

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Christ Church CE Primary School

45 Commerell Street

Greenwich, London

SE10 0AP

Diocese: Southwark

Local authority: Greenwich

Dates of inspection: 6 November 2013

Date of last inspection: September 2008

School's unique reference number: 100165

Headteacher: Claire Harrison & Victoria Ellis

Inspector's name and number: Kevin Edmonds / Jo Fageant Assessor 104

School context

Christ Church is a smaller than average, inner-city, one form entry school of 180. The school has well above average eligibility for Pupil Premium Grant funding and a high proportion of minority ethnic background pupils. Approximately 50% of the pupils are from church families. The proportion of children with special educational needs is above average. There has been a significant amount of change at senior leadership level. Christ Church is now in partnership with St. Mary Magdalene School in Woolwich. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have now become joint headteachers of the school for a two year period that started in April 2013.

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

- Governors and senior leaders work in an effective partnership to enrich and strengthen the Christian ethos of the school.
- The strong Christian vision articulated by leaders of the school has a positive impact on the attainment and achievement of pupils and the professional development of staff.
- Pupils understand that Christian values and Biblical teaching influences the good behaviour and strong relationships in the school.

Areas to improve

- Establish a strategic plan for the future leadership of the school which ensures the continuance of the strong Christian ethos and drive for high standards exemplified in the current temporary leadership arrangements.
- Provide support which develops the confidence of teachers that will enable them consistently to set and assess work with appropriate levels of challenge in religious education (RE) for all learners.
- Develop learners' skills and confidence in planning and leading acts of collective worship.

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

Children, staff and governors speak about and affirm the Christian values that have been agreed. These values have not yet been fully embedded in all aspects of school life. Children from the Pupil Faith Team say that people at school believe in God and that the school is welcoming, especially to new children. The school environment reflects its Christian ethos with prayer areas in each classroom and with good quality display work in evidence around the school, encouraging spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children also come to understand the importance of prayer through opportunities to share their prayers through a prayer box and taking home the class prayer book to write prayers with their families.

The senior leaders of the school model Christian living which encourages positive relationships to permeate all areas of school life. Christian values, developed in RE lessons and across the curriculum, support the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the learners. Learners are effectively encouraged to reflect on issues and their responses are valued. Learners are given opportunities to show concern and think about the needs of others. For example harvest gifts were delivered by the children to older members of the local community. The school also supports other national events, including Jeans for Genes Day. This contributes well to the school living out its Christian values.

Standards across the curriculum for all groups of pupils are in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress from their varied starting points. Children understand the school's expectations with regards to behaviour which is based on the golden rules and the motto; "Do unto others as you would have done unto you". Reception class parents are invited to watch at lunchtime when their children first start school to see how the younger children are supported by the school's Guardian Angels. Parents see how this confirms and reinforces the caring Christian ethos of the school. The number of children on role is gradually increasing due to the positive promotion of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship has a high profile in the school and is valued and shared by all members of the community. This is because the school provides a planned programme of themes which is thoughtfully led and well supported by staff leaders, visitors and clergy which develops personal spirituality. All staff attend and participate in worship.

Collective worship occurs daily and is widely enjoyed by the pupils. Parents are invited to join collective worship on a Friday in the school when children's work is celebrated and also to attend services at the parish church throughout the year. The recent harvest festival service was well supported by parents as a result of the school being proactive in encouraging families to attend. The number of children who are withdrawn from collective worship has reduced because the school has met with individual families to explain the value of collective worship within a church school. Members of the school community see the importance of worship and are able to talk about what it means to them.

Worship is distinctly Christian and central to school life. A different Christian value is selected for each half term. Biblical material is used to explain these Christian values which also have a direct link to the classroom. Teachers have the value of the half term and memory verse displayed in class. One project using photographic banners has helped to raise the profile of the school's values. This has had an impact as the children are beginning to understand and articulate their significance.

Pupils actively engage in collective worship. The choir sings enthusiastically and children read their own thoughts and prayers. Opportunities to reflect are provided. Pupils are happy and confident to share their ideas and reflections in front of different audiences, including the whole school. Pupils are given responsibilities for particular aspects but are not fully involved in planning and leading acts of worship. The children say that collective worship "helps me with my Christian beliefs"; another said that stories such as David and Goliath "helps you to stand up against bullies".

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The achievement of learners in RE is good. Attainment in RE is appropriate for their ages and ability. The school's spiritual leader makes an outstanding contribution to the development of RE. The school has made significant improvements in the quality of teaching of RE since the last inspection. Planning is of a high quality, with clear differentiated medium term planning. Not all plans are brought to life by all teachers and not all planned activities ensure that learners are appropriately challenged. Links are made to RE in other subjects where appropriate. RE is well resourced with a wide range of artefacts. RE is treated as a core subject, indicating its high status. The Spiritual Leader is a member of the senior management team.

Opportunities are given to explore the Trinity. One child articulated the Trinity as "God is three parts in one essence" and linked this to three parts of an apple. Children feel that the teaching of RE is good, although some said that they would like a little more challenge. Children record their work in many different ways including photographs, written work and creative art work.

The learners are engaged and enjoy their lessons. In Year 6 children show excellent relationships with their teachers and respond positively to challenging and thought provoking questioning. In Key Stage 1, children took part in a range of activities including dance, art and mathematics indicating the use of a range of appropriate learning approaches. All classes are well supported by effective support staff and visiting governors. Opportunities are taken to create a special atmosphere at the start and the end of a lesson promoting spiritual growth. For example in Year 2 the children who were looking at the story of Rama and Sita entered their classroom following a rose petal strewn path lit by tea lights. One child said that it felt that "God was protecting me". In Year 4 music was played and an image of a flickering candle displayed as the children reflected on the lesson.

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

The school has recently gone through a period of significant change which has led to the collaboration with St Mary Magdalene's School. There is obvious capacity for rapid improvement. Close co-operation between both schools has led to the reorganisation of some governor structures. Opportunities for joint staff training have taken place. The two headteachers are held in high regard and offer outstanding support that has led to significant improvements in a short time. The school is considering how this arrangement will evolve into a secure structure for the future leadership of the school as a church school.

Governors and staff are committed to securing the impact of their vision through evaluation and strategic planning. Governors are working well in partnership with the school; they fulfil their statutory role. There is a developing relationship between the new rector and school; she refers to this as a "shared sense of excitement." As part of the Faith Team she meets regularly with the school's Spiritual Leader to support planning. There are strong links between the school and the church community seen clearly in the displays of children's work in church, regular reports from the Chair of Governors about the school to the parochial church council (PCC) and prayers said frequently for the staff and school.

The headteachers' termly report to the governors includes information on RE and collective worship. New governors attend diocesan training to understand their role and be able to positively challenge the school. The Faith team is strongly supported by staff and governors. It understands the school's strengths and identifies the areas for development. This group carried out a learning walk to see the use of prayer areas. The faith team also developed the idea of defining the school's Christian values and promoting them across the school. The school's improvement plan clearly incorporates objectives to develop Christ Church as a distinctive and effective church school. Arrangements for RE and worship meet statutory requirements.