

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Barnabas and St Philip's Church of England Primary School	
Pembroke Mews, 58 Earls Court Road, London W8 6EJ	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	London
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Date of inspection	6 February 2018
Date of last inspection	10 December 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	100493
Headteacher	Christopher Doyle
Inspector's name and number	Emily Norman 912

School context

St Barnabas and St Philip's is a smaller than average one form entry voluntary aided primary school. Of its 208 pupils, the number eligible for free school meals and those receiving additional support for special educational needs and disabilities is lower than the national average. Pupil mobility and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are both above the national average. Standards are above average at all key stages. The school is served by the churches of St Barnabas and St Philip's. The school is oversubscribed and the majority of pupils who enter the school attend church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Barnabas and St Philip's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The strong Christian character of the school is at the heart of its drive for excellence in standards, behaviour and attendance.
- The charitable work that pupils throughout the school engage with, motivated by what they learn through collective worship, is a strength of the school and is of huge benefit to the local and global community.
- Pupils' understanding of one another's faiths, and the faiths of those in their community, strongly impacts upon their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The creative approaches to teaching religious education (RE) inspire and enthuse pupils so that they achieve extremely well and apply what they learn to their lives.
- The leadership of RE and collective worship is highly effective and the whole school is motivated and engaged to ensure these areas are of a consistently high standard.

Areas to improve

- Continue to embed the school's Christian values even further, by maximising the partnership with the newly arrived clergy.
- Utilise the local network of schools to further sharpen the assessment of RE.

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

St Barnabas and St Philip's school is a highly effective school, with above average achievement for all pupils and exemplary behaviour, which is driven by its desire for excellence within a Christian framework. All members of the school community speak passionately about the difference it makes to them that the school is a church school. The revised Christian values of the school - friendship, trust and peace – have made a noticeable difference to the lives of the pupils. Pupils say that the value of friendship, for example, has made their classmates kinder to each other and more considerate. The school has taken the time to embed these values, so that they are thoroughly understood by everyone. Pupils can give impressive examples of biblical stories which relate to these values, such as the story of Abraham and Isaac, to demonstrate what 'trust' means. Attendance is above average and the school works tirelessly to address any issues around attendance or behaviour so that all pupils are maximising their learning opportunities. The school has been extremely effective in developing a clear definition of what spirituality looks like at St Barnabas and St Philip's, which is enhanced by the breadth of worship styles the pupils experience. Pupils therefore are confident in praying both in formal and informal ways, and this enriches their experience of school. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is very strong and leads them to initiate meaningful charitable social action projects, both in the local community and around the world. The pupils are rightly proud of this and it is a key strength of this school that it is always looking for ways to help others. The care and concern that is threaded throughout this school community leads to high quality relationships, both between pupils, and also with the adults in the school. All members of the school are clear that this emanates from the Christian vision of the school, and its values. Pupils say the Christian values teach you that 'everyone should have a friend; no one should be left out' and this is evident in how they treat one another. Newly arrived pupils to the school attest to how warmly they have been welcomed in and how much they enjoy learning about the Christian faith at St Barnabas and St Philip's. Pupils also enjoy learning about a range of other faiths and cite this as one of things they like most about the school because they feel it helps them to understand others better. They say 'we are all part of God's family'. This is achieved through creative, interesting RE teaching, collective worship and the range of opportunities pupils have to learn about the lives of others, locally and around the world. RE is a highlight for pupils, who speak about it with enthusiasm.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is a real highlight in the life of St Barnabas and St Philip's school and makes a significant impact on the whole school community. In particular, the way it spurs pupils on to want to engage in social action in their local community and worldwide is exceptional. Pupils experience a very wide range of worship styles as they are linked to two very contrasting parish churches, and also worship at a third church with yet another style of worship. The way these churches work together to provide a rich programme of worship for the children is impressive. It helps pupils to learn in detail about the anglican church and its diversity, and gives them a good grasp of the church's year. Pupils, staff and parents all speak highly of the impact worship has upon their lives. Parents speak of the 'warmth and kindness' they experience and how 'relevant to life' they find worship to be, whether they are regular church attenders or not. Pupils learn biblical stories in depth, probing them and getting to the heart of what they are teaching. They have a secure grasp of the importance of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and pupils recognise, for example, that 'God can come as a dove'. Worship is strongly focused on Jesus, and pupils have learnt a wide range of biblical stories about him. Collective worship seen during the inspection, where Year 4 pupils were leading in their own class, looked at a story from the gospels which demonstrated what 'service' is through focusing on Jesus' own actions. The regularity and confidence with which pupils lead worship is impressive, and shows the impact of what they themselves are gaining from whole school worship. Reflection areas and prayer boxes in classes are well used to support pupils' prayer lives, as are formal prayers learnt by the whole school. Pupils value the opportunity to write personal prayers about their own experiences, knowing they will be kept private and will enable them to 'be closer to God in their own way'. The school's set prayers are enjoyed by pupils, staff and parents who find them helpful to reflect upon and say they make use of them at different times in their lives. Thus worship in this school equips the whole school community for their spiritual lives. The leaders of collective worship, along with the clergy (both past and present), have been actively engaged in developing worship so that it is consistently meaningful and effective. For example, ensuring class worship takes place at the same time across the school so that it can be monitored, and providing clear planning and feedback to teachers so that it is continually improving. The school is very reflective about how it can keep embedding its Christian values through worship and its relentless commitment to this is having a marked impact on what takes place on a daily basis for pupils. They are now well placed, together with the newly arrived clergy, to look at further ways to utilise their high quality worship to deepen pupils' understanding of these values.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE at St Barnabas and St Philip's is a fun, engaging and wonderfully creative subject. Pupils say they hugely enjoy the subject and value what they learn, both about Christianity and about a range of world faiths. The curriculum is enhanced by meaningful visits to places of worship and visitors from different faiths, who speak to the classes about their practices. Therefore standards are high and the quality of pupils' work is impressive, at least in line with pupils' achievement in other subjects which is well above the national average. Teachers deliver interesting lessons, with a range of hands-on activities for pupils to explore and discover. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils were handling Jewish and Christian artefacts and sorting them, whilst explaining their choices. The variety of approaches ensures that the subject is fully inclusive for pupils of all abilities. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound, because they are extremely well-supported by the two capable subject leaders, and they say they feel excited to teach RE because of this. The implementation of the new diocesan scheme of work has also made a difference to the quality of learning in RE, which was previously 'good'. Pupils say that the subject 'leaves them in awe' and they show an impressive ability to be able to analyse and explain different religious beliefs and concepts. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were drawing upon their knowledge of Buddhism to write stories with a moral, and then reflected upon which values were common to both Buddhism and Christianity. Pupils were able to do this with confidence, and explained that their visit to a local Buddhist centre had made a real difference in enabling them to do this. Their ability to understand a range of different faiths is directly impacting upon their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and they show a great deal of respect as a result. Monitoring of pupils' work shows that pupils are utilising their RE knowledge across the curriculum, for example when writing about Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai in English lessons. The school has implemented a more robust assessment system since the last inspection, and has a much clearer view of standards in the subject and what pupils need to do next to attain the highest possible standards. Staff have been well-trained in understanding the progression of skills in RE, and make good use of this when planning so lessons are pitched at an appropriate level. Leaders understand that they could refine this further, and are keen to make use of the network of other local schools they already have to do so. The drive of the RE subject leaders has had a huge impact on the quality of RE in the school, because they have made good use of external feedback and engaged with training. They show a real love of the subject which is infectious and has made RE exciting, interesting and high profile within the school.

