

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **St Mary's Kilburn Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Quex Road,  
Kilburn,  
London,  
NW6 4PG

#### **Diocese of London**

Local authority: London Borough of Camden

Date of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008

Date of last inspection: April 2002

Type of School: Voluntary Aided Primary

School's unique reference number: 100042

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Ceresa

SIAS Inspector: Gladys Vendy (N.S. 299)

### **Context**

St Mary's is a small one form entry over-subscribed school with a Nursery, situated in North West Camden and on the borders of Brent and Westminster. The school, which was founded in 1872, serves the parishes of St Mary's with All Souls, Kilburn, and St. James, West Hampstead. It moved to a new building in 1991. Although there are some fourth generation families in school there is a mobility rate of 25%. 88% of pupils come from a minority ethnic group although no one group is dominant. 35% of pupils are of Black African and Black Caribbean heritage and 13% of pupils are of South East Asian heritage. The school features among those with the highest deprivation indicators. It has above average numbers eligible for free school meals, children with learning difficulties and statements and those who have English as an additional language. 75% of the children are from Christian backgrounds, the others being predominantly Muslim. Since the last denominational inspection there has been a change of leadership with the current Head Teacher being appointed in 2006. The legacy of past under achievement where educational standards were below the national average is now being reversed.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Mary's as a Church of England School are good.**

The clear Christian vision of the Head Teacher, together with the strong and supportive links with the governing body and St Mary's Church has enabled the school to renew its distinctiveness and effectiveness as a Church School.

### **Established strengths**

- Strong and supportive relationships with the Church and the presence of a Chaplain within the school who supports both the teaching of RE and leads collective worship
- Worship is central to the life of the school and is a flourishing part of its Christian witness
- The school has a shared identity which contributes effectively to the social, moral, cultural and spiritual development of the community

### **Focus for development**

- Alignment of the RE policy with the scheme of work
- Evaluation of the new scheme of work with particular reference to planning, monitoring, assessment and a programme of visits and visitors
- Recording and assessing non-written and creative work for each child in RE

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

The school makes good and constantly improving provision to meet the needs of all its learners based on Christian values. Church notice boards placed at both entrances to the school show the history of the church, regular service times and special events. A display in the foyer around the statue of Our Lady features the liturgical colours, the church season and the school prayer. SEN and EAL pupils are identified early and given very good support both in the classroom and outside that impacts positively on their progress. Behaviour in the school is good and well modelled by the staff. Behaviour is supported through the weekly celebration assembly and there is a clearly defined set of rewards and sanctions. Pupils are trained through Child Line to be peer supporters and make a positive impact upon relationships in the school playground. Parents feel that the school is a 'special place, loving and caring'. The school strives to be fully inclusive and is piloting the use of SEAL resources to support social and moral development. A breakfast club is about to start with a nearby school. There is a wide variety of extra curricular activities which contribute to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the children. The diversity of pupils' heritage is celebrated through the curriculum, in particular the marking of Black History month. The School Council feels that through its voice it impacts upon school life and pupils proudly talked about the difference they have made to the playground, the toilets, school meals and initiating the wearing of a uniform. Year 6 children read with the Reception Class and some of the older children help to supervise playtime in the Nursery. The learning mentor supports parents, children and staff and assists the transition to Key Stage 3. Views are regularly collected from children, parents, staff and the local residents. Each term six children from each class complete a 'pupil voice' questionnaire. A number of church members volunteer their help in school. Children recognise the need to work together to help others and support charities both at home and overseas.

