in all its fullness.' Leaders are committed to ensuring that the school is an inclusive and welcoming community. Thoughtful provision is made so that those who are deemed vulnerable and those who are disadvantaged are carefully supported. This means that they thrive. Students recognise and appreciate the care they receive. The 'faith' values shape school culture and experiences. Students understand and live out the values, appreciating how they contribute to their growth. The vision brings cohesion to the staff body, driving their purpose and commitment to the school community.

### Vision and Curriculum

Reflecting the school's foundation and purpose, the vision underpins the taught curriculum and wider curricular experiences. The care and provision for students who have SEND means these students are given the bespoke support they need to thrive. Well trained and informed specialist staff provide care and intervention. The additional provision for students whose home language is not English (EAL) demonstrates how proactive leaders remove barriers to learning. The focus on equity impacts students' learning experiences positively. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) days, culture day and the 'endeavour programme' are examples of the broad learning opportunities. These inspire curiosity. Clubs such as drama, debating and the bicycle repair club add richness. Music is an important part of school life and supports spiritual flourishing through learning an instrument and singing. The curriculum includes some planned references to spiritual development and staff have taken part in training on spirituality. However, the concept of spirituality is not widely understood by the school community. Therefore, opportunities for spiritual reflection are not always explored.

### Worship and Spirituality

Collective worship is inclusive and invitational. Year group collective worship is planned around the school values, supported through a Bible verse, spiritual reflection and prayer. Students are engaged during worship and recognise how it helps them reflect on their lives. However, it does not include enough variety, such as singing, drama, responsive liturgy and Bible stories. Additionally, there are few opportunities for students to play an active part in the year group collective worship. As a result, it is not always engaging enough. Form time worship for Key Stages 3 and 4, includes a new 'faith in focus' programme with opportunity for discussion. Daily collective worship at Key Stage 5 is well planned and sequenced to support students' spiritual development. This is as a result of them completing reflective booklets, which provide opportunities for engagement reinforcing the school's faith values. These worship times, underpinned by the school values, include topical discussion, reflection and prayer. Partnerships with the trust, Derby cathedral and the diocese enhance the collective worship provision. For example, students take leadership roles, reading, performing and singing at the cathedral. Year groups have the opportunity to worship at the cathedral annually. The school has a good relationship with local churches and this further contributes to the faith life of the school.

### Vision and School Culture

Leaders have worked to ensure that the school culture and ethos is inclusive, welcoming and affirming. The emphasis on consistency in good behaviour and courtesy is evident in the calm way students enter and move around school. Positive student behaviour is reinforced by staff in a kind and supportive manner. Students



experience a clear sense of community and belonging, this is reflected in the high level of attendance. The faith values underpin pastoral care. The school's behaviour points system further supports this. These help students develop confidence and supports their personal growth. Care for those who are disadvantaged is a priority, for example, through the free breakfast programme. The vision of the school is clearly lived out in the way it provides for students who have SEND. Leaders have focused on removing barriers so that these students are given the right support. Staff are ambitious for students to succeed. Thoughtful and at times bespoke adaptations are made to provide support for those who face challenging circumstances. There is significant pastoral support and provision for emotional wellbeing such as through one-to-one support. One student said 'we are all equally valued and cared for.' Leaders have made careful provision to offer prayer spaces for those of other faiths, for example, during Ramadan. Staff feel appreciated because of the kindness of proactive leaders and recognise the care shown for their wellbeing. Underpinned by the vision, the supportive ethos of compassion and understanding means that they are enabled to thrive. This includes support for their professional development, enabling them to flourish in their roles.

#### Vision, Justice and Responsibility

As a result of the vision, the school is outward-looking, actively engaging in partnerships and committed to serving the community. The curriculum offers many opportunities to explore justice. Students are encouraged to develop their thinking and articulate their opinions. Sixth form students undertake the 'endeavour programme'. This project deepens their understanding of justice while developing their leadership confidence and personal growth. The inclusive culture of the school means that injustice and inequality are carefully addressed so that differences are respected. Students have a strong sense of responsibility and the need to care for others. They willingly take on leadership roles in school. They are empowered to give their time fundraising, donating and supporting local charities. This includes raising money for those less fortunate and donating supplies to the local food bank. For example, the Year 12 Christmas fair raised money for those in need. The school works carefully with outside agencies to further enrich cultural and spiritual experiences. This includes working with local churches and Christian groups to provide a deeper level of care for students. Partnerships beyond the school, with the cathedral, the diocese and other church schools, positively and reciprocally benefit the school.

#### Religious Education

The RE curriculum provides stimulating and challenging opportunities for students to deeply engage with and ask 'big questions.' RE is tailored to the school's context and is well planned. The breadth and effectiveness of the curriculum include a high level of critical thinking, oracy and literacy. As a result, students understand and respect those who hold differing beliefs. At Key Stage 4, all students complete the RE short course GCSE. The Key Stage 5 core RE content, written by the department, is meaningful, relevant and challenging. The department has forged positive partnerships with national organisations and other networks to strengthen the curriculum. This is supported by visitors to the school, conferences and external visits that enrich the provision. The training and development of staff has a positive impact on the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Assessment is used well in RE. Feedback given to students is clear, specific and moves students forward in their learning. Careful teacher questioning enables them to think critically about the topic studied. Supported by the trust and the diocese, leaders monitor RE effectively. This strengthens the provision and profile of the subject. Students are engaged and inquisitive. They are challenged to think deeply while reflecting on their own beliefs and respecting the views of others.

## Information

Address	Great Northern Road, Derby, Derbyshire. DE1 1LR		
Date	02 March 2026 and 03 March 2026	URN	143734
Type of school	Free School Academy	No. of pupils	1155
Diocese	Derby		
MAT	Derby Diocesan Academy Trust		
MAT Chair	Sarah Charles		
Headteacher	Andrew Brown		
Chair of Governors	Zoe Nye		
Inspector	Claire Gibson		