

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. Augustine's CE Primary School

Kilburn Park Road, London, NW6 5XA	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	London
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Westminster
Date of inspection	28 February 2017
Date of last inspection	April 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 101125
Headteacher	Suzanne Parry
Inspector's name and number	Gill Walley NS 644

School context

This is a one form entry school with a nursery. There are 230 children on roll, mostly attending from the surrounding area although some travel considerable distances. There have been no changes to status or leadership since the last inspection. Significant proportions of pupils (51%) come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The majority (82%) speak English as an additional language and most are at the very early stages on arrival. There are more pupils with special educational needs/disabilities than average (20%) and there is now greater mobility than in the past. Approximately 31% of pupils come from Christian backgrounds. 64% of the pupils and their families are Muslims.

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

- Explicitly Christian values underpin the school's work and ethos so that pupils and others in the community can explain the school's Christian distinctiveness.
- The school knows its community very well and is highly reflective about the needs of the pupils and their families so that everyone is fully included and involved.
- Pupils make extremely good progress in religious education (RE) so that most reach the standards expected for their age and many children exceed these standards.
- Parents are extremely positive about the strong Christian character of the school and the impact this has on their children's behaviour, relationships and their readiness for adult life in a multicultural society.

Areas to improve

- Celebrate the Christian distinctiveness of the school more emphatically, for example on the website and in documentation, so that this is more apparent to visitors.
- Develop the children's understanding of Christianity as a world religion by developing a link with a Christian community in another part of the world.

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

The school focuses on 10 core Christian values which are discussed regularly in collective worship and during the school day to help children understand them and to know how to show them in their behaviour and relationships. Each value is explained through a biblical quotation so that children completely understand their Christian context.

To help them understand the relevance of the values to their lives, adults talk about people who have demonstrated them, for example Mother Theresa's compassion and Martin Luther King's hope. To encourage the children to show them 'Values Superheroes' look out for times when they see children living out the values and these children are given recognition for this. The school's policies regarding behaviour and exclusion are rooted in the values and children behave exceptionally well. Its mission is to ensure that 'all children develop the skills to cope with any challenge they meet in life'. Most children make good progress, reaching and often exceeding the levels expected of them, in all areas of the curriculum including RE. Relationships are very strong and children feel safe and very well cared for as individuals as well as learners. Senior leaders know the community extremely well and ensure that the pupils who are not Christian completely understand the values and how to show them in their behaviour to others. In particular leaders make strong links between Christian and Muslim values and emphasise the similarities between beliefs and practices. Parents are especially appreciative of this and feel that the emphasis on the 'common ground' supports the children's outstanding social and moral development. They develop their spirituality well through worship, RE and a curriculum which is focussed on widening children's horizons, helping them to understand the world they live in and to discuss different opinions. Children have a strong sense of their social responsibility and often raise money for worthy causes such as the local food bank. They are confident to express and challenge one another's views. They show a profound respect for those of different faiths or no faith and everyone in the community greatly values the diversity of their community. Although the Christian distinctiveness is not emphasised well in the school's documentation and on the website, parents feel that it is very strong and they particularly value how inclusive and welcoming the school is to all its families. Children have some understanding of Christianity as a world faith but don't have the opportunities to gain first-hand knowledge.

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

Worship is a very important part of the school day and children value these times for coming together in God's presence. They are equally enthusiastic about worship in school and in church. They value the opportunity to contribute through discussion and to take an active part in role play or sharing what they already know. They may share their own prayers and reflections if they wish to. These opportunities have increased considerably since the last inspection. Children feel that worship helps them to develop their faith and to learn more, for example about Christian festivals, prayers, the life of Christ and Bible stories. It helps them to understand what it means to be Christian and to make connections between this and other faiths. Children are able to reflect on the key messages and to decide how they can apply this in their own lives. Older pupils understand and can explain the Trinity and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Leaders now seek the children's views regularly and use this information well to plan worship which is engaging, relevant and spiritually uplifting. Monitoring of worship by senior leaders and governors also feeds into this evaluation process. Worship is carefully planned so that the Christian values are reinforced well. Pupils use a range of Christian prayers and greetings and are invited to join in as much as they wish to. Classrooms have prayer tables where children can reflect and write prayers personal to them or to be shared with their classmates. Worship is fundamentally Christian but makes very good links with other faiths and enables all children to participate. A range of people lead worship including the incumbent once each week so that children experience a range of styles. They particularly enjoy his visits as well as opportunities for worship in the parish church at special times in the church year, such as Ash Wednesday. Children participate fully in the mass and learn about its significance to Christians. Other Christian leaders lead worship so that children develop some understanding of other groups and denominations such as the Salvation Army. A great strength of worship is the way in which children who are not Christian are fully involved and able to contribute actively. Parents and children feel this helps to make their community a united one where everyone is completely respected.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding.

