

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

<b>St Luke's Church of England School (Foundation)</b>	
Acre Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT2 6EN	
<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>Southwark</b>
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Thames
Dates of inspection	12 December 2017
Date of last inspection	November 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary – Foundation –VA – 102604
Head of School	Gareth Dutton
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott (161)

### School context

The school is oversubscribed. It has nursery provision and generally one form of entry, although it has increased to two forms of entry periodically to meet local need. Most pupils are White British. There is a small and growing percentage from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is well below average. The percentage with special educational need or disability is below average. The percentage who speak English as an additional language is around average. Most are from Christian backgrounds with a small and growing percentage from other religions or with no religious background represented.

### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Luke's Foundation school as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's embedded Christian foundation clearly underpins and drives forward its development as a church school, successfully influencing the high academic outcomes, respectful relationships and excellent behaviour of pupils.
- There is a respectful and purposeful learning environment across the school, enhanced by effective displays, which expresses the school's mission of, 'High expectations....reflecting the example of Jesus', very well.
- The varied worship programme has a high profile and contributes effectively to conveying the school's Christian foundation and developing its ethos, virtues and values.
- Mutually supportive and solid links between the school and the parish church are deeply rooted in a mutual understanding of Christian service to the community.

### Areas to improve

- Extend the involvement of pupils in regularly planning and leading acts of worship and in evaluating the impact of the worship programme in order to refine and enrich the existing strong provision.
- Embed recent changes to assessment practices in religious education (RE) in line with school developments and linked to the newly introduced diocesan schemes of work.

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

The school vision is shared through its mission statement which is summarised as, 'High expectations, by all, for all, reflecting the example of Jesus'. This is well known and lived out across the school by both adults and pupils. It explicitly supports and reflects the school's aspirational ethos that is expressly Christian and inclusive of those of other faiths and none. It drives its focus on ensuring high academic attainment and progress as well as supporting pupils' personal development and well-being. Consequently, there is a happy, calm and purposeful learning environment across the school and pupils are developing as confident, thoughtful and kind individuals. Displays across the site celebrate its Christian foundation well. Pupils and staff are very well cared for, as are families, particularly at times of illness, sadness or other difficulties. Practical and prayer support is offered at such times. Attainment is consistently high when compared with local and national averages. This reflects the good progress made by pupils of different abilities and backgrounds across the school. Equally, its Christian foundation is lived out through its strong sense of community and 'family' and through pupils' caring behaviour. Pupils feel happy and safe in school and consequently attendance is above the national average. On those isolated occasions when behaviour gets in the way of learning, the school works consistently and compassionately to effectively support pupils and their families and bring about positive resolutions. The school's Christian foundation is based on the 'Fruit of the Spirit' outlined in St Paul's letter to the Galatians as, 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control'. These are then exemplified through a range of character virtues, such as resilience, neighbourliness and respect. As a Year 6 pupil reflected, 'Our virtues help us to live better lives because that's what Jesus showed'. Opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are wide ranging and responded to very well by pupils. For example, opportunities to discuss religious, spiritual, moral and social issues are appropriately taken in a range of subjects across the curriculum. This includes, but is not limited to, RE, history, personal, social and health education (PHSE) and literacy. Extra-curricular clubs provide opportunities for pupil leadership and enjoyment of a wide range of activities. The worship programme and prayer and reflection spaces in the hall and around the school support spiritual and moral development very well. Pupils have experience of fundraising for various charities both local, national and international. This includes sponsoring a child's education in Nepal. RE successfully encourages an appreciation of difference and diversity through considering some similarities and differences between Christianity and the world faiths of Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam. Beliefs and practices are shared and applied to everyday life. The teaching of Christianity is firmly grounded. A Year 4 pupil commenting positively about RE said, 'RE helps you learn about God and helps you respect what other people think.'

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

The worship programme is given a high priority across the school. It has a valuable role in sustaining and promoting the school's Christian and inclusive foundation. The Christian calendar, key beliefs and practices alongside the school's character virtues form the backbone of planning and delivery of the varied programme. Pupils and staff engage deeply with worship and enjoy, 'it brings us together to worship God and pray or reflect', as a Year 5 pupil said. A further example of this 'togetherness' is how Year 6 pupils sit with Reception to help them during worship time. Opportunities are very well extended through visits for worship to St Luke's Church. The frequency of these visits has increased since the time of the previous denominational inspection. Parents are invited to join in worship in church. This contributes effectively to a strong sense of belonging and community alongside providing relevant opportunities for worship. The parish priest regularly leads worship in school as well as clergy from some other local churches. An 'Open the Book' team visit the school to lead worship on Fridays. This team specifically focuses on exploring stories from the Bible. The variety of leaders helps to maintain interest. There is a strong focus on using the Bible as part of worship which contributes very well to pupils' developing understanding of its relevance for Christians. This includes its impact on helping them to make decisions about life in the world today. Pupils occasionally take responsibility for planning and leading worship but this is not a regular feature. However, pupils consistently participate and respond positively to worship and engage well with it. Pupils enter and leave the hall respectfully, join in with the responses to opening and closing sentences with understanding, and listen attentively. They volunteer to go to the front to help the worship leader and answer questions enthusiastically. Singing includes a range of modern and child-centred Christian songs alongside some more traditional hymns. These embedded practices support pupils' religious, spiritual and moral development very well. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of the significance of Jesus for Christians. They can, for example, relate the candles lit during worship to, 'Jesus as God's light for the world', as a Year 6 pupil reflected. Core Christian beliefs such as that of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit are referred to during worship and understanding extended through work in RE. This exemplified positive and appropriate links between RE and the worship programme. Anglican dimensions of worship, such as the use of an Advent wreath in the lead up to Christmas, are well supported through the programme. Prayer and reflection play a central part in worship. Since the time of the previous denominational inspection, the school has developed its use of prayer and reflection spaces. For example, a prayer tent is made available at the back

