

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Chippenham Mews
Paddington,
London
W9 2AN

Diocese of London

LEA: City of Westminster
School's Unique reference number: 101139
Date of inspection: 11th March 2008
Date of last inspection: November 2003
Headteacher: Ms Samantha Adcock
SIAS Inspector: Miss Gladys Vendy (NS 299)

Context

St Peter's is an oversubscribed one form entry school situated in the Parish of St Peter's, Paddington close to a main London thoroughfare. Pupils live in an area of significant socio-economic disadvantage. A large majority of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds (80%) and speak English as an additional language. There is an above average number of pupils with learning difficulties and statements and the number receiving free school meals is high. Mobility of pupils is higher than average but staffing has now stabilised after a period of considerable movement. 45% of pupils are from Christian backgrounds, the remainder being predominantly of the Muslim faith. Great care has been taken to make the best of a cramped site and the playground provides a bright, colourful environment decorated with ceramic mosaics.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

The school is particularly effective in promoting inclusiveness where every child matters. The caring and stimulating Christian ethos is reflected in all aspects of school life. Pupils' spiritual, academic, personal and social development is enhanced by the Christian vision which is lived out within the school.

Established strengths

- Inclusiveness which is based on a strongly shared set of Christian values
- Leadership that promotes the Christian vision gives a strong sense of corporate endeavour supporting the excellent relationships of children, staff and governors with each other.
- Spiritual development of pupils which is underpinned by a clear spiritual policy, opportunities for reflection both in collective worship and very good RE teaching.

Focus for development

- Formal evaluation by Governors of collective worship

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

This is based on a very clear mission statement about the school being founded on Christian values and supported by the aims which focus on achievement for all. These are embedded in all policies and guidelines. The school places great emphasis on being an inclusive school that fulfils its original foundation to serve the local community. As a parent remarked the 'Christian ethos runs through all aspects of school life'. The diversity of pupils' backgrounds is celebrated in many ways and different beliefs and cultures are highly respected. It is adept at early identification of pupils with learning difficulties who are given excellent support including that from a drama therapist. Similarly, children who are gifted and talented are given plenty of enrichment opportunities. All are encouraged to recognise their God given talents and self assessment techniques are used against success criteria to enable children to become more aware of their own strengths. Development of the creative curriculum and the RE scheme of work ensure that other cultures and beliefs are explored. Spiritual, moral, emotional and cultural development is planned into the curriculum. Visual evidence that this is a church school abounds. Displays in the school hall include named Christian values, personalised 'Every Child Matters' posters and Salvadoran crosses where signs of suffering are balanced by signs of hope. Written questions on displays provoke children's thinking. Each classroom has a designated RE and prayer area that encourages spiritual development and makes the current RE theme visible to all. Photographs in the reception area include community officers as part of the school family and a board where parents are encouraged to write comments. One of these perfectly reflects the school community 'I love the ethnic diversity, the beautiful mosaics, the encouragement and fostering of self worth'. A culture of care, courtesy and respect is paramount and the excellent relationships which are evident between all groups are well modelled by a united staff team. The behaviour policy emphasises self control and responsibility and disagreements or conflicts are resolved through fresh starts and forgiveness. The school council takes its responsibility seriously and has already impacted in the areas of the playground, uniform and development of the curriculum. The school has gained the ActiveMark Gold award and Healthy School and Investors in People status. Children recognise the need to help others and support charities both at home and overseas. The school is currently involved in a research project 'looking at Faith School ethos'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is of central importance in the life of the school and is seen as underpinning its Christian character. The Head Teacher, who is the worship co-ordinator, plans the programme of themes that are linked to Bible stories and include church celebrations and saints days. Major Christian festivals are celebrated in St Peter's Church. There is a regular weekly pattern of worship and parents are invited to class led assemblies. Prayer is an integral feature of school life and children speak positively of the opportunities to pray together, to reflect and have thinking time and of how prayer has helped them to manage difficult situations. They recognise that prayer helps them to understand their place in school and in God's world. Pupils know the Lord's Prayer, responses and other prayers. Prayers are also said during RE lessons. The behaviour of everyone in the observed act of worship was excellent. Pupils came in silently to music and a picture on the whiteboard encouraged them to engage in reflection. Children showed very good recall of the previous act of worship about Jesus in the temple and Mary Magdalene anointing Jesus' feet. Very good links were made with the simnel cake from Mothering Sunday and the disciples at the last supper. Children could name every disciple and enjoyed doing so. The children were actively responsive and had written and read the prayers of intention. They were excited by the choice of hymn and sang tunefully and enthusiastically. Children contribute to worship on a regular basis through readings, dance, drama and music. The recently appointed Vicar leads a weekly act of worship and feels the school takes its relationship with the parish seriously. During the interregnum the school was well supported by the area dean, other clergy and youth workers. Worship, which is sometimes attended by governors, is well monitored but not formally evaluated. Children are aware of the diversity of the Anglican faith through visits to other local churches, cathedral events at St. Paul's, Proms Praise at the Royal Albert Hall and the links the Anglican church has made with Mozambique and Angola.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is outstanding

