

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Mark's Church of England Primary School

Stafford Road, Shirley, Southampton, SO15 5TE

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Winchester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Southampton
Date/s of inspection	15 th June 2017
Date of last inspection	14 June 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary 116342
Headteacher	Stephanie Bryant
Inspector's name and number	Richard Blackmore 857

School context

This is a larger than average-sized primary school. The headteacher started in her post two and a half years ago. There are 27 languages spoken by pupils at the school and a higher than average number of pupils have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is also above the national figure. The school serves families from an increasingly wide area of Southampton.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Mark's Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are good

The enthusiastic and motivating head teacher, senior leaders and governors demonstrate Christian vision and commitment.

The distinctive Christian vision and values of the school lead to positive, respectful relationships throughout the school and a high degree of nurture for each child.

There are strong and mutually beneficial links with the parish church, which combined with Religious Education (RE), ensure pupils have a good understanding of the life and teachings Jesus.

Collective and class worship leads pupils to understand the value of personal prayer and reflection; consequently, pupils take this into their own lives, impacting upon their own personal spirituality.

Areas to improve

Embed the values in every aspect of the school's work so that they can be seen in the different parts of school life.

Develop the leadership of pupils so that they have greater ownership of planning and delivering acts of worship.

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

The school knows its school community well. This includes understanding the context of its families and the challenges that they face. A Christian conviction to serve shapes the school which enables it to successfully fulfil its

responsibility to meet the academic and personal needs of learners and their families. Children make rapid progress, with any vulnerable groups receiving very good support with differentiated interventions in order to close any gaps in learning. Consequently, pupils who have special educational needs or those in receipt of pupil premium funding make good progress and achieve well. This stems from pupils' self-confidence which staff instil through a focus on each child as a unique individual. The distinctly Christian character of the school has a positive influence on the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils are helped to be aware of the diversity of different cultures and communities through their RE work and the Personal, Health and Social education programme. This sometimes includes visiting a range of places for worship. More locally, pupils use St Mark's Church as an effective curriculum resource. Respectful relationships are evident throughout the school. This impacts positively on pupils' good personal development and wellbeing. As they grow through school the children mature as kind, thoughtful and confident individuals. The Class 'Dojo' behaviour management tool is improving behaviour because it places a clear emphasis on friendship and respect through the school's values of 'Love, Equality, Inclusion and Respect'. To support this the 'Prefect' team and the school council provide an effective method for children to express and discuss their views and any anxieties. The pupils spoke warmly of the difference this and the well-developed relationships make to their enjoyment of school. However, there is further work needed to fully establish the school's values so that they are more consistently seen in the daily life of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

A strong feature of the schools' approach to worship is the way in which pupils are given time and space for their own personal reflections alongside reflections by staff. For example, the headteacher reflected very thoughtfully on food and drink that meant something to her from her childhood. This strongly encouraged pupils to reflect deeply on their own experiences and the importance of bread and wine in Holy Communion. Through provision such as this, pupils are ably supported to make meaning for themselves. This enriches their spiritual development by ensuring a full understanding of important aspect of the Christian faith. The weekly class worship, led by staff, is valued and enjoyed by pupils. It offers interactive approaches, which involve and engage them. Staff see worship as a time that unites the school as a community. Prayer is central to the life of the school. There are frequent opportunities around the school building to engage in prayer and lead payers. During a singing assembly pupils prayed with great thought and sincerity for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are confident in turning to prayer for different situations. Collective worship is distinctly Christian, is wholly inclusive and reaches out to everyone whether they have a faith or not. Children explain with confidence how the messages they hear in worship are linked to their school values and how these messages make them think and influence their lives, including how they treat others. Children have a good knowledge of a wide range of Bible stories and the teachings of Jesus which they readily connect with the core values and the belief in God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Worship is extended through special services in church. It is also strongly supported through work in RE and in personal health and social education (PHSE). Pupils of all ages are involved, enthusiastic and respectful during worship. However, some pupils do not have enough opportunity to lead worship in school and the church. Plans are in hand to increase this responsibility and extend it to more pupils, mindful of succession planning. Pupils show that they enjoy such leadership roles, for example as members of the PRIDE (Proud, Responsible, Individuals Developing the Environment) group, which also nurtures their spiritual lives.

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

The headteacher has a depth of understanding of the purpose of being a church school that has enabled the whole school community to flourish. She is fully supported by a committed senior leadership team who share the headteacher's insight and vision. This foresight enables the school to evaluate itself accurately and to plan in detail for the improvements needed. Leaders, including governors, check thoroughly and at timely points whether the desired impact is being achieved. The leaders at St Mark's primary school articulate an explicit Christian vision and are deeply committed to raising standards, aspirations and expectations at the school. As a result, the school is an inclusive community, rooted deeply in distinctly Christian values, determined to meet the areas for development identified in the last Ofsted report. Links with the local church are strong with members of the parish congregation supporting the school as volunteers in a number of ways. The new vicar has quickly established herself as an important person in the life of the school, providing professional and individual support and guidance. One key link between church and school communities is the attendance by children and staff at 'The Haven'. This is a time when different community groups meet at the church. However, they acknowledge that the school's values are not threaded completely through the wider curriculum. The knowledgeable subject leader has a good grasp of the standards and progress in RE and ensures that the profile of this subject and Christian distinctiveness remains a high priority with all governors, leaders and staff. There is a coherent approach to school improvement. This extends to the professional development opportunities available to staff, including for leaders. Bespoke training courses and support are provided for staff at different stages of their career, who have different levels of responsibility. This

ensures that leaders of the future are being developed through ongoing support and challenge now. Leaders ensure that RE and collective worship meets statutory requirements.

SIAMS report June 2017, St Mark's Church of England Primary School, Southampton.