

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's CE Primary School

Felsham Road, Putney, London. SW15 1BA

Current SIAMS inspection grade

Outstanding

Diocese

Southwark

Previous SIAS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Wandsworth

Date of inspection

29 November 2017

Date of last inspection

November 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

VA 101046

Headteacher

Cheryl Payne

Inspector's name and number

Shaun Burns 808

School context

St Mary's is a one form voluntary aided primary school with nursery in Putney. There are 251 pupils on roll, 45% from minority ethnic groups. The school's deprivation indicator is below the national average, with a low number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The number with special educational needs and disability is just below the national average. Whilst 20 languages are represented, the % of pupils with English as an additional language is also slightly lower. The majority of the pupils are Christian whilst a few are from other faiths or no faith. The parish church currently has an interregnum.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Mary's as a Church of England school are outstanding.

- A deeply Christian faith underpins everything the school does; the whole school community articulates the positive difference this makes.
- All leaders share and realise an unwavering ambition, deeply rooted in distinctively Christian values. This has a significant and positive impact on every pupil, so developing their potential as a 'whole being'.
- The effective and enthusiastic leadership of the Religious Education (RE) subject leader impacts positively on standards in RE and the Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- The preciousness of diversity is embraced; ensuring pupils develop profound respect and understanding of difference, believing all are created in God's image.
- A strong partnership with the parish offers pupils a meaningful experience of worship and prayerfully and pastorally supports the school.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the school's mission statement more fully reflects the highly developed, deeply Christian distinctiveness of St Mary's School as a Church of England school.
- Develop the membership of the Faith Group to include representatives of faiths other than Christianity and the involvement of pupils. This will allow all sections of the school community to contribute to the strategic development and Christian character of the school.

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

St Mary's provides an education of the highest quality, shaped by a deep Christian faith, to all pupils. The school community unites in understanding and this is what makes it the unique and effective school that it is. Academic standards sit alongside personal development, developed equally for each pupil. Academic progress for all pupils is highly successful, with attainment at or above national expectation, as attention is given to the learning journey of each individual, with tailored support provided as needed. This ensures each one is fulfilling their God-given potential. Attendance is very good, pupil exclusion extremely rare. Responsibility for each child, stemming from the school's ethos, consistently informs any decisions. The committed and insightful headteacher believes that 'every child is made in the image of God, they are uniquely individual and valuable.'

Confident and well-balanced pupils live out distinctively Christian values, not least, humility. They display exemplary behaviour. This community holds strong to its Christian foundation and, in particular, understands the theology of welcome. Adaptations enable all pupils to access school life whatever their needs. All are received warmly, following the example of Jesus. Parents speak of the school being a safety net for their children, building up lost trust when families experience relational difficulties. This is firmly attributed to the school being a Christian community of love. Children provide an example to them in the way to live, from what they have 'caught' from being part of St Mary's. Family groups help to cultivate caring relationships between older and younger pupils. These are also aided by pupil-operated initiatives such as Playground Pals and Play Leaders. Anti-Bullying Ambassadors raise awareness and offer support to combat bullying in all forms. Pupils say, 'We really try and take the word of God and incorporate it into our school.'

Everyone has a shared understanding of spiritual development, with each individual being allowed to flourish spiritually in their own way and in their own time. Quality opportunities, informed by an inclusive Christian dimension, feature across the curriculum and wider school life. Pupils respond thoughtfully and creatively. Many opportunities for moral, social and cultural development are provided. The school's Christian values guide and enhance choices of partnerships in the wider community such as 'Diversity Role Models'. The school successfully prioritises diversity awareness, not in a tokenistic way, but as part of the fabric of St Mary's. One parent commented 'There is a love for humanity.'

Through national and international links, such as the annual enterprise project created to support Christian Aid, pupils understand that Christianity is multi-cultural. Putting faith into action through charitable support, a pupil said, 'It is important that we be aware those less fortunate than ourselves.'

RE is integral to the life of St Mary's and it makes a significant contribution to the distinctive Christian character of the school. Pupils learn well and are challenged in their thinking. Since their previous inspection, the school has undertaken a process involving a range of stakeholders to develop its mission statement, vision and values. This has successfully helped in the explicitness of how it operates. However, these no longer do justice in fully showing the outstanding way in which the school lives by its Christian distinctiveness. Equally, they do not yet portray the transformational impact that the school makes, nor its hope for future developments.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding.

Collective Worship is clearly lived out through the whole school experience at St Mary's. All attend worship and speak personally of its value. This lasting impact is clearly discernible in all relationships and other dimensions of the school community. One parent said about the weekly Family Worship, 'If you go in low, you feel high when you come out.'

Mirroring the school's inclusiveness, worship is invitational and has a bold Christian foundation with structure shaped in Anglican liturgy. The Bible is given a key role, as the source of Christian teaching, unpacking the school's values. Original and relevant themes are carefully planned between school and clergy. This offers pupils the chance to explore faith through the Church seasons and a variety of worship styles. As a result, worship has a profound impact on pupils and staff in the way they respond to living out God's word, following the role-model of Jesus. A pupil appreciated this, articulating that it was good '... to have God to believe in.'