of the school hall, the theme of which changes linked to different church seasons or the character virtue being focused upon. Pupils have opportunities to sit and reflect quietly in the prayer tent or to write their prayers which they then leave in the tent.

Staff and governors monitor the worship policy and programme regularly. Pupils' regular involvement in evaluating the worship programme is limited. However, there are periodic staff, pupil and parent questionnaires which do offer the whole community the opportunity to contribute to its continued improvement. These views are taken into consideration in developments.

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

RE is treated as a 'core subject' alongside literacy, mathematics and science. This rightly recognises its importance in supporting the school's Christian and inclusive ethos. The school has recently updated its RE curriculum in the light of a new scheme of work, produced by the Diocese of Southwark. Whilst still being relatively new, the changes are building on previous practice very well and impacting positively on pupils' engagement and enjoyment of RE.

Standards of attainment and progress are high in relation to national expectations, mirroring at least those of literacy. In keeping with the school's vision, staff have high expectations of pupils' work in RE providing a range of both challenging, supportive and reflective activities to aid learning. For example, the youngest children are introduced to stories from the Bible through a puppet called Bernard, who engages them thoroughly. The oldest pupils compare and contrast the birth narratives of Jesus in the Gospels to explore the motivation of the writers and the significance of the incarnation for Christians. Pupils are attentive in their learning as they focus on content that develops knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. They are well engaged as they consider the implications of religious beliefs and practices on the lives of believers and on their own lives. Teaching in RE is well focused and at least good and often outstanding. Teachers are skilful in asking open-ended questions which prompt reflection and deep thinking. Pupils are keen to participate and offer their own thoughts whilst listening respectfully to those of their classmates. Activities are planned which develop skills such as investigation, analysis and reflection very well. Pupils are given opportunities to address the symbolism of religious artefacts and explore their significance to believers. Through this their interpretive skills have been effectively developed. These things contribute deeply to pupils' learning in RE.

The school has refined its general assessment practice recently in line with national developments. Assessment practice in RE is currently balancing the advice on assessment linked to the diocesan schemes of work with overall school changes. Consequently, assessment practice is rightly identified as an area for development in the subject's action plan. The link governor and senior leaders work closely with the effective subject leader to ensure continued development of the subject area. Regular monitoring and evaluation of standards, teaching and progress feeds into the school's action plan well. This ensures that RE continues to deepen its positive contribution to school life.

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

The headteacher is new to the school since the time of the previous denominational inspection. He has effectively built on the work of his predecessor and ensured that key issues for improvement have been well addressed. Working closely with his colleagues and governors, the school's embedded Christian foundation has been refreshed through the focus on the character virtues. Governors are appropriately involved in school life; they know it well and are deeply committed to continuing its Christian witness of service to its community. An example of this is the major decision taken to change admission criteria, a couple of years ago, to open up places to a wider number of local families. The school's self-evaluation of its Christian foundation is accurate and leads to good action planning for maintaining and improving practice. Strong leadership for both RE and worship is secured and both areas meet statutory requirements. Regular staff training for RE occurs and the professional development of staff through performance management and training opportunities is well catered for. The whole curriculum is underpinned by the school's Christian vision of high expectations reflecting the example of Jesus. Therefore, achievement is high. Parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress, through termly consultations and an annual report. Parents recognise the openness of staff and praise the school for its swift responses if ever they have a concern. The vast majority are very supportive of the school's Christian and inclusive underpinning. They see how the school's character virtues, based on its Christian foundation, are having a strong impact on their children's behaviour and attitudes. They recognise this through, for example, the respect and consideration for others that children develop. Links with St Luke's Church are deeply rooted and strong. The parish priest is a regular visitor for worship and acts as a governor. He opens the church, vicarage and his garden up for school use. Members of the congregation act as governors. Through the church and links with the wider community the school is well involved in its locality including with local residential accommodation for older people and the choir singing at local events. Links with the Diocese are being increasingly drawn on through courses for both staff and governors as well as through advisory support. These have impacted positively on school practice and on the possible future leadership of church schools.