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

The impact of worship on the school community is good. The very clear worship policy and mission statement affirms the centrality of worship in the school. Worship is carefully planned across the year and the themes based on the liturgical year supports the school's Anglican heritage. There is a weekly pattern of worship which includes Key Stage worship, whole school worship and class prayers. Nursery children attend whole school worship once a week and always join with the school for services in the church. Worship follows a clear liturgical form beginning and ending with responses and a time for reflection. Two acts of Key Stage worship were observed and both times children came in silently to recorded music. The atmosphere was reverent and children understood the meaning of the lighting of the candle on the mobile altar. The theme in both cases was the Baptism of Jesus and there was distinct progression between the Key Stages. All children showed good prior knowledge and took an active part in the presentation through a Bible reading, drama and prayers. The Lord's Prayer and school prayer are known by the children and said at each act of worship. The children were well behaved, responded enthusiastically and everyone sang with an uplifting joyfulness. Year 6 children are encouraged to write the prayers for many of the acts of worship. Children say they enjoy worship and that prayer is more regular now. The school council feel that other faith practices and faith festivals are respected. The display board in the hall shows the theme for collective worship together with the church season and the reading and prayer for the week. All staff attend worship in both school and church and feel that it unites the community together in a special way. The school attends church for the main Christian festivals and some children are being prepared for Holy Communion and Confirmation. A significant number of children attend Sunday worship and a twice termly 'School Sunday' is held. The impact of worship upon the school community is strengthened by the presence of the School Chaplain who leads worship each week in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There are many whole school events where the church and community come together.

### **The effectiveness of Religious Education is satisfactory**

Since the appointment of the present Head Teacher the status of Religious Education is being raised. The use of the Solihull scheme is being replaced by the London Diocesan scheme of work and currently rolled out in all but Year 6. This scheme has Christianity as a primary focus with a required input of comparative religions. The RE policy has yet to be revised to take account of this. The RE co-ordinator and School Chaplain have worked hard to ensure that the scheme of work is well understood and clear. It is initially being taught by them and another RE specialist. There is planned INSET for all staff. Very good medium and short term planning was seen. The quality of learning and teaching observed was always at least satisfactory with the pupils overall showing good prior knowledge. In the Foundation Stage RE is taught as a discrete subject and also shows very good links with the Early Learning Goals, as for example, through the bulbs and flowers planted to show new life and forgiveness in the story of Jonah. Children in Key Stage 1 were focussing on the journey of the Magi and good use of 'Godly Play' elements enabled them to empathise with the kings and to think how they might be guided to Jesus. In the lower Key Stage Two children considered the importance of Jesus as Messiah through a range of Nativity pictures. They asked some very searching questions and the follow up work was carefully differentiated to support all children. The lesson observed in the older juniors was of a very good pace and made excellent cross curricular links with history work. Some pupils' homework on 'giving thanks to God' was impressively integrated with a display about Corrie Ten Boom. Pupils were able to empathise with her feelings and write about her experiences. One boy declaimed his work in 'preacher style' dramatically telling the class 'you are special'. Assessment has been set up to use the national level descriptors and is being developed alongside the introduction of the scheme of work. There is a very good portfolio of children's work. The new scheme of work has yet to be embedded and evaluated with particular reference to planning, monitoring, assessment and a programme of visits and visitors to enhance the children's learning. Children say they enjoy RE and now do 'fun' things in lessons. Follow up work sometimes takes a practical form and ways to record non written and creative work are not yet established. There are no withdrawals of pupils from worship or Religious Education. The approach to the subject together with very good support from the Diocesan Board shows that there is very good capacity for improvement in this subject.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school are good**

The Head Teacher is making a marked impact upon the quality of learning and teaching in the school and gives clear guidance to promoting the Christian ethos of the school. He works in close partnership with the Senior Leadership Team, including the school Chaplain and the Governing Body to further the pupils' spiritual and moral development. The school mission statement which forms part of all revised policies, and is clearly displayed around the school, embodies the principles of God's love, uniqueness of the individual and service to others in a clear Christian context. The governing body has a close involvement in the life of the school as a church school and through their assigned links spend a day each term with their class, including attending collective worship, and report back to the Governing Body. The Church has bought the school a Christus Rex that is displayed in the school hall. There have been few changes of staff and this has impacted upon the school as a safe and secure place. Regular surveys of stakeholders' opinions cover a wide range of issues, including those relating to the school as a church school, and have led to a better understanding of the school's ethos. There are clear links between the church and school websites. The school is very well supported by the diocese. The key issues from the last denominational inspection have been addressed. With the renewed vision of the school as a church school and the developing strength of the leadership and management team and the positive support of the governors, including the clergy, there is very good capacity for improvement.