

Sir John Cass Church of England Foundation Primary School

St James's Passage

Duke's Place

London

EC3A 5DE

Diocese of London

The City of London LEA

SIAS Inspection: 21 & 22 November 2005

Previous S23 inspection: 27 September 2000

URN: 100000

Head Teacher: Mr. Gerard Loughran

SIAS Inspector NS 85: Mrs. Diane von Kesmark

Context

Sir John Cass Foundation School is the only primary school maintained by the local authority in the Corporation of London. The one-form entry school serves a very diverse inner-city community. The school has recently expanded and now includes a Child and Family centre for children from the age of three months.

Summary Judgement

Sir John Cass Foundation School is an outstanding Church school with many strengths. Its ethos is distinctly Christian and the school is highly effective in valuing every member of its community.

Established strengths

- The school's Christian ethos is outstanding and palpable.
- The head teacher, senior management team and governors have high expectations for learning.
- Changes within the staff and school have been well-managed and not disruptive to learners.
- Learning is fun and so learners are enthusiastic.

Focus for development

- To continue to monitor the agreed assessment tasks in R.E. so that they may be refined or adapted as needed.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

The school makes outstanding provision to meet the needs of all its learners. Learners from all groups feel valued and special, regardless of the diversity of their backgrounds and learning needs. Learners flourish and aim to achieve their potential. Good relationships within the school community enable pupils and families to feel secure when they are experiencing difficulties in life or in learning. The student council is a forum in which concerns can be raised and solved. Children feel confident in telling staff of their concerns about life in and out of school. Spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is excellent, and the Christian ethos of the school is exemplary with much evidence of pupils' empathy with others.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

Worship is outstanding and plays a central role in the life of the school. It is a key element in its Christian witness. Acts of worship are exceptionally well-planned and varied in style. They are inspirational, and those attending respond very positively to the content and format. There are high levels of participation, in leading prayers, in reading, in answering questions and through music. Worship is consistently recognisable as Christian and utilises the skills and interests of Governors and parents. Although the Anglican tradition is honoured, the school is highly sensitive in endeavouring to ensure that acts of worship provide for the spiritual and moral development of its entire community. Worship is monitored effectively in several ways.

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education is outstanding and is clearly recognised by the whole school community as being of crucial importance in a Christian school. The subject has core status to reflect this view. Achievement in relation to other subjects and to the learners' background and prior attainment is high. Immense improvement of presentation and progression in learning was noticeable in the book scrutiny. All learners observed and spoken with enjoyed the subject, seeing its relevance to their own lives and to the school's values. The quality of teaching was exceptionally high and learners' enjoyment of the subject was highly noticeable. Teaching styles varied according to learning intentions, and this added excitement and enthusiasm to each lesson. Schemes of work are of a very high quality, reflecting the school's distinctly Christian ethos at the same time as providing education about other faiths.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

Leadership and management in this aspect are outstanding. The head teacher, senior management team and governors provide exceptionally effective leadership and they work in very close partnership. The school's Christian purpose has been well thought-out, recognising the duty to lead by Christian example and to provide an inclusive education. This is clearly communicated to parents and learners, supported by all staff and highly evident in practice throughout the school. There are highly effective systems for monitoring, evaluating and developing relevant areas, including worship. Portfolios of evidence are freely available. Learners, parents and staff speak very highly of the way they are cared for within the whole school community. The school's relationship with the parish church is very close and highly productive.