

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

The Blue Church of England Primary School

North Street, Isleworth TW7 6QS

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	London
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Hounslow
Date of inspection	25 April 2018
Date of last inspection	22 May 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided 102523
Headteacher	Rachel Jones
Inspector's name and number	John Logan 892

School context

The Blue School is a two-form entry voluntary aided primary school in the parish of All Saints, Isleworth. The school is expanding with 454 pupils currently on roll, including a nursery. The headteacher is new to the school and took over this term following the retirement of a long standing headteacher. The number of pupils for whom the school is able to obtain additional funding is below the national average and there is an average number of pupils have special educational needs or learning disabilities. The majority of pupils are from practising Christian families and drawn mainly from three parishes.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of the Blue School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's Christian character is very strong, deeply embedded and provides a framework for all aspects of school life. This is articulated well by all members of the school community.
- The school has very high aspirations for pupils in all aspects of their learning and their daily lives. Strong Christian values enable pupils to achieve their very best outcomes whatever their starting points, whether that be those from vulnerable groups, English as an additional language or those of differing abilities.
- Both religious education and collective worship are of a high quality enabling pupils to flourish.
- Relationships in the school are strong and result from a strong sense of community and Christian character. This equips pupils well for life in the wider community.
- Leadership in the school is very strong and drives the distinctive Christian vision and values of the school.

Areas to improve

- Create more opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning monitoring, leading and evaluating collective worship.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to learn about the global dimension of Christianity.

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

The Christian character at the Blue school is very strong, deeply embedded and provides a framework for all aspects of school life. The school statement 'I am a child of God' provides the basis for all of school life. This is articulated well by all members of the school community 'in a relaxed and living way', as one parent described it. Parents speak highly about how the school prepares their pupils for next stage of education and life in general. The school has very high aspirations for pupils in all aspects of their learning and their daily lives. Pupils achieve well at the Blue School and the strong Christian vision and values enable pupils to achieve their very best outcomes whatever their starting points, whether that be those from vulnerable groups English as an additional language or those of differing abilities. This is drawn from their strong and shared Christian belief that all deserve to flourish and this results in high levels of attainment for pupils at the school. Attendance rates are high and the very few issues surrounding attendance are addressed with care and compassion reflecting the school's concern for the individual. Relationships in the school are exemplary and this is shaped by their distinctively Christian vision and outliving of shared values. An example of this is the child in year 2 who said, 'I know I am a channel of God's peace when I show love and kindness if someone is having an argument.' Cross year group activities such as the buddying system also help to reinforce this. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is strong and is framed by the Christian values of the school. Pupils are able to use and reflect on a wide range of Christian values, often linked to Bible stories, and are able to apply them to their own situations. The distinctively Christian character is very well developed in the general life of the school and through religious education and collective worship but is not yet as well developed throughout other curriculum areas. The school provides a rich and wide curriculum for pupils to explore. Pupils speak highly of the opportunities they have beyond the formal curriculum, such as the Bushfire project in Uganda and the various sporting and extra-curricular opportunities. Whilst the school has a large proportion of pupils from Christian families, the small numbers of pupils from other faiths are fully included and throughout the school there is high degree of understanding and respect for diversity and difference. Pupils have developed an understanding of Christianity in its global context, but opportunities to explore this in greater depth are not yet fully exploited. Religious education (RE) is a strong and dynamic feature of the school. Pupils are excited and challenged by the RE curriculum which has a strong influence on determining the Christian character of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship has a centrality to the life of the school. High quality acts of worship enable pupils and adults to engage in rich and varied worship experiences. Worship is valued by all the school community and seen as a good opportunity for prayer and reflection. Pupils express their enjoyment for worship. 'I like lighting a candle so we can sense God's presence' as one pupil said and other pupils describe how they like to pray, read the Bible and reflect on the large cross in the hall. The wide range of opportunities for pupils and adults to engage in prayer and reflection is extensive and makes a real and tangible difference to their values and attitudes. One pupil explained that collective worship 'makes me feel closer to God'. Staff appreciate the early morning prayers led regularly by clergy. Pupils speak highly of opportunities for prayer and worship both within formal collective worship and through informal opportunities. One example of this is the 'post box to God' in the RE hub where pupils write prayers and post them in the box. One pupil explained that 'if you are having a bad day you can say sorry to God' using the post box. Worship regularly includes biblical material and enables pupils to develop a good understanding of Christian belief. There are many opportunities to engage in different forms of worship reflecting the different Anglican and Christian traditions. Pupils talk confidently about the importance and value of collective worship. Prayer includes a wide variety of different 'styles', such as the formal school prayer, quiet personal prayer and extemporary prayer. Collective worship enables pupils to apply the content to their everyday lives, for example in one act of worship pupils were invited to consider what it means to be chosen to be in a team and how being in God's team they can change the world by loving others. There are opportunities for pupils to engage in planning and leading worship, particularly through the class worship that each class leads in turn. Beyond class worship and a few other special services, opportunities for pupil involvement in planning and evaluating acts of worship are more limited. Through collective worship pupils gain a strong understanding of the life of Jesus and develop a good understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Local clergy are fully involved in planning and leading collective worship and this, alongside the involvement of others in the school community ensures that worship opportunities are rich and varied.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Teaching and learning in religious education (RE) is of a very high standard. Teachers and teaching assistants demonstrate strong subject knowledge, which together with clear and consistent planning helps to provide exciting and dynamic lessons. Learning activities help to develop a good balance between learning about religion and

