

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Christ Church Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Perry Vale

Forest Hill

London

SE23 2NE

#### **Diocese: Southwark**

School's Unique reference number: 100721

Date of inspection: 3 December 2007

Date of last inspection: November 2006

Interim Headteacher: Geraldine Constable

Inspector's name with National Society inspector's number : Mandy Watson (396)

### **School context**

Christ Church is a one-form entry primary school serving a socially and ethnically diverse inner city community. The majority of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. A few children come from practising Christian backgrounds. The number of vulnerable pupils is increasing. A significant number have learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has faced considerable staffing changes over the past three years. The interim headteacher and deputyhead have been in post since September 2007.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Christ Church as a Church of England school are satisfactory**

The new leadership, the staff and the governors are fully committed to the school's Christian vision and mission. Plans for further improvement based on the learning and personal needs of all pupils have impacted on rising standards and there is good capacity to improve further. The school is increasingly emphasising its Christian identity through its life and work and in serving the local community. Pupils and parents are beginning to respond well to this.

### **Established strengths**

- The good relationships and attitudes developing across the school promoted by its Christian character
- The drive and vision of headteacher and deputy in improving the Christian ethos of the school and building on the strong partnership between school and church
- The teamwork of governors and staff committed to developing the distinctive Christian character of the school using the self-evaluation Toolkit as a guide to self-evaluation and improvement

### **Focus for development**

- Maintain good systems and strategies recently implemented to meet the needs of all learners through the school's distinctive Christian character
- Raise standards in Religious Education (RE) further through development of staff expertise and monitoring and evaluation of standards
- Involve parents more in the development of the school's Christian community

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

The school is re-establishing itself as a 'church' school after a difficult period of considerable

change. The current senior leadership and governors are implementing the school's vision and mission effectively, maintaining the Christian ethos which was previously established. Visual evidence of its developing Christian character is found throughout the school. There are crosses and reflective areas in every classroom. Displays in the entrance and around the school are prominent and attractive and support RE, prayer and worship. The stained glass windows created by pupils are a particular focus of enjoyment. Pupils are given opportunities to see prayer as an important and integral part of the school's life. The prayer boxes in each classroom and in the entrance hall, for pupils and adults to request prayer, are increasingly used and shared in worship and assemblies. In RE and through worship, pupils are given an increasing range of opportunities to explore spiritual, religious and moral issues. However, the impact of these on meeting the needs of all learners has not yet been fully assessed and evaluated. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Improving behaviour and positive attitudes to learning reflect the strong focus on Christian values that the school is beginning to develop. Pupils from all cultures feel safe and happy at school. They know that they are part of a church school and are beginning to understand how this is shown in the ways they learn. Pupils give support willingly to others through charities and the Lent project. Parents say they are pleased that their children attend a church school. Good relationships and teamwork within the school community are characterised by Christian care and concern for others.

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

Worship occupies an important place in the life of the school and underpins its Christian character. It is effectively planned across the year around Christian themes and festivals, with good support each week from the local clergy. Worship is distinctively Christian, but pupils of other faiths say they like taking part in assemblies. Pupils say they particularly enjoy worship assemblies with the visiting clergy. A candle and music set collective worship as a quiet and reflective time of the day and children listen and behave well. Pupils were interested and focused in the Advent act of worship seen and joined in well with the hymn and school prayer. They understand the importance of this time and can talk about how they use prayer. One Year 4 pupil said, 'This is when we talk to God'. Pupils own prayers are displayed and used at different times of the school day. They are able to talk about the key Christian festivals and older pupils understand and can remember the Lord's Prayer. Although the planned new worship centre, close to school is not yet complete, the school's Anglican heritage has been supported through visits to the church for the Harvest Festival service and the Year 6 Leavers' service. This has also given pupils opportunities to contribute to the presentation of the services.

### **Religious Education is satisfactory**

Standards in RE are improving in line with progress in achievement across the school and are satisfactory. Achievement in RE has been accurately identified by the school leadership as an area for further development. This is because teachers need support in extending their subject knowledge and in using the Diocesan scheme of work, which has recently been introduced. The new RE coordinator is very committed to achieving quality teaching and learning in RE and is well supported by the Diocesan adviser. The subject is now well planned, based on the good schemes of work and pupils have access to a wide range of resources to enrich their learning. Christian teaching of morals and values relates well to other faiths, but teaching about other faiths is not yet of sufficient depth. There are good links with the school's Personal, Social, Cultural and Emotional development policies. Good progression and continuity in planning was seen across the school in lessons observed, related to Advent. RE display areas in classrooms are informative and interactive. Teachers manage behaviour well so that pupils are generally focused and enjoy lessons. Teaching assistants are well deployed and involved with the children's learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good elements. However, progress in learning is inconsistent because differentiated activities are not challenging enough in all classes and teachers have not yet developed questioning skills to extend pupils thinking and relate their learning to their own lives. Assessment for learning strategies recently introduced have not yet begun to have impact. Teachers are beginning to introduce a variety of successful approaches to stimulate pupils' interest and learning. A birthdays calendar, Advent calendar and making a cake, were effective activities to focus Reception pupils on getting ready to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. They were enthusiastic to take part and could remember why they were opening the new day on the Advent calendar. In Y6 pupils were effectively using the webpage 'Crisis at Christmas'

to think about support for those in need in the community and what they could do to support them. The reflective journals and end of unit response books for RE, completed by each class show some pupils are becoming more reflective about their learning. Although monitoring of teaching and assessment of learning in RE by the school leadership is not yet established, the RE coordinator has a clear plan for future development and staff training.

**The leadership and management of the school as a church school are satisfactory**

Strong leadership from the interim head and deputy has provided good focus on improvements across the school. With governors they have a clear and developing vision for the Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school. This has enabled them to re-establish the progress started in 2006. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, identified clearly in the Self-Evaluation Toolkit. A clear plan of development and improvement involves support from both the Diocese and local clergy, although this is at an early stage. Good links with the church and the strong support of governors have been maintained through changes in staffing and leadership. This has enabled the new leadership to make some effective impact on the life of the school in a short time. This is indicated by maintained progress in learning, the developing good attitudes and behaviour of pupils and the welcoming school environment. New staff have responded with commitment and enthusiasm to leadership's planning for development and feel valued in the school. Parents are pleased that their children are at a church school and believe it makes a difference to the development and progress of their children, but they are not fully involved in the life of the school at present. The impact of new leadership on the continued development of the Christian foundation of the school, cannot yet be fully evaluated, but there is good capacity for further improvement.

SIAS report November 2007 Christ Church Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School  
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