On the day of the inspection, contemplative music and lit candles evoked a deeply reflective setting. Pupils and staff were enabled to think about 'O is for Ordinary,' as part of an A-Z of Advent. In the concept of Jesus being born for the ordinary, they reflected on when they had felt God in the ordinary. Worship takes place in a range of groupings and settings, but core expectations ensure that all worship is of quality. The value of prayer contributes to pupils' spiritual journey. Many opportunities for offering prayer and worship are woven throughout school life. Pupils are confident in planning and leading acts of worship. A half-termly Eucharist takes place with Key Stage 2. In the Summer this is a joint service with a neighbouring Church of England school. This enhances understanding of Anglican liturgy. Familiarity with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit means that pupils understand The Trinity in an age-appropriate way. A strong partnership between the school and local clergy supports the school in planning and

leading worship that is deeply moving. This was evident recently when the school suffered a bereavement of one of its pupils. The school came together in the parish church to remember and comfort each other as a community in God's presence. The church has since set up 'Monday Club' in school as a space for pupils to explore issues of faith. Led by the ministry team, this supports pupils on their individual journeys of faith. The rich experience of worship contributes powerfully to the spiritual development of all. Structures are in place for the regular and effective monitoring of worship by a variety of stakeholders. This gives insight into the impact of the school's worship and evaluation leads to further development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding.

All pupils are inspired by RE. A pupil recognised that their RE was so important because this country '... has so many different varieties of religion'. Pupils learn exceptionally well, developing a deep understanding of the Christian faith whilst learning integrally about other world faiths. This has been enhanced by the introduction of the new Southwark Diocesan Syllabus for RE. Teaching focuses on learning from and learning about religion. Teaching which is mostly outstanding, and never less than good, leads to pupils developing and using a range of RE skills in religious enquiry. Much creative work shows originality and internalisation. Regular reflective opportunities lead to pupils' ever-deepening spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, (SMSC). Throughout a Year 4 lesson about peace in incarnation, pupils reflected on how we see God's peace resting on our 'broken and hurting world today.' Visits feature regularly in the RE curriculum as do visitors. Seen as highlights, these bring authenticity to learning. A comprehensive RE assessment system has been developed. This informs pupils in their learning, teachers in their teaching and the school strategically on the successes and areas for further development. Pupils reach national age-expected standards, a good majority achieve higher. The school analyses groups of pupils and has a relentless focus on all achieving well. This was a focus for development at the last inspection and has been successfully addressed. The subject is ably led by a hard-working and dedicated subject leader who, together with the headteacher, has a clear vision for the subject. She collegiately promotes this, enthusing and supporting other staff. Consequently, RE is a relevant and constantly developing subject, central to the school and development of its pupils. A focused action plan is informed by the regular monitoring cycle for RE. As part of this, pupils in RE Feedback Groups contribute to giving the school an accurate picture of the effectiveness of provision. RE Day was implemented as a result of their thinking and was a stimulus for concentrated creative and interactive teaching and learning. Displays in classrooms and central areas support and celebrate learning, provoking questioning, thinking and discussion. Portfolios of RE work tell the story of consistent high quality learning experiences. This journey of RE clearly impacts powerfully upon each learner and the common good of the school.

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

All leaders and managers of the school unite in promoting and living out the school's mission statement. There is a joint ambition to provide a relevant education of the highest standard. Distinctively Christian values are at the core of absolutely everything that they do. Leaders and managers are inspirational in how they all readily, insightfully and deeply articulate the impact of the school's Christian foundation. This has a positive impact upon the life of each and every pupil and the whole school. They work in servant leadership to realise the school's Christian vision. Each person brings their respective skills to their roles with a generosity of spirit. Leaders, parents, the local church and other partners in the wider community work together to benefit all groups. The school particularly focuses on their 'dimension of acceptance' of all diversity in local, national and global communities. This, along with the school's Christian ethos, informs opportunities provided as part of its curriculum. It contributes to fostering excellent behaviour, balanced attitudes and profound SMSC. The school has a close relationship with the diocese. This supports the development of staff and governors as present or future church school leaders. The school has developed a well-planned system of self-evaluation in which all stakeholders contribute. This enables it to accurately evaluate the outworking of its Christian mission and informs focused strategic planning. This was another focus for development from the last SIAS inspection, which has been successfully addressed. Both the leadership of collective worship and RE are given a high priority. This ensures outstanding practice, recognising the significant contribution of each to the distinctiveness of the school. Although the Faith Group plays a key strategic role in this process, the membership of this group is currently rather limited. Therefore, this does not directly allow all the voices to inform it in wholly fulfilling its role. The strength of partnership between school and church has enabled it to be maintained and, indeed, organically developed during the interregnum. All understand and avow that it is imperative that this partnership remains key in the future. It is the deeply Christian faith of St Mary's that leads the school to fruitfully bring out the best, God-given potential, in each individual. As one of the foundation governors said, 'All are loved, entirely as we are, (this) underpins it, why we are doing it.'