exploring what pupils can learn from Christianity and the other faiths studies. There are many examples of this working in practice. For example, in the Reception year pupils exploring the creation narrative through play were nursing toy animals said that 'the Bible tells us we have to look after the animals'. In another example, Year 6 pupils learning about the Buddhist 8-fold path were encouraged to consider what their own 'path' might consist of. One pupil, for example, said that the concept of 'right understanding' helped her remember to 'hear everybody out in the playground, which would stop arguments'. Responses to biblical and other stories are often very thoughtful and practical, such as the pupil in Year 4 who wrote about Jesus' legacy saying 'I will follow in Jesus' footsteps by helping people that are hurt just like the man in the Good Samaritan story'. The school caters well in RE for pupils of differing abilities and work provides a high level of challenge for each of these different groups. Pupils' thinking is further developed by the good use of questions about meaning and purpose, particularly through the good use of dialogue in marking. Achievement in RE is high with pupils making very good progress throughout each year group. Standards in RE are at least as good as those in other core subjects, such as English and maths. The school is developing its assessment practices in RE and this is enabling greater focus on the teaching of a wider range of skills such as enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection. There are many examples of these skills being used very effectively indeed, resulting in a strong ability to consider and reflect on significant life questions and other questions of meaning and purpose. The rich RE curriculum means that pupils are able to gain a strong understanding of Christianity and there are some good examples of sharing in pupils own experience of Christianity as a world faith, such as the pupil who wrote about her own experience to the Holy Land with her Indian Church. The school does not as yet fully exploit opportunities to explore the global dimension of Christianity. Subject leadership of RE is extremely strong and the experienced RE leader has helped staff to realise ambitious expectations and delivered significant improvements. Monitoring and evaluation in RE is thorough and as a result the quality of teaching is mostly outstanding and never less than good. The RE subject leader supports staff which enables standards in religious education to be consistently high.

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

The Blue School has a very strong Christian vision of every one as 'a child of God', which is supported by Christian values. This is shared throughout the school community and impacts on all aspects of the school's life. Leaders have effective systems for understanding each pupil and what needs to be done to ensure that they achieve to the best of their ability. They work tirelessly to ensure that pupils succeed not only in their academic well-being, but also their overall well-being. Governors have a clear understanding of their role in the strategic development of a church school. This has been particularly evident in the recent recruitment and appointment process of the new headteacher which exemplified the impact of a strong Christian vision on the recruitment process. Parents speak highly of the holistic nurturing nature of the leadership of the school and are very clear that this is a result of their strong Christian vision and values. Leaders are skilled at securing the impact of this vision through clear, monitoring and evaluative procedures. As a result, arrangements for religious education and collective worship meet statutory requirements and overall strategic planning is a strength of the school and impacts on all areas of school life. This has meant that succession planning has been extremely well managed, particularly with the handover for the new headteacher who has, in a very short period of time, gained a good understanding of strengths and areas for development in the school. This, combined with the new senior leadership structure, puts the school in a strong position to further develop the leadership and vision of the school as a church school. The school engages well with training opportunities within the diocese, with other local church schools and many staff have been part of a wide range of programmes for leadership in church schools. Partnerships with local churches, the deanery and the diocese are strong, and this adds to the richness of their Christian identity as a school. Clergy play a significant role in further developing these links and provide strong support for the governors, the headteacher and other leaders. The school also has developed many other links within the local and global community which helps to develop pupils understanding of their local environment and their global identity.

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