

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Christ Church Church of England Primary School

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| Batten Street Battersea London SW11 2TH | |
| Current SIAMS inspection grade | Good |
| Diocese | Southwark |
| Previous SIAS inspection grade | Good |
| Local authority | Wandsworth |
| Name of multi-academy trust/federation | N/A |
| Date of inspection | 17 January 2017 |
| Date of last inspection | 20 March 2012 |
| Type of school and unique reference number | Voluntary Aided 101035 |
| Headteacher | Colette Morris |
| Inspector's name and number | Imogen Woods Quality assurance assessor: Jo Fageant 104 |

School context

Christ Church C of E Primary is a smaller than average, voluntary aided Church of England school for pupils aged 3 – 11. The school serves the parish of Christ Church and St Stephen's Battersea. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress. The school has higher than the national average proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, from minority ethnic groups and for pupils with English as an additional language.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Christ Church as a Church of England school are good

- The school has an organic and ongoing sense of developing spirituality; it promotes Christian values and is welcoming to all. As a consequence, learners are confident in expressing their own beliefs.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors are committed to collective worship which is informed by distinctive, Christian values which contribute to the good behaviour and attitudes of all learners.
- Parents speak positively about the impact prayer has on the lives of their children and of the way staff guide and support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a consequence, learners are open and welcoming to others aware that they belong to a local, national and global community.
- The school enjoys close links with Christ Church and St Stephen's Church. This leads to strong relationships between the school and its families which enable new families to be made welcome.

Areas to improve

- Finalise, share and promote a revised version of the school's overall vision. Ensure that, in addition to reflecting the school's excellent focus on outdoor learning, it expresses this as explicitly Christian and that it informs all policy and practice.
- Ensure all relevant stakeholders are involved in the process of monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship and religious education (RE) in order to inform continuing improvement.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is good at meeting the needs of all learners

The school encourages learning and spiritual development through monthly Christian values. These values make a significant impact on the members of the school community. Learners understand that the school's values are Christian and are linked to the teachings from the Bible. They have a good understanding that these values are important to Christians. The values, mission and strapline of the school are currently in development as leaders finalise a revised version of the school's overall vision. Subsequently, it is not yet possible to measure the impact that aligning the mission, values and new concept of 'GROW' will have on learners' achievement and daily lives. Learners, particularly in older years, make links between cultures, backgrounds and religions and can see how their learning affects their own beliefs and is applied within their faith. This is especially evident through the school's approach to gardening. As a Royal Horticultural Society level 5 school and members of the Gold LOtC Learning Outside the Classroom Award, learners make links between creation, caring for the environment and considering others in the wider community. The whole school community lives a life where the 'small details' make significant differences. A good example is the choice of peace lily as one of the plants used inside the school which "when cared for is quick to recover". This comment speaks volumes of the headteacher's embedded passion that all learners see how acts of kindness and compassion to others do make a difference. Vines have been planted to represent those who have passed on, prayer plaques hang from trees. These all reflect the sense of spirituality and the organic nature in which the community grows ideas and learning opportunities. These opportunities include learning in a perfume garden and visiting the school's own 'Secret Garden'. As a result of regular opportunities to pray and reflect, learners can talk about their personal sense of growing spirituality. One learner describes loving gardening because "you can explore so many things with God" and another says she learns about "all God's creatures". Due to careful planning, learners behave well and relationships between all members of the school community reflect the distinctively Christian values. Learners universally agree that RE and the wider curriculum are exciting and are challenging. It is clear that RE makes a significant impact on the lives of the learners' SMSC development and plays a major role in shaping the Christian character of the school. Lessons benefit from having learners who are from different cultural and spiritual backgrounds. As a result, learners embrace difference and are well aware of the diversity present in the church and of other faith communities. The school's approach to attendance is based on Christian principles of truth and love. It ensures that over time families are able to engage in committing to improved attendance for their children.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Learners speak very positively about their experiences of worship and as a result they are able to talk readily of the impact it has on their day to day lives. Learners are actively involved in worship, joining in with dramas, songs and regular signed prayers. They talk of how collective worship helps them feel calm and how they love to sing together every day. Learners respond well to songs, prayers and stories from the Bible. Collective worship includes teaching about the person of Jesus Christ. Learners' have an understanding, through collective worship, of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They make links between the stories told from the Bible and the distinctively Christian values which are introduced each month in a range of ways including in lessons throughout the school. These monthly Christian values play a strong role in developing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural lives of the learners. The school works within a distinctively Anglican framework which follows the liturgical church year. Following this framework, as well as joining in with opening prayers, lighting of a candle and whole school prayers leads to a worshipful atmosphere for all. The regular attendance of parents at worship supports the school's assertion that it is a worshipping community. The importance given to prayer is demonstrated by the way learners use the prayer bear in each classroom to create their own prayers which are then stored and displayed around the school. Learners lead their own class worship regularly. By participating in harvest, Easter, Eucharist services and nativities celebrated in Christ Church and St Stephen's Church, learners develop an understanding of Anglican traditions. Although planning is carried out with care, there is as yet, no regular monitoring and evaluation of impact by all stakeholders, to inform an ongoing journey of improvement.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The school's RE curriculum benefits from the enthusiasm, commitment and energy of the subject leader. She works well with senior leaders, governors and the wider staff team to secure improvement in teaching and learning through her good awareness of current diocesan and national initiatives. This has enabled professional development opportunities and well-placed support from diocesan advisors to ensure that teachers are able to ensure that learners make good progress. Consequently RE is well planned and teaching is good, with some being outstanding. Pupils express their learning through a broad range of creative activities including dance, art and role play. At their best these activities combine enjoyment with academic challenge. Visits to the local church, the mosque and synagogue add meaning, context and inspiration. RE weeks ensure that learners engage with and enjoy RE topics through a range of other subjects. Without exception, learners talk enthusiastically about their learning. They ask lively questions demonstrating their ability to apply a range of skills. They make good links between their understanding of Christianity, teaching from the Bible and the beliefs, cultures and practices of other faiths. They demonstrate a good understanding of the religions they study. Furthermore, they are able to talk about the similarities and differences between their own beliefs and the beliefs of others from different faiths. In these ways RE makes a strong contribution to learners SMSC development and provides a context for exploring the school's Christian values. The school is in the process of introducing the new Southwark diocesan RE syllabus. This and its associated assessment system are not yet fully embedded to provide a coherent learning journey across the school. Information about pupils' progress and attainment is in a state of experimentation and transition. However, indications are that standards in RE compare well with and in some cases exceed those of other key subjects.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

