



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

West Ham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Portway
Stratford
London
E15 3QG

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Newham

Dates of inspection: 18 November 2015

Date of last inspection: 22 November 2010

School's unique reference number: 102765

Headteacher: Paulette Bailey

Inspector's name and number: Iain Gunn 727

School context

This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupil's eligible for pupil premium funding, due to social disadvantage, is high. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs at all levels is lower than the national average. Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the majority of them speak English as an additional language. Just over half the pupils are from Christian family backgrounds and around one third are of Muslim heritage. There is a small number of pupils from Hindu or non-faith backgrounds.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of West Ham as a Church of England school are good

- The inclusive Christian ethos in which all pupils are nurtured, valued and encouraged to reach their potential.
- The Christian values which are lived out by the whole school community regardless of background.
- The strong partnership with the local community which make the school welcoming and inclusive
- The behaviour of and respect for others as demonstrated by the pupils and the school community.
- The trust and confidence that the parent body have in the school's leadership in promoting a fully inclusive school.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that the Christian character and ethos of the school is systematically monitored so that there is a clear focus on evaluating how it drives improvements.
- Include a wider range of members of the school community in planning the worship programme.

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

This is a welcoming and nurturing Christian community that lives out its mission statement: 'A highly inclusive Church of England primary school, we promote the spiritual, moral, social and emotional development, resulting in enhanced self-esteem and care for others'. West Ham school serves a very diverse community. However, there is not doubt as you walk into the building that this is a church school with Christian values at the heart. All school life and practice is rooted in the school's core values of responsibility, respect, peace, truth, perseverance, and kindness. These values are prominently displayed around the school and they form the basis of the behaviour policy. The pupils are able to link their values to biblical teachings, such as St Peter showing perseverance when he was fishing with Jesus. The values are also central to the Christian vision of the school: 'to provide high quality Christian education for all children within a Christian environment'. The school delivers a rich, diverse and exciting learning environment, where pupils are proud to belong and feel valued regardless of their back ground. Its explicit Christian vision does not exclude those from other faiths. Behaviour is very good. Pupils say is as a direct result of the important messages shared in collective worship about how to treat each other. The parents, pupils and teachers are as one in knowing that bullying of any kind is not tolerated in their school. On those rare occasion that it may happen it is dealt with swiftly and justly. Academic achievement has risen over the last twelve months and is now broadly in line with national averages. The progress that the children make is above the national expectation. The standard of learning in religious education (RE) is equivalent to other core subjects in the school. The school's RE curriculum deepens the pupils' understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. It is delivered in a way that pupils recognise its importance in helping them live in a multicultural world. Pupils' global awareness is enhanced not only through links with the diverse local community but the wider world, for example communicating schools in Kenya and France. Such activities enable pupils to gain an understanding of their place in the community and their responsibility to others in looking after God's world. Although attendance dropped slightly last year. This was due to specific circumstances around a few families. The school takes a very positive approach to working with families and meeting the needs of individual pupils, based on its Christian ethos. Pupils feel exceptionally well cared for and recognise the 'extra mile' all adults go to make their school safe and happy. This sentiment was strongly echoed by parents who recognised the importance of the breakfast club, for example, in raising pupils' self-esteem. The social moral, spiritual and cultural development is outstanding and is a real strength of the school. Pupils live the Christian values of grateful service and generosity through fund raising for charities. They also volunteer to be 'West Ham helpers' and carry out tasks for others within the school. The spirituality of the pupils has been developed in the school through the use of prayer. The children are very proud of their school prayer and how it is inclusive to all the community. Spiritual development is also enhanced by a very clear definition that was developed in conjunction with the whole school community. This is based around the 'fruits of the spirit'. Learning is not only academic but a wealth of competencies is also valued. For example, there is the 'Brilliant Club' where pupils work with Russell Group Universities, before graduating at the end of the year. There are a number of sport, music and creative clubs that the pupils attend and enjoy. Pupils thrive and feel able to make a positive contribution such as through the 'eco club' and 'healthy team'. The children in these clubs could relate them to the school's distinctly Christian ethos, 'I am in healthy club to learn first aid so I can help others' echoing the school value of kindness. The 'eco club' highlights links to the school value of responsibility.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Acts of collective worship form a central part of the school day. They have an important impact on the school as a whole and on the lives of the individuals within the community. Worship is skilfully planned and delivered so that it is Christian in character and also inclusive and sensitive to the diverse community the school serves. Through worship pupils develop a good understanding of principal Christian festivals. They also develop an age-appropriate understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Lord's Prayer, the school prayer, joyful singing and the use of candles and set responses to close the

worship are established practice. This helps pupils understand aspects of Anglican worship well. Singing and music play an important role in worship. Pupils actively participate regardless of their own religious background. There is some variety in the groupings in which worship takes place. Whole school and class worship elicit different responses from pupils due to the group size. A range of different people lead worship, including members of the local Christian community. Worship in school is enhanced by worship in the parish church four times a year. Pupils enjoy these and find peace and a 'spiritual atmosphere' as they enter the church. There is a good balance of biblical material and Christian teaching, enabling pupils to gain a deep understanding. Pupils can explain how collective worship affects how they behave and learn. All pupils, irrespective of faith or non-faith background, participate well in the worship programme which enhances the community feel of the school well. Older pupils are actively involved in the delivery of worship and the school has successfully drawn them into a pattern of evaluation. Strategies for involving younger pupils in leading worship are not well developed. Parents appreciate the contribution of worship and the impact that it has on their children. This provision is well received within the community however this could be further developed by involving a wider variety of the school community in the planning of worship such as pupils, a range of staff and clergy.

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

The headteacher, supported by governors and an enthusiastic staff team, has a clear vision for the school based on distinctive Christian values. This effectively ensures that the school adheres to its Christian mission. It is shared by all members of the school community, including parents who speak warmly of the difference it makes to their children's lives. They describe the 'family' environment in which they feel encouraged to contribute to school life. Teamwork is a strong feature of the school's inclusive environment. Staff feel valued and respected. In turn they inspire high expectations of behaviour and trust in pupils that are characteristic of the school. Parents from other faith backgrounds are supportive of the school saying that, 'the school shows our faith great respect so it is only right we show respect to the Christian character of the school'. Partnership with the diocese and local deanery provide the leaders and teachers with structured professional support in fulfilling their roles. Following the previous denominational inspection the school has put in place a number of monitoring procedures to maintain the Christian distinctiveness of the school. These include pupil perception questionnaires, parental forums and planned governor visits. As a result some new strategies have been put in place: for example the implementation of 'Bible club' as a direct response to the pupils asking for more biblical stories in worship. However, monitoring is still not systematic enough. In turn this means that the impact has not been fully evaluated and so it does not always effectively drive further developments. The leadership recognise the need to secure this area and create a more systematic plan for monitoring and improvement. As a result they have started to link monitoring directly to the improvement plan. The governors are now taking a more active role, using their expertise to influence improvement. This includes the chair and clergy observing RE lessons. Governors have also asked the headteacher to change the format of her report to them so that there is always a focus on the impact of initiatives within the school. The school provides effective professional, spiritual and personal development for staff and governors within the context of being a church school. The school has strong links with the local Church and diocese. It also has built up very strong relationships with the wider community through a variety of initiatives to bring people into the school such as special assemblies, parent's forums, coffee mornings. Statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education are met and areas for improvement given in the previous denominational report have been appropriately addressed.

SIAMS report November 2015 West Ham C of E VC Primary Stratford E15 3QG