



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Paul with St Luke Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Bow Common
Leopold Street
London
E3 4JQ

Previous SIAS grade: Satisfactory

Current SIAMS grade: Good

Diocese: London

Local authority: London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Date of inspection: 4 February 2016

Date of last inspection: January 2011

School's unique reference number: 100958

Headteacher: Nicola Horton

Inspector's name and number: Pamela Draycott 161

School context

This average sized school serves an ethnically and religiously diverse area in East London. Around 86% of pupils come from Muslim family backgrounds, mainly of Bangladeshi origin. Approximately 10% come from families who attend church outside of their involvement with school. A much higher proportion than the national average speak English as an additional language or have some sort of special educational need. The proportion for whom extra funding is received, due to social disadvantage, is above the national average. Since the previous denomination inspection (2011) the headteacher has taken up post (2012). The incumbent has been in post for around one year.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Paul with St Luke school as a Church of England school are good

- The welcoming and hospitable Christian vision and ethos underpin the school's service to its community and influences school life and work well.
- The good, long-standing and well established links between the school and the parish church which supports both the school and parish in expressing their service to their local community.
- Pupil behaviour is very good and reflects mutually respectful relationships based on its Christian foundation.
- Pupil safety and well-being is central to the school's vision of Christian service providing a good framework for support and challenge in order for pupils to make good progress.

Areas to improve

- Build on the school's inclusive Christian ethos by explicitly identifying the heart of it as being based on Jesus' commandment to 'love God and love your neighbour'.
- Improve the worship programme by:
 - enhancing the structure of worship through introducing opening and closing sentences with responses during all acts of worship in school.
 - ensuring regular opportunities for pupils to support staff and governors in planning and evaluating the worship programme.

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

St Paul with St Luke primary school is a welcoming, respectful and happy community. Members speak confidently about its Christian and inclusive identity. The school summarises its Christian vision as 'being spiritual and reflective, being caring and respectful, working together, taking responsibility, celebrating individuality and life-long learning'. These statements were developed in collaboration with staff, governors, parents and pupils. They are inclusive of the whole community irrespective of faith background. Recently, they have been more explicitly linked with biblical teaching. Pupils reflect on and are confident in speaking about how this underpinning Christian ethos affects their learning and behaviour. However, how these relate specifically to the teaching of Jesus and to Christian practice is less well understood and articulated. The school is focused on ensuring that all pupils achieve well both academically and personally. This means that new systems and monitoring procedures have been put in place based on wanting all to achieve to the best of their ability as precious children of God. This means that overall attainment is improving and pupils are making at least good progress from their various starting points. The gap between different groups of pupils is closing. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and respectful towards adults and their peers. The school works well at including and supporting children from all faith backgrounds in developing their religious and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. The school council and a range of extra-curricular activities support this well. Attendance is good and carefully monitored by the school. In keeping with its inclusive Christian ethos the school works well with parents and pupils who are having difficulty with attendance, behaviour or learning. Religious Education (RE) makes a strong contribution to the school's underlying Christian values through what is taught and the range of activities undertaken. Pupils see the relevance of understanding a range of religions in today's world. As a pupil said, 'RE helps us get more knowledge about what people believe and what they do. It's important so that we can understand.' RE focused visits to the parish church and to other places of worship such as the mosque and synagogue enhance the school's inclusive Christian ethos and contribute well to SMSC development. This is given a high profile in the school, for example, in a display along a corridor and with a celebratory book in the entrance hall.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Daily worship is well planned by the headteacher in consultation with the vicar. Pupils have a role in leading whole school and class worship. They have a more limited role in the overall planning and evaluation of the worship programme. The importance of worship in supporting the school's ethos is rightly recognised and celebrated by staff and pupils as well as by parents. Worship content explores Bible stories and Christian teachings including about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the example of Jesus for Christians. Principal Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter are appropriately celebrated. Pupils' understanding of Pentecost and Ascension are less well developed. The worship programme does contribute effectively to pupils developing religious, spiritual and moral insights. Pupils and staff engage well and enjoy the worship programme. Parents attend class led worship in school and church based worship opportunities. These are rightly recognised as important in extending and enhancing the school's worshipping and community life. There is a worship and reflection area in each classroom which encourages pupils to write their own prayers on issues of concern to them. Prayer is becoming an increasingly important part of school life. Aspects of Anglican practice are evident through, for example, the use of candles, reading from the Bible and saying the Lord's Prayer. The church has made and presented the school with altar cloths for its worship table in different colours reflecting different times of the Church year. Opening and closing sentences with responses are used when the Vicar leads worship but this structure is not followed through in all acts of worship within school.

The effectiveness of RE is good

Over their time in school pupils make good progress in RE. On entry standards are below the national expectation and by the time they leave in Year 6 the majority are achieving at or slightly above the national expectation. There is a good balance within the RE curriculum in learning about and reflecting on Christianity and other world religions. This includes acknowledging a range of festivals that are celebrated by members of the school family including Eid ul Fitr and Divali. A range of visits to the parish church, other churches and to other places of worship such as a mosque and a synagogue enhance the RE curriculum significantly. Teaching as monitored by the school and confirmed by inspection evidence is good overall. There is good support for RE offered by the subject leader, who is the headteacher. She supports staff well in developing their knowledge of and confidence in planning and delivering RE. There is good use of key vocabulary to improve literacy, writing and discussion elements of RE. Teacher marking helps pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to respond to teacher marking which helps in this. However, pupils do not know how well they are doing in relation to their progress in other key areas such as, for example, in literacy. Assessment practice across the school is developing in the light of national developments and RE is being included appropriately in these developments. The school has rightly identified the need to review its RE curriculum because of proposed changes to the diocesan scheme of work. Plans are firmly in place to do this once it is available.

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

The headteacher, very well supported by her deputy, has worked effectively to develop further the school's Christian vision as a church school. Staff and governors are also appropriately involved and committed to this development. Christian values are linked to biblical teaching. Whilst the Christian underpinning of the school's values are clear, how they explicitly link to Jesus' commandment to 'love God and love each other' is not sufficiently well expressed. There have been significant changes to the governing body recently, including new foundation governors and a new chair. The governing body is both supportive and challenging of the school as a church school. Items identified for improvement in the previous denominational inspection (2011) have been well addressed. RE and worship are part of the monitoring cycle by senior leaders and governors. RE and worship meet statutory requirements for a voluntary aided school. Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This is shown through its self-evaluation and strategic improvement planning. It is keen to externally validate its judgements and so positive links to do so are in place with the Diocese of London, the Local Authority and with some local church primary schools. Parents are supportive of the school and its Christian foundation whilst being inclusive of all. This is reflected in the school providing a range of opportunities for parents to be well engaged with their children's learning, including running parent workshops. A good number of parents volunteer to help in school on a regular basis and the weekly coffee morning is well attended. There are strong and long-established links with the parish church. These have been refreshed by the new incumbent. The school has developed a supportive model of coaching to help teachers reflect on and improve their practice. There is appropriate training given for working within the church school sector.

St Paul with St Luke CE (VA) Primary School, Bow Common, Leopold Street, London, E3 4JQ