

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

<b>St Dunstan's Church of England Voluntary Aided School</b>	
Anne Boleyn's Walk, Cheam, Sutton, Surrey, SM3 8DF	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Southwark</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local Authority	Sutton
Dates of inspection	24 January 2018
Date of last inspection	March 2013
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided – 102992
Head of School	Julia Corby
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)

### School context

This large primary school also has an attached nursery. The majority of pupils are White British with a higher than average, and increasing, percentage of pupils from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) is below the national average, as is the percentage for whom extra funding is received due to social or economic disadvantage. Those who speak English as an additional language remains just below the national average, but has increased significantly recently. Since the previous denominational inspection there have been significant changes in staffing, including a new headteacher.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Dunstan's Voluntary Aided Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's longstanding and strong Christian ethos is well embedded. It underpins and successfully drives forward developments across school life.
- It's caring and compassionate nature is a clear expression of the key Christian belief of loving God and loving your neighbour. This is very well reflected through the school's Christian values and the excellent relationships and behaviour in evidence.
- School leadership is effective in living out the school's Christian ethos and promoting high expectations and providing strong support for both pupils and staff.
- Worship and religious education (RE) make effective contributions in sustaining and celebrating the school's Christian and inclusive life. They impact very positively on pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.
- The partnership with the parish is strong and makes a significant contribution to the school's distinctive Christian character.

### Areas to improve

- Embed the more rigorous assessment criteria that are in the process of being introduced across RE so as to evidence and improve the attainment and progress of all pupils.

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

The school motto is, 'St Dunstan's – excellence through Christian education'. This effectively expresses its Christian foundation which is deeply ingrained and based on the uniqueness of the individual as a child of God. The school's Christian underpinning is conveyed through its values such as love, friendship and forgiveness. The school's vision provides a focus which consistently supports the academic and personal development of pupils. This leads to effective monitoring to support learning and strong pastoral systems that place pupils' wellbeing at the heart. Thus, pupils are well known and cared for. Academic performance is monitored regularly and effective short and longer term interventions to address issues are actioned. Pupils are confident, knowing their views are listened to. They express the impact of the Christian values on school life and on their own behaviour. 'When you fall out or do something wrong you should say sorry. Jesus forgives you when you do that,' as one pupil reflected. Whilst another said, 'Compassion means showing love like Jesus did. So when you give to a charity you should do it from love and concern rather than just to feel good yourself'. Mutually respectful relationships and excellent behaviour from pupils reflect the school's Christian life in action very well. Pupils feel happy in school which contributes to attendance being above the national average. On those few occasions when behaviour or attendance get in the way of learning, the school works closely with the pupil and their family to support and bring about improvement. This has a clear focus on justice and forgiveness as a way of expressing respect for each other. Attainment is above average. The vast majority work at or above age related expectations and make at least good or better progress. Any dips in academic performance are thoroughly analysed and practice adapted well to address issues. There is a small gap in attainment between those pupils who are both SEND and economically or social disadvantaged and their peers. However, in school data, moderated across other schools, shows that these pupils are still making good progress. SMSC development is given a high priority within the curriculum and through the wide-ranging extra-curricular provision. The school has rightly identified the need to refresh approaches to the whole curriculum and its relation to the school's Christian ethos and SMSC. This is due to the recent turnover in staff. It has consequently put firm plans in place to use an approach to teaching which addresses these issues, called, 'What if... learning'. In RE and through worship, pupils have opportunities to consider a broad range of spiritual, moral and ethical issues. They are encouraged to consider how these relate to their own life and life in the wider world, including addressing British values, as defined by the Department for Education. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility for themselves and others both formally and informally. The celebration of religious diversity is built into the RE curriculum, which successfully encourages pupils to develop an appreciation of the difference and diversity in beliefs and practices across a range of faiths. Pupils' understanding of Christian denominational and cultural differences is periodically addressed but understanding of these aspects is less well developed.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding**

