

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Anne's CE Primary School

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| St Ann's Hill, Wandsworth London SW18 2RU | |
| Current SIAMS inspection grade | Outstanding |
| Diocese | Southwark |
| Previous SIAS inspection grade | Outstanding |
| Local authority | Wandsworth |
| Name of multi-academy trust / federation | NA |
| Date of inspection | 7 February 2018 |
| Date of last inspection | March 2013 |
| Type of school and unique reference number | 101041 |
| Headteacher | Lesley Steward |
| Inspector's name and number | John Viner NS144 |

School context

St Anne's is a small, currently undersubscribed, primary school located in Wandsworth and serving the parish of St Anne's. Its 171 pupils reflect the rich diversity of the area with a much higher than average proportion who speak English as an additional language. Around a quarter of pupils attend a church. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average. There is a much higher than average proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receive additional funding. Pupils make very good progress, often from low starting points, and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above the national average.

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

- The Christian values that the school promotes are embedded and visible in every aspect of its work and define its life.
- Under the faithful, strategic leadership of the headteacher, leaders and governors share and live out an ambitious Christian vision for the school that is driving improvement and raising standards.
- Collective worship is inclusive, inspirational and unites the whole school community.
- A golden thread of prayer is woven throughout the school and provides a context for worship. The free, enthusiastic and deeply spiritual participation of pupils in prayer characterises this prayerful and worshipping community.
- Pupils are excited by religious education (RE), make exceptional progress and attain high standards.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and equips them for life beyond school.
- The powerful partnership with the parish church and the dedicated support of the incumbent unite it and the school as a beacon of Christian hope in the community they serve.

Areas to improve

- In RE, ensure that pupils' excellent spiritual development is consistently recognised in the work they are set and in the questions that teachers ask.

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

The school's motto, 'growing together as a family of God', truly reflects its Christian character. Staff, pupils and their parents, unanimously agree that this is more than a school: it is a community where there is a sense of compassion, trust and fellowship. This is illustrated by pupils' appreciation of each other, their mutual support across years and their pride in the school. Because pupils know that they are safe, valued and special, their attendance is rapidly improving, they work hard, make excellent progress, often from low starting points, and attain standards that are higher than those expected nationally.

The specific Christian values upon which the school bases its work define its purpose and are evident in all aspects of its life. Even though there are more than twenty identified values, pupils can name them, explain them and say how they influence their attitudes. They inspire the warm, trusting and compassionate relationships between and among adults and pupils. This leads to a harmonious and productive learning environment in which pupils thrive and where they behave impeccably. Parents agree; saying that, regardless of their own faith or belief, the values that the school nurtures in their children give them a firm foundation for their lives. As a result, regardless of faith or background, pupils develop a strong spiritual identity and a deep appreciation of faith.

This excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that they value diversity and develop lasting attitudes of tolerance and respect. As a result, they are unafraid to ask deep questions, using the language of faith with a growing confidence. Pupils universally agree that they are excited by RE, love learning about all faiths and understand Christianity in the context of a multi-cultural world. Therefore, it is a key element of the school's Christian character and makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' academic, personal and spiritual development, equipping them with skills and attitudes that prepare them for life beyond school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and an important part of each day. It is an opportunity for the school to reaffirm its shared identity as a spiritual family. When adults and pupils gather for worship, they do so knowing, that, regardless of faith and belief, it is real and life-affirming. As a result, pupils arrive quietly, sit reverently and behave attentively. They participate in worship joyously and enthusiastically. Pupils of all faiths and none are encouraged by attending worship. It provides a focus for their day and is an essential part of their developing spiritual journey. Parents say that worship teaches their children how to talk about faith and be open to all faiths. Staff say that worship reinforces the Christian values that are embedded in everything the school does

Worship is planned around a series of precisely chosen themes and led by a range of leaders, including staff, pupils and clergy. This helps to keep it fresh and interesting and pupils say how much they like the variety. Because pupils' spiritual understanding is nurtured so effectively, they find that worship challenges their thinking. This is exemplified by the pupil whose understanding of forgiveness was changed as she realised that she could still forgive, even if the offence was deliberate. Pupils develop a shared sense of Christian compassion in action, demonstrated through their active involvement in supporting good causes.