Leaders are able to articulate and promote the school's vision 'Believe, Achieve, Succeed' and its mission, which is based on distinctively Christian values. Not all leaders are as yet aware of the revisions being made to the vision to take account of the school's focus on outdoor learning. However, leaders do have a good overall understanding of the school's performance and use this to establish strategies which bring about improvement. The focus of these initiatives is the leaders' commitment to each individual learner. However, documentary records of self-evaluation do not convey a full analysis of the impact of the school's Christian vision on the outcomes for learners. Leaders have ensured that collective worship, RE and many aspects of the wider curriculum are informed by the distinctive Christian values. This contributes well to the behaviour of learners and further develops their SMSC development. Parents speak very positively about the school. They contribute in many ways and are able to describe times when leaders have been instrumental in supporting their children. One significant example was of how the headteacher helped learners resolve a disagreement about religious beliefs. The learners come from a range of religious and cultural backgrounds. The school's 150th anniversary enabled it to celebrate this diverse community. A timeline which highlighted changes for learners and their families from around the world enabled learners to understand their place in the history of the area and to learn more about the wide range of cultures their community is built upon. This led to learners feeling rightly proud of their own backgrounds, cultures and religions and confident to talk about their local, national and global identities. Projects like this are common in the school and there are clear benefits to the learners. The local church contributes significantly to the life of the school which results in its very clear identity. Clergy and senior leaders all agree that "you can't avoid knowing this is a church school" and that "we welcome everyone whatever religion you are and if you don't have a faith; everyone is welcomed". This openness to others through the Christian mission of 'loving one another' is felt throughout the school. Leaders have carefully planned opportunities to develop the staff and governors at the school. They have, for example, liaised with the diocese which has been supportive in the process of launching a new RE syllabus. The leadership of collective worship and RE is given high priority. Support is offered by the chair of governors who is also the parish priest through planning and reframing acts of collective worship. Worship is being developed and reviewed regularly which helps leaders ensure current good practice is maintained. The school meets the statutory requirements for both religious education and collective worship.