The worship programme is central in sustaining and promoting the school's Christian foundation. It is very well planned and delivered to include Christian values, key Christian festivals and Anglican practices, including opportunity to share in the Eucharist. Local, national and international events are drawn on to enhance worship further. Thus worship effectively supports pupils and adults in their appreciation of worship and its impact on school life as well as on their own lives. Whole school, key stage and worship in class provides a varied programme. This is appropriately enhanced through visits to church. Worship is well led by senior leaders and other staff, by clergy and a church worker, as well as by pupils. Worship is expressly Christian, drawing on, for example, biblical teachings and using key Christian prayers, including the Lord's Prayer. This means that pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of the importance of the Bible for Christians. By lighting a candle to mark worship time and the presence of Jesus they engage regularly with his centrality within the Christian faith. Appropriate opportunities to address the Christian belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit are given in worship and deepened through work in RE. Whilst being openly Christian it is inclusive and respectful of those of other or no faith background. Thus it makes an effective contribution to enhancing the school's community and 'family feel'. Worship is appropriately reflective and challenging. For example, in an excellent act of worship for Key Stage 2 focused on the Parable of the Good Samaritan, pupils were fully engaged and challenged to go from the gathering to be the Good Samaritan in the school, at home and in the world. Pupils respond positively in worship and enjoy it. They see its relevance, so that worship is, 'important and part of the pattern of what we do in school. It shows that we are a Church school', as a pupil commented. Another reflected that worship was important to them because, 'it gives you time to think and communicate with God. It's nice being together and sharing'. Prayer is important across school life so that, for example, as well as praying during worship time pupils have opportunities to pray at other times of the school day. Prayer and reflection areas are in each classroom and in the entrance hall. These provide opportunities to write individual prayers and to request prayer for others. A school prayer is regularly said which places the work of the school in God's hands. Whilst the prayer and reflection areas are used in class they are very closely aligned in most classes with RE work being undertaken currently. This leads to some confusion between the differences between RE and worship. The worship programme contributes effectively to pupils' deep spiritual and moral development. It is

very well monitored and evaluated, principally by the Faith Committee with appropriate input from other members of the community. This leads to its relevance at the centre of school life being consistently reinforced and developed.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good**

RE has a high profile and its importance in supporting the school's Christian and inclusive ethos is very well expressed and celebrated. Standards are broadly in line with those across the school and high in relation to national expectations. Pupils make at least good and often accelerated progress from their various starting points, well supported by effective and focused teaching which is at least good and often outstanding. The RE curriculum is appropriately balanced between developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. It also appropriately focuses on considering and reflecting on issues of religious and moral concern. It provides a wide range of activities which engage pupils well and support their enjoyment of the subject. Through RE they develop their writing and discussion skills as well as skills of interpretation, analysis and reflection. Pupils share their personal ideas articulately within a respectful and open learning environment. This contributes deeply to their learning. Pupils see the relevance of the subject in terms of, for example, 'RE is good because it helps you think about what you should do and how you should live'. It also, 'helps you learn about your own faith and other peoples' so that you can be knowledgeable and respectful'. Pupils are attentive and engaged in their learning. Building on a firm foundation, the school has recently reviewed its RE curriculum, based on the new scheme of work produced by the Diocese. Some significant and necessary changes to the curriculum have been made but are not yet embedded. As part of the changes, and in keeping with school practice, alterations to the assessment process for RE have recently been made. This has rightly brought assessment practice in RE into line with English, mathematics and science as the other core subjects in the school. It is also more rigorous practice. However, these necessary changes are not embedded across the RE curriculum. RE is very well led and managed by two members of staff who work closely together. The subject leaders provide effective support in developing RE. In school monitoring by senior leaders and the subject leaders take into account a broad range of evidence including work in books, lesson observations and the gathering of pupil responses. This is well used to inform governors of strengths and areas for development and to refine practice further.

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

The school's deeply embedded Christian vision has successfully sustained the school through some significant changes since the time of the previous denominational inspection. Changes to staffing, brought about through retirements, promotions, relocations and changes of career, have been successfully handled. New staff are very well supported and inducted into an understanding of the school's Christian ethos and values and how these impact on life and work in the school. In-service training and continued professional development successfully supports staff and succession planning within the school. Reflecting the changing nature of the locality, the increase in the school's ethnic diversity has been welcomed and celebrated. The significant increase in the percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language, some at the very early stages of English acquisition, is very well supported both within school and by the effective use of outside agencies. The headteacher and her deputy work very closely together and positively set the tone in ensuring the school's Christian service drives forward its daily life. High aspirations for both academic excellence and strong personal development to its pupils are clearly based on the value of the individual, created by and precious to God. This means that achievement is high. The committed governing body, as a whole and through its Faith Committee, work closely with leadership to ensure these priorities are kept in mind and fulfilled. There are firm plans in place to develop a pupil Faith Committee to mirror the governing body group and to deepen further discussions about the impact of the school's Christian distinctiveness. Leaders, including governors, know their school well. This leads to a detailed and accurate self-evaluation of its nature as a church school which, in turn, means that effective action planning is in place to maintain and improve practice. Committed and very well focused leadership for both RE and worship is secured and both areas meet statutory requirements. The whole curriculum is underpinned by the school's Christian vision and values. Appropriate opportunities are taken to address these in different subject areas. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and its Christian underpinning. They see how the school's Christian values have a strong impact on their children's behaviour and attitudes. This is recognised, for example, through the compassion and respect children develop. Links with the parish are longstanding, deep and mutually supportive. There is strong clergy involvement and members of the congregation are governors. The incumbent left recently and effective support is in place to maintain clergy involvement during the intervening period. Links with local businesses and community organisations, including other Christian denominations and other schools in the area, are well established. Links with the Diocese are well drawn on through the headteacher, who is involved on two diocesan committees and through courses and advisory support. All these links impact positively on school practice.