

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mary's Church of England Primary School			
Address	Lewisham High Street, Lewisham, London, SE13 6NX		
Date of inspection	27 th June 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary
Diocese	Southwark	URN	100730
Overall Judgement	How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?	Grade	Excellent
Additional Judgements	The impact of collective worship	Grade	Excellent
	The effectiveness of religious education (RE)	Grade	Excellent
<p>School context</p> <p>St Mary's Primary School has 232 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of Black African or Black Caribbean heritage with a range of other ethnic groups represented. Most pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is high and well above the national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national averages. A higher proportion of pupils than usual enter or leave the school at times other than the usual starting points. Just over half of pupils come from Christian backgrounds.</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">The school's Christian vision</p> <p>To be a learning community that promotes the unique gifts, wellbeing and potential of every person. Our work is founded on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, building on his message of equality, peace and justice, guided by his words 'As I have loved you, so you must love one another'. (John 13:34).</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">Key findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the previous denominational inspection significant and sustained improvement has been made. This is encapsulated through the revised and embedded Christian vision and associated values which are extremely well known and lead to high aspiration for all members of this inclusive school community. • The vision is strongly underpinned by a theological understanding of education within a Church of England context. Its associated, well-chosen values complement the vision and impact extremely positively on wellbeing, on the commendable pastoral care and on the positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour of pupils. • Collective worship and religious education (RE) are given an extremely high priority and make powerful contributions to the school's vision and associated values. • The school's Christian service is powerfully exemplified through its outward-looking nature and the many opportunities taken to work with its parish church and the Diocese, as well as with other schools. An innovative approach is utilising space in school for a Community Hub facility, established to support both families and the wider local community. • The school has the RE Quality Mark (Gold Award) and the Inclusion Quality Mark (Centre of Excellence). These awards show the outworking and extension of the school's Christian vision in exemplary ways. 			
<p style="text-align: center;">Areas for development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the very recent awarding of the Inclusion Quality Mark (Centre of Excellence), expand opportunities to effectively share the school's exemplary work, including the impact of its Christian vision on its exceptionally strong practice. 			

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

St Mary's inclusive and transformational Christian vision acts as a guide for ongoing developments, effectively shaping practice throughout the school. The vision has a clear theological underpinning based on the example of Jesus' love for all. Its associated values are well-chosen and appropriately biblically based. They spring from the vision and are conduits through which it is lived out; shaping and being reflected in the high quality of relationships and the excellent behaviour of pupils. The school has made substantial and continued progress since the previous denominational inspection. It is now in a stable and positive place which is aspirational and provides a strong platform for continued improvement. There is an upward three-year trend in attainment and progress, evidencing the effective work of senior leaders, and governors, as they lead the wider staff body. There is an exemplary focus on improving outcomes for pupils, both academically and personally. Very high levels of mobility mean that not all pupils are able to meet national expectations. However, individual progress is effectively monitored, and well-thought-out interventions put in place to support progress. The school's vision and associated values are shown in the extremely effective pastoral support provided for all pupils. It is also demonstrated through the school recently gaining the Inclusion Quality Mark (Centre of Excellence). Whilst new, it is a fitting recognition for this inclusive Church of England school.

Governors and senior leaders have ensured that key areas for improvement from the previous denominational inspection have guided positive developments. Likewise, account has been taken of developments in Church of England educational thinking at both national and diocesan levels. Accordingly, the school has productively incorporated selected ideas into consequent improvement planning. There is robust and continuous self-evaluation which contributes positively to senior staff and governors knowing their school extremely well and setting focused priorities for development. Collective worship and RE are afforded high priority and both areas meet statutory requirements. The expectations of the Church of England Statement for Entitlement for RE are reflected in policy and practice. Links with the Diocese are valued and have impacted on developments in recent years.

