



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Edward Betham Church of England Primary School

Oldfield Lane South
Greenford
Middlesex
UB6 9JU

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: London

Local authority: London Borough of Ealing

Dates of inspection: 8 June 2015

Date of last inspection: April 2010

School's unique reference number: 101927

Headteacher: Margaret Kolanowska

Inspector's name and number: Barbara Chevis 794

School context

Edward Betham Primary School is a larger than average school of 472 pupils on the outskirts of London. The school is on a split site with the building housing Key Stage 1 and Early Years pupils being across a narrow but busy road from the Key Stage 2 building. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language with 77.5% being from minority ethnic groups. 88% are from Christian families and a high percentage attend church regularly. Mobility is low with over 90% of pupils remaining at the school from Reception to Year 6.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Edward Betham as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school has a clear and strong Christian ethos which underpins all aspects of school life, with the result that all pupils are nurtured and supported.
- Collective worship is inspirational and inclusive with the result that pupils of all faiths feel welcome.
- Pupils have an outstanding knowledge of the Bible and biblical theology, including their understanding of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Links between the church and the school are exceptional and this has supported development of the Christian ethos of the school.

Areas to improve

- To establish regular prayer groups in order that all stakeholders, including parents, have the opportunity to develop their own spirituality.
- To involve all stakeholders in the Religious Education Steering Group ensuring that pupil voice is heard.

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

The school is proud of its heritage and celebrates and reflects upon the vision and values of the founder, Reverend Edward Betham, annually. This results in a strong ethos which underpins every aspect of school life and clearly impacts positively upon standards which are in line with and above the national averages in all subjects at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The school environment reflects the importance placed on Christian values and pupils have engaged in producing a number of displays on both school sites illustrating these. The school logo has been designed to link with the values, and pupils are able to connect each coloured arc linking the cross to a value. These colours are also reflected in the school environment, ensuring cohesion. This approach, along with the focus on values in collective worship, lessons and school newsletters, ensures that the values and vision have a high priority and are well known and understood by all stakeholders. Pupils feel safe and the unique Christian ethos of the school nurtures a sense of belonging for all learners. Consequently learners enjoy school and attendance is high. Pupils are very respectful of each other and of adults, and behave well. They understand cultural and religious differences whilst being insistent that 'we are all the same', and are caring and supportive of each other. Pupils are prepared well to become responsible citizens, supporting local, national and international charities and appeals. The exciting and innovative curriculum ensures that pupils gain a deep understanding and knowledge of other diverse communities in the world. As a result, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is strong. There are excellent links between the communities on both school sites, due to careful and thoughtful planning. Year 2 pupils visit the Junior site frequently to ensure a smooth transition at the end of the year. Links are further strengthened through joint activities resulting from the pairing of EYFS and Key Stage 1 classes with Key Stage 2 classes. All pupils come together for masses at the church. This has resulted in a tight school community with the church at the centre.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central to the life of the school, underpinning its Christian character. It is well planned and monitored with those leading worship being given helpful feedback. Therefore worship is inspirational and the standard is high. The wide range of worship styles ensures that there are many opportunities for a creative approach with drama, singing, reflection and prayer all playing major parts. Pupils are familiar with a range of Anglican traditions and practice as themes are based on the church year and masses are held regularly. Responses are used in collective worship and pupils talk confidently about God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunity to take communion and regard this as a very special time which supports their spiritual development. Collective worship allows pupils time to reflect and open ended questioning ensures inclusion. Whilst collective worship is Christian, the use of stories, illustrations and artefacts from other faiths ensures all pupils feel valued and included and as a consequence, no child is withdrawn from worship. Pupils join in singing enthusiastically and as a result worship is joyful and uplifting. Pupils regularly lead various aspects of worship such as the prayers and frequently contribute to the words of the service. Parents, governors and members of the wider community attend school masses and other child led worship, both at the school and in the local church. As a result all stakeholders feel included in the spiritual life of the school and speak positively about it. Staff appreciate the special mass held at the beginning of the school year which ensures they are aware of the importance of the Christian faith as the foundation of the school. Impromptu prayer meetings are held by staff. All classes have prayer areas which are used well and enjoyed by pupils. Pupils contribute to the areas when appropriate, sometimes offering pictures of people and animals, requesting prayers for them. All requests for prayers are treated sympathetically, showing pupils' strong social, moral and spiritual development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

The headteacher is the lead for Religious Education (RE), showing the high priority given to this subject. There is a strong vision for RE and an action plan is in place which is regularly monitored and evaluated. The focus for development from the previous inspection was to review the scheme of work for RE to ensure consistency of practice between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This has been addressed through improved monitoring and assessment systems as well as reviewing the scheme of work. The school has elected to pilot 'RE with Soul' and is working closely with the diocese in delivering a unit in Year 5. This has resulted in increased enjoyment for staff and pupils. Many staff are highly skilled in teaching RE and lead training within the school. Observation of teaching and learning is undertaken regularly and as a result teaching is at least good, and much is outstanding. Careful assessment is undertaken on a regular basis and this is used to inform planning, enabling rapid progress for all groups of pupils. Marking is helpful and encourages pupils to reflect on their work. They do so thoughtfully, often relating learning to their own lives and experiences. RE books are regularly monitored and feedback followed by further monitoring ensures that improvements are made. Therefore the standard of work is high and often better than that of English and mathematics. An RE Steering Committee is being set up to ensure succession planning and sustainability. This committee could be further enhanced by the inclusion of pupils who are keen to offer their opinions about RE lessons. Pupils say they enjoy RE lessons, especially when they are learning about Jesus and the Bible. They also like learning about different faiths stating that this 'makes everyone feel welcome'. A club is in place for Year 3 and 4 pupils which frequently includes Godly Play. This is led by the incumbent and is attended by pupils of all faiths and abilities. As a result these pupils have an increased understanding of biblical stories and skilful questioning enables them to develop their skills of reflection.

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

The headteacher has a strong and clear Christian vision for the school and is ably supported by the senior leadership team, governors and trustees. Christian values underpin all policies and practice ensuring that they are embedded in the daily lives of all at the school. All stakeholders are able to articulate the values and their impact upon the school community. This results in parents recognising a strong sense of community with a unique village feel to the area, the church and school being central features. There are outstanding links with parents who appreciate their views being acted upon. They are extremely positive about the school and the impact that the Christian ethos has on their pupils' lives. There are exceptionally strong links between the church and the school who mutually support each other. Parishioners with no pupils at the school frequently attend mass held in church and songs taught during collective worship in school are often subsequently sung in church. Clergy provide advice and guidance, spiritually as well as educationally. For example the incumbent, who leads collective worship weekly and leads the Young Christians Club, has worked with the school on the collective worship scheme of work and the evaluation schedule. This has ensured continuity of approach. All Governors are aware of their strategic role and support and challenge as appropriate. Self evaluation is robust and this impacts positively upon development planning. School leaders have a clear idea of what they wish to develop further to ensure the distinctiveness of the school and these ideas form part of the RE Development Plan. The school works well with the diocese and uses their recruitment pool. By doing so, the school is confident that new staff show strong support for the Christian ethos. Staff are supported to develop their own faith through the annual staff mass. This, and attendance at LDBS courses, prepares them for leadership of church schools.