Worship is always distinctly Christian, centred on the person of Jesus and the Christian belief that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, all faiths are valued and respected within the context of Christian worship, without compromising this Christian distinctiveness. Worship incorporates elements of Anglican tradition and practice, including a simple liturgy and lighting of a candle. This is further reinforced by the times when worship takes place in the parish church and at the Easter Eucharist, which is held there. A significant strength is the involvement of pupils in contributing to planning worship and helping leaders and governors in the evaluation process. Pupils are regularly engaged in leading key elements of worship, as a result of which they gain in confidence and faith.

From the moment they enter the school, pupils quickly learn about the nature and purpose of prayer so that it becomes their daily experience. Prayer is a central aspect of the life of the school and, because pupils of all faiths become familiar with it, they are skilled at prayerful reflection and sometimes surprise adults with their spiritual maturity. The development of prayer is supported by the reflection areas in each classroom and the corridor displays which focus specifically on collective worship. Adults provide effective role models so that pupils learn how to pray with meaning. As a result, as they move through the school, their confident, and sometimes extemporaneous, prayers become a key feature of worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Religious education has a very high profile in the school. It is regarded as a core subject and has the same close scrutiny of pupils' performance. Standards in RE are at least in line with national expectations and sometimes significantly higher. Pupils make excellent progress, often from low starting points and even those who struggle academically, thrive in RE. Pupils are universally enthusiastic about RE, many saying that it is their favourite subject and, as a result, they learn exceptionally well. By the time pupils leave the school they have a secure foundation of Christian understanding and a good knowledge of other key faiths and beliefs. Above all, they have a lasting interest in religions and faith. As a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted at a high level.

Pupils make excellent progress because teaching is consistently good or outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps them to plan lessons that are engaging and which pupils find exciting and inspiring. Many pupils are impressive in the way they apply their clear spiritual thinking to their learning, often making connections between the key points of the faiths they are studying. However, these high starting points are not always recognised by teachers in planning their lessons, or in the questions which they ask pupils. Consequently, the most confident pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Since the last inspection, the school has taken robust steps to develop the way that RE is assessed so that teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils' progress. This has taken place alongside the introduction of a new curriculum. The new programme of study is more demanding than its predecessor. It has been introduced carefully and, with the excellent support of diocesan officers, staff have been well-prepared. RE is well-led and those charged with its development have a clear understanding of what must be done to make it even better. The curriculum is enriched by many visits to places of worship or visitors from a range of faiths. The subject leaders monitor RE rigorously so that there is a constant focus on the quality of pupils' learning and the way their thinking is deepened.

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

The headteacher's faithful and inspiring leadership unites key staff, governors and clergy in an ambitious Christian vision for the school that is driving improvement and raising both attendance and standards. This leads to a school where Christian values are shared among and between all stakeholders, irrespective of their personal faith. Because the school's Christian values are so thoroughly embedded in the life of the school, they influence the teamwork between and among staff and leaders and have a positive and significant impact on pupils' personal and academic development. Since the last inspection, governors have ensured that there are robust systems for reflective self-evaluation. This takes place through the formal work of the governors' faith team and informal, ongoing review. As a result, leaders and governors have a deep and thorough understanding of the school's performance and distinctiveness. This places pupils at its heart and leads directly to effective strategies for ongoing improvement. Governors ensure that the school meets its statutory obligations in respect of collective worship and RE. They regularly monitor each so that they both play a key role in the excellent promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are very efficient systems for promoting staff development, with effective use being made of diocesan training. Therefore, governors are able to plan for the future leadership needs of the school and contribute to the wider Church school community.

Governors have acted to address the school's current under-subscription by adjusting the ratio of foundation to open places in order to better reflect the needs of the local area. They have also ensured that the financial challenges of under-subscription have been managed effectively and not compromised the high quality of education that the school provides.

There is a strong and productive partnership with the parish church and the regular involvement of the incumbent ensures that spiritual support is always available for any member of the school community. This partnership is mutually beneficial, engaging parents and pupils in many demonstrations of Christian compassion in action. The school lends its support to the charitable work of the church, for example in leading the charity carol service and supporting a community kitchen linked to the church. Pupils and parents recall with pride the sponsored walk led by the school which raised a significant sum in support of the victims of the Grenfell Tower disaster. This event united the community, including church and civic leaders in a public act of collective worship and confirmed that the school and church are a beacon of Christian witness to the community they serve.