The broad and balanced curriculum is enriched through a wide extra-curricular offer. The curriculum provides opportunities to apply learning to the wider world. There are clear, appropriate plans in place to enhance the curriculum further through taking a 'Big Ideas' approach, following training received from the Diocese. Classrooms are calm, reflective and productive learning spaces. Consequently, pupils are making above average progress from their various starting points, many of which are well below age-related expectations when they join the school.

Spiritual development is given a high priority as a key contributor in enhancing personal and academic development. Pupils are effectively encouraged to reflect and consider 'big questions' and to share their ideas within a respectful learning environment. Pupils respond extremely positively, and relish exploring differing viewpoints which means that those of varying abilities and backgrounds value themselves, each other and their learning. This exemplifies the strong and effective emphasis, drawn from the school's vision, on the uniqueness, wellbeing and potential of pupils and indeed of staff. The staff are excellently supported for working in this Church of England school. Their wellbeing, like that of their pupils and families, is given the highest priority by governors and leaders who provide compassionate and effective support. An example of innovative practice for staff is 'Therapeutic Tuesday' which provides some space after school for personal and group reflection. Staff speak confidently about how the Christian vision underpins their work and the collegiate relationships in evidence.

St Mary's is outward-looking and is inventive in many of its approaches to growing partnerships. It has very deep links with its parish church, whose clergy are regular visitors, providing spiritual and pastoral support. Lay involvement is also strong. The lay reader complements worship led by clergy and leads a team of volunteers from church who listen to children read weekly. Year 2 pupils help care for the Therapeutic Garden in the church grounds which is used by the community, including a local hospital. Some under-utilised space has been converted into a Community Hub to support the diverse local community, including the most vulnerable. It includes immigration advice, financial planning support and various workshops for parents and other members of the community. Parents have been taken out on a trip to show them where they can take their children for free or for very little cost during school holidays. This community focused attitude effectively encourages the involvement of pupils in being agents of change. They know that they have a voice and can 'make a difference' to improve their locality. For example, the need for a nearby road crossing has involved pupils in drawing up a petition and speaking with the local Member of Parliament. Pupils have a deep sense of right and wrong, of responsibility, justice and equality. They support a wide range of local, national and international charities, through which they understand, 'We can show love for others, like Jesus loves us'. Links with a school in Ghana enhances their understanding of

how people live in different parts of the world. Pupils' moral development and their understanding of their ability to be courageous advocates for change is consequently effectively enhanced.

The worship programme is inclusive and excellently focused on enabling pupils and staff appreciate and apply the vision and associated values to life in school and beyond. Thus, it is both engaging and inspirational. Pupils' response to prayer, silence and reflection is extremely positive. Biblical teaching and various Anglican worship practices are very well-understood and appreciated by those from all backgrounds. Consequently, there is a deep awareness of the importance of Jesus for Christians, although appreciation of the concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is less well-developed. Pupils, through the faith group and more widely, are confident in planning, leading and evaluating worship. How worship reflects and supports the school's vision and associated values is exemplary.

The RE curriculum is very well-planned, drawing on and appropriately adapting the diocesan scheme of work. Assessment practice has improved significantly. It consistently helps pupils to know their strengths and the next steps for improving learning. RE is treated as a core subject and its positive impact on extending the school's Christian vision and associated values is affirmed by staff and seen in pupils' work. The effective practice in RE is generously shared. For example, more than 20 other diocesan schools attended a showcasing RE event at the school recently.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Teaching is very strong with elements of excellent practice in evidence. In-school monitoring takes place regularly and staff are admirably supported by a committed subject leader. Attainment and progress are in line with or above other core subjects and display the same upward trend. Pupils make at least age-related expectations, with some working at greater depth rather than the expected. A wide range of age-appropriate opportunities involve pupils positively in learning about and considering the implications of religious beliefs and practices. This is reflected in the RE Quality Mark (Gold Award), gained in 2018. This award recognises the exemplary practice evident across the school which was verified during the inspection. Because of the high priority given to RE and strong engagement from pupils responding to effective teaching, pupils flourish both academically and personally.

Headteacher

Christine Bernard

Inspector's name and number

Pamela Draycott (161)