

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St John's Walham Green CofE School

Filmer Road
London
SW6 6AS

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	London
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
Date of inspection	4 th October 2016
Date of last inspection	October 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	VA 100 349
Headteacher	Barbara Wightwick
Inspector's name and number	Gill Walley NS 644

School context

The school has expanded to become a 2 form entry school in recent years with 382 pupils on roll. Most pupils live in the locality. The school is in an area of deprivation with average numbers of disadvantaged pupils. The number of pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities is slightly below average but the proportion speaking English as an additional language is above average. The mobility of staff and pupils is relatively high. There are very strong links with the parish church. A significant proportion of the pupils and their families worship at the parish church or in other churches in the area.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St John's as a Church of England school are good.

- Leaders feel that their main purpose is to ensure that all pupils are nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential.
- Pupils understand and can explain how the life of the school is based on Christian values because these are at the heart of the school's vision and ethos.
- Pupils enjoy RE; they make good progress and most reach levels expected of them for their age.
- Worship is central to the life of the school and pupils are highly involved in planning and contributing to worship. This provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their own spirituality.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the Christian ethos of the school drives forward the development of every pupil, so that more pupils make accelerated progress and exceed the levels expected for their age.
- Develop the RE curriculum so that pupils have more practical opportunities to deepen their understanding of different faiths.

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

The Christian values of Generosity, Compassion, Courage, Friendship, Forgiveness and Respect were

chosen by the children. Each one is woven into worship and referred to frequently so that pupils completely understand how to demonstrate it in their behaviours and relationships. They can explain how each value is rooted in the Christian faith. For example how they are responding to God's generosity in creating our world by continuing to care for it, and how they forgive one another because God forgives us. Pupils' attendance is good and they enjoy coming to school because the Christian ethos which underpins school life creates a very supportive atmosphere where they feel safe and very well cared for. They say 'everyone respects one another', 'I can always count on adults to make me feel at home', 'teachers are kind and thoughtful' and 'teachers value our opinions'. The support pupils receive encourages them to learn and to thrive so that most achieve well and make good progress. Pupils are confident to express what they believe and to discuss their beliefs because the school encourages them to reflect and empathise. Parents comment on the way their children encourage their families to discuss the questions they have considered in school. The school environment reflects and reinforces the Christian distinctiveness well, with prayer corners in every classroom where pupils can write prayers and read Bible stories. The values are displayed as a constant reminder to everyone in the community, together with Christian symbols and pictures. Pupils' behaviour is extremely good; they are courteous to adults and to one another because the curriculum provides good opportunities for their social and moral development. They learn about a range of world faiths so that they learn to understand and respect everyone in the community. Pupils 'like knowing what other people believe in' and 'being encouraged to express our ideas about religion'. However pupils' opportunities to engage with the leaders of faiths other than Christianity are limited and they have few opportunities to make visits to different places of worship. This would enhance and deepen their understanding.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Pupils now contribute to the planning of worship and do so with great enthusiasm. They explain how much they enjoy drama, singing hymns and praying aloud. They write and use their own prayers and many are confident to lead prayer spontaneously. The spirituality of pupils and staff is encouraged, for example through retreats and 'Prayer space', and there is a prayer group meeting for parents. They demonstrate how well they understand Bible stories, Christian prayers and Anglican traditions because worship is planned well to develop their knowledge. Older pupils can explain the main events in the life of Jesus and how these times are observed by Christians. They can also describe their understanding of the concept of the Trinity because it has been explained to them in a way they can understand. During worship a Christian greeting is shared and candles are lit. Pupils say they find these helpful reminders that they are together in God's presence. They can explain the main festivals in the church calendar and they know the significance of the liturgical colours of the church year. Pupils talk of 'liking to be calm in God's presence', 'a special atmosphere' and the feeling that they are 'all together and no one is alone'. They describe how the school's motto 'Love one another' is often referred to in a Christian context through the stories and passages which are shared with them. Worship enhances pupils' understanding of Christian values well because adults use Bible passages to reinforce the messages in secular stories. This helps pupils apply the values to their own lives and parents say their children often talk about these values and their Christian context at home. Several members of staff, visitors and local youth workers lead worship regularly so that pupils experience a range of Christian traditions. The incumbent is greatly involved in planning worship, related to the value which is in focus each half term, and he leads a Eucharist once a week. Pupils particularly look forward to this and many of them volunteer to be servers. They and their families also value the special times in the year when worship is held in the parish church. Families of all faiths feel very welcome and fully involved. Governors and senior leaders monitor worship to ensure that it is having good impact on pupils and developing their spirituality well.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Pupils make good progress in RE and most reach or exceed the levels expected for their age. RE is well led and there is now a robust system for assessing what pupils know about religion and how well they can apply that understanding to their own lives. Teachers use this information when planning their lessons so that they pitch activities at the right level. The school works closely with the diocese to review the RE curriculum so that it is relevant, meets the needs of all pupils, and develops their understanding of the Christian faith well. Leaders monitor and evaluate pupils' progress well to ensure they make as much

progress in RE as they do in other subjects. They have an accurate understanding of the areas where further improvement is needed and have taken action to address them. The RE leader supports teachers extremely well in developing their confidence to teach RE and to provide resources which make lessons practical and memorable. Teachers plan interesting lessons which engage pupils through exciting activities such as art and drama as well as discussion. Pupils are confident to share their views with one another and older pupils say how much they enjoy discussing 'tricky questions', both at school and with their families. They feel RE helps 'make them a better person' and teaches them things 'we can put into practice in our daily life'. Pupils enjoy learning about all faiths and say that everyone is included. They appreciate learning about the beliefs of everyone in their community. Teachers use creative ways to involve pupils who are not Christians, for example by asking pupils of other faiths to talk about their festivals and traditions in lessons. The school is seeking external validation of RE teaching because it is confident that this has improved considerably and is worthy of recognition.

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

Leaders are very good role models and promote an ethos based on Christian values. Staff say that the vision to 'love one another' permeates every aspect of school life and helps to create a 'wonderful and welcoming atmosphere' where everyone in the community thrives. Most pupils reach and some exceed the levels expected for their age but some pupils do not do as well and leaders need to take steps to address these variations. Governors have given thought to succession planning because maintaining the distinctive character of the school is their highest priority. The school has developed its Christian distinctiveness since the last inspection and has met the recommendations to improve. Collective worship and RE meet statutory requirements. There are rigorous systems in place for governors and leaders to evaluate the distinctiveness and to identify ways to improve further, and parents engage in this process informally. There are very strong links with the parish church and its community. Pupils and their families value the support they receive from the incumbent and his regular contribution to RE and worship. Staff and pupils are actively involved in parish projects such as the Glass Door hospitality project for the homeless in the locality. A recent Advent procession demonstrates their commitment to share the Christian message with the community. Pupils raise money for several charities to demonstrate their care for others who are less fortunate. They have links with schools in Zambia and Sierra Leone which help pupils to learn about the ways Christians worship in other parts of the world. Parents feel the school teaches their children to 'be tolerant and to value everyone's differences'.

SIAMS report October 2016 - St. John's Walham Green CE Primary School SW6 6AS