The high status of RE is reflected through the passion and enthusiasm of the Head Teacher who is the co-ordinator. The Solihull scheme of work is used and has recently been updated and reviewed

successfully taking a greater account of the balance of the two attainment targets and creating good cross curricular links. There are detailed long, medium and short term plans. There is very good monitoring of RE through regular work scrutiny, classroom observations and planning. The books seen showed very good progression and development through the key stages and were assessed against the learning intentions. Standards were very good and in line with those in other core subjects. The school has resources of a high quality that contribute to RE being seen as a lively and colourful subject. Assessment procedures are firmly embedded. Pupils are encouraged to self evaluate their understanding using 'I know', 'I feel' and 'I have learned' headings which teachers level through the accurate use of national level descriptors. These assessments are completed at the end of each unit of work. The quality of learning and teaching observed was always outstanding. Features such as excellent questioning which develops thinking skills, the promotion and understanding of relevant vocabulary and key questions and inbuilt opportunities for reflection, when a candle was lit, make a distinct contribution to spiritual development. The response of pupils was always positive and they showed their enjoyment, very good prior knowledge and understanding. They were also inquisitive about their faith and confidently asked insightful and thought provoking questions. The youngest children were learning about the celebration of birthdays relating this to the birth of Jesus. The story of Easter was being taught across the school and showed very good progression. Key Stage 1 children had the opportunity to learn about the last supper through the foot washing ceremony which they re-enacted. This enabled them to empathise with the feelings of Jesus and his disciples. Lower juniors focussed, appropriately, on Peter's part, creating identifiable freeze frames for specific parts of the passion story. The older children built on the previous weeks visit to the cemetery as part of their topic 'the final mystery'. They confidently discussed the Resurrection of Jesus and were able to discuss how Easter is relevant today to people of all faiths. In all classes a good pace was set, very good use was made of information technology and shared talking allowed all children to take an active part in the lesson. Differentiation was carefully planned and all lessons had an extension activity for the more able child. Teaching assistants gave positive support whether or not they were Christians. Children visit other faiths places of worship to enhance their learning as appropriate. RE is reported on at Governing Body meetings

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

The Head Teacher has a strong Christian vision for the school which is confidently shared with all the staff and is committed to raising the effectiveness and quality of teaching and promoting sound Christian values, witness and inclusion at every level. The development of collective worship and spirituality is given high importance in the leadership of the school. This is articulated in all public documentation and shared with all stakeholders. The mission statement and aims of the school drive the school development plan which includes sections on the development of spirituality, RE and the development of a shared vision which reflects and celebrates the school's Christian foundation. The admissions criteria provide a balance of open places that helps the school to fulfil its mission. The Senior Leadership Team and closely involved Governing Body are excellent role models who contribute significantly to the strength of the school as a church school. The school vision is realised through the strong Christian presence which is a vital strand in the cohesive quality of the school community, high staff morale and very good relationships. There are effective inclusive, recruitment and induction procedures that have a firm Christian base and the school was justified in waiting for the right candidates before making the appointments that have now given the school stability. Views of parents, pupils and staff are regularly sought and acted upon including those relating to the Christian ethos of the school. Parents speak warmly of the caring nature of the school and the high quality education their children are receiving. The school has a newly formed Parents' Association which is working hard to draw in parents of all faiths and cultures. The school is very well supported by the diocese and the local authority. The school well deserves its reputation in the community as an effective and distinctive church school.