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

The leaders of St Barnabas and St Philip's have a clear vision for excellence, which is rooted in a firmly Christian framework. Leaders at all levels are determined to achieve this for their pupils, and do so very successfully. There is a shared understanding between all leaders, including staff, governors and clergy, of the importance of the school's Christian character and seeing it enacted in the lives of its pupils. One of the local vicars described the Christian character as 'irrigating school life'. Leaders speak movingly about individual pupils who have been nurtured and developed in this school, so that they are able to achieve their full potential. They are clear about the importance of Christian values in the life of the school and have worked hard to simplify these from 12 to three so that they can be universally understood, in a deep and meaningful way. They understand the school extremely well, and utilise self-evaluation effectively so that improvements are made as and where needed. They have acted decisively, for example, on feedback from the diocese about how to develop RE and the Christian distinctiveness of the school, ensuring that every improvement point has been attended to in detail. They also seek out the views of pupils, staff and parents on a regular basis and act upon their feedback. Governors routinely visit the school and are involved in monitoring RE and worship with their diocesan advisor. They are therefore well-placed to comment on the quality of the school's provision and the impact of actions taken to improve this. They ensure that high standards of achievement, behaviour and attendance are maintained and where possible, increased, leading to a very successful and harmonious school. Parents are actively involved in the life of the school, particularly through their attendance at weekly worship. They work with pupils to organise fundraising for projects chosen by the children, such as a 'Readathon' for the World Vision charity. The school's relationship with its parish churches is very special, and has been well-maintained during a period without clergy. The newly arrived clergy have already become involved with the school and are proactively building upon the mutually beneficial partnership between the school and its churches through regular church services and special events. Their passion for the school is evident and they are keen to work with the school on the next part of their journey in embedding their Christian values, so they permeate throughout the whole community.

Staff are carefully developed in this school, with many starting as newly qualified teachers and progressing into more senior roles. They receive diocesan training and are well-prepared for future leadership within a church school. All enthusiastically support the Christian ethos and values of the school. The leadership of RE and collective worship is particularly strong and as a consequence the school meets, and often exceeds, the statutory requirements for RE and collective worship.