

**STATUTORY
INSPECTION OF
ANGLICAN AND METHODIST
SCHOOLS**



Name & address of School: **St Luke's CE School**

Kidderpore Avenue. Hampstead, London NW3 7SU

Diocese of London

School's Unique reference number: 2022000

Date of inspection: 26th September 2012

SIAS Inspector: Miss Gladys Vendy (NS 299)

LA: London Borough of Camden

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Hunt

Date of last inspection: N/A

School Context

St Luke's Free School was established in September 2011 as a school founded on Christian principles for the whole community. It was driven out of a basic need for Primary School places in North Camden, by a partnership of the local community, including members of St. Luke's church, neighbours, The London Diocesan Board for Schools and the Department of Education. It is situated in the Grade 2* listed undercroft of St Luke's church which has been properly redeveloped for the purpose. The school which is over-subscribed admits pupils on a half form entry basis. This year sees the second class of entry to the Reception year group. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. About half the children speak English as an additional language and an above average number of children are from minority ethnic groups. About one sixth of the children have identified special educational needs at School Action level or above. The school aims to offer a broad curriculum with all children learning a foreign language. An interim Head Teacher was initially appointed but a substantive appointment was made in April 2012.

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

This new school has made very good progress on its journey within its first year. It has shown integrity in being true to its aspirations to create a school with high academic aspirations underpinned by a living faith.

Established strengths

- The determination of the Leadership and Management team to set up a distinctively Christian school serving the whole community manifests itself in every aspect of school life.
- The centrality of worship and prayer in the life of the school
- The openness of the school to children of all faiths and none

Focus for development

- Formally evaluate collective worship
- Develop assessment strategies for Religious Education

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

The Christian character of the school has been clearly established from its inception. The unwavering vision to build excellence is woven through all aspects of school life and documented in all policies and procedures. Children's individual needs are met through the much strength of the staff who bring a range of expertise. This has driven improvement particularly in the provision for children with additional needs. The first group of children entered the Reception year with skill levels below the national average. The recognition of each child as an individual resulted in pupils of all groups making outstanding progress so that at the end of the year attainment was well above the national and local averages. This is evidenced in the accurate monitoring of children's progress. The Christian environment reflected in the building design and location encourages strong yet easy links to be built with the church. Visual evidence that this is a church school is apparent by the reflection areas in both classrooms and high quality RE displays around the school. Children know that the golden rules are based on Jesus' teaching to 'treat others as you would want them to treat you' and this encourages them to show respect to everyone. This makes a significant contribution to children's moral development. Pupils' behaviour is of a high standard. The admissions criteria which admit pupils geographically lead to cultural diversity and inclusivity. This encourages children to be proud of their own culture and to recognise and respect the differences in others. Families of all faiths and none are welcomed into the school and parents spoke enthusiastically of the school's openness. The Christian character of the school is having a significant impact on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children. The broad curriculum is enriched by community links with gardeners, musicians, dancers and others. Parents are extremely supportive and have used their skills to contribute to children's learning.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship is of central importance in the life of the school and is carefully planned, timetabled and resourced. It makes a strong contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the school community. Worship is led by the Head Teacher, the Vicar and his wife. The weekly pattern includes worship in the church where Biblical teaching has a significant yet sensitive place and reflects the Anglican tradition and practice of St Luke's church. Long term planning shows how the school's core Christian values and festivals, the teachings of Jesus and the fatherhood of God will be taught in collective worship. This includes introducing children to the Eucharist through sharing meals at Harvest, Easter and Pentecost. All children and staff attended the observed act of worship about Harvest. This built on previous worship of which children showed a good recollection. Carefully chosen visual material enhanced the understanding of the youngest children. Bread made by children the previous day was shared amongst everyone in a contemplative atmosphere. The worship leader made an effective link with Jesus sharing bread with his friends reinforced by a visual image of the Last Supper. The use of music, an appropriate worship song, prayer, including the school prayer, and opportunities for reflection exemplified the school's clear worship policy. All elements of prayer were present. Worship is always recorded but is not formally evaluated. A survey of children at the end of their first year showed that nearly all children enjoyed worship. Parents are invited to attend worship when it is class led or for special services. The importance of a prayer life is being developed throughout the school community. Prayer boxes have recently been introduced into classrooms and daily set prayers are a part of school routine. Children are given opportunities to say and make up their own prayers. The Vicar is active in leading a weekly staff prayer group as well as a half termly Governors' and staff group and there are plans to introduce a termly parents' evening prayer group.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good

Religious Education has been given a high profile. RE is properly timetabled, resourced and budgeted. The School Ethos group has determined the scheme of work which includes teaching about other world faiths. Initially RE was taught to the Reception Year in the context of an integrated day with a discrete focus on RE once a week. The embedded Christian ethos is reflected in the children's outstanding attainment in the EYFS areas of social development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Assessment of RE is not yet fully developed although there are plans to assess progress and to include it on the school's target tracker. It is not possible currently to make a definitive judgement on children's attainment in RE although informal monitoring would suggest that it is likely to be similar to standards in literacy. The Head Teacher led the subject in the school's first year but this role is now being shared with a newly appointed RE co-ordinator. In service training has taken place this term. The School Development Plan indicates that the RE policy will be reviewed this academic year. The church is used as a resource to deliver aspects of the scheme of work. The quality of teaching observed was good. Children were engaged and responsive particularly when they were encouraged to be reflective in learning about the parable of the sower. The story was reinforced through a number of linked play activities which encouraged children to think about aspects of the sower's story. Other children recognised that the story was found in the Bible by looking at the contents of a special treasure chest. Older children explored the concept of obedience and trust through the story of Noah's Ark. The lesson was characterised by differentiated activities which extended the more able pupils and provided targeted support to others.

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

The Governors were instrumental in setting up the school as an explicitly Christian school to serve the whole community. The values of faith, hope and love have been adopted by the Governors as core Christian values, with the addition of 'excellence' from which the aims of the school flow. The work of the Governors' Ethos Group, which includes the Head Teacher, has ensured that the Governors reflect on the Christian vision at each policy review and its practical impact is embedded into all policies and procedures. The effectiveness of this is demonstrated by the above average attendance figures which exceed the national average and the outstanding achievement of all groups of children. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school through a model of distributive leadership that offers both strategic direction and pastoral support. Care has been taken to appoint staff who actively support the principles of the school and to ensure that they are trained appropriately. Succession planning is being implemented through very good professional development. The recruitment of a permanent Head Teacher was delayed until the Governors felt confident they were appointing the right person. Both the Interim and substantive Head Teachers have clearly articulated the Christian vision of the school to the whole community. High staff morale, team work and excellent relationships between all groups exemplify the strong Christian foundation. Views of parents, pupils and staff are regularly sought, analysed and communicated. Strong partnerships have been made with a range of local communities in addition to supporting national and international charities. The school is very well supported by the diocese and the local authority. The provision for collective worship, the RE teaching and the strong leadership and management of the school impact strongly upon the school's growing reputation as an effective and distinctive church school. The school's shared self-evaluation is accurate and is linked clearly to strategies for continued improvement. St Luke's has very good capacity to develop even further.