RE is a very important part of the curriculum and teachers plan interesting and relevant lessons which engage the children well. Lessons include drama, discussion and activities which help the children to understand how their learning about religion helps them to lead better lives. Teaching is always good and often outstanding so that children make very good progress and reach levels expected for their age. Many children reach higher standards and teachers use assessment information well to identify any gaps in understanding. The RE leader monitors teaching and learning in RE closely and helps teachers to identify how they can improve further. The school has adapted its curriculum recently to ensure that it is appropriate for the age and interests of the children and the needs of the community. It has ensured that whilst RE is predominantly Christian, it is also developing the children's knowledge of other faiths well and supporting their strong moral and spiritual development. Teachers give children very good feedback when marking their books and check that they all respond to the feedback promptly. The school is working closely with partners to develop the depth and accuracy of assessment so that teachers have a closer

knowledge of the children's understanding. Children handle religious artefacts respectfully and they make comparisons between faiths, for example looking at the views of different faiths through stories and art. Teachers develop children's skills in analysing and interpreting, and in discussing questions which have more than one answer. Children particularly enjoy learning about different religions – their similarities and differences – and show a profound respect for one another's beliefs and values. For example the children can explain the links between faith groups. They say that this understanding helps them to live in harmony with everyone else now and in the future. Staff speak very highly of the RE leader who is very knowledgeable and experienced. She supports staff with their planning and assessment and helps staff to adapt to changes in the curriculum. She leads INSET and encourages teachers to develop wider expertise. She identifies areas where they can improve further, for example in assessment. She monitors the curriculum to ensure that children have a wide range of learning opportunities including visits to various places of worship. She is especially supportive of new staff so that they really understand how to teach RE well and to support the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Governors monitor RE lessons as part of their routine programme of evaluating standards so that they have a very good understanding of standards in RE and know that it meets statutory requirements.

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

All leaders and governors articulate the school's Christian distinctiveness and attach the greatest importance to this. They promote the Christian values and have systems for encouraging children to demonstrate them. They monitor the impact of worship and RE on the children and identify aspects for improvement often responding to local and national changes, such as the recent change to the syllabus. Leaders have responded to the recommendations of the last inspection report and have made significant improvements. They ensure that whilst RE and collective worship are predominantly Christian, children learn about other faiths and traditions and behave respectfully. Leaders and governors have worked with the diocese to drive further improvements, for example in developing the RE curriculum. A robust system for assessing children's progress and achievement is also in place. Staff talk about the 'cohesive atmosphere' and the 'tolerance and understanding'. A particular strength is the way in which the Christian distinctiveness is promoted sensitively so that it embraces rather than distances the majority of families, and makes them feel included. Leaders understand that children of different faiths or those with limited understanding of English are less likely to be able to articulate the distinctiveness so they have developed practical ways of supporting them in this understanding. The school's environment reflects the Christian distinctiveness well, with Christian symbols, prayer areas and displays of religious artefacts and children's learning in RE. The school works closely with the parish church and the wider community so that they feel fully involved. The incumbent is a strong presence in the school. Parents regard the school as 'one big family' and say they are always welcomed to attend events such as the nativity and celebrations in church. They say the school has promoted social integration and built a harmonious community because it 'applies' the Christian values so well. There is a strong sense of unity in the community which parents attribute to the promotion and implementation of the school values. For example, all children of all faiths are invited to pray during Ramadan so that this becomes an inclusive rather than an exclusive activity. Governors have given thought to succession planning and the need to preserve the Christian distinctiveness of the school and its vision to nurture and encourage every child because they see these as the school's fundamental purpose. Leaders are shadowed by less experienced staff so that they develop their own leadership skills. Statutory arrangements for RE and worship have been met.

SIAMS report February 2017 St. Augustine's CE Primary Kilburn Park Road London NW6 5XA