



St James Church of England Primary School



Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools

Inspection Report

School address	Woodside Avenue Muswell Hill London N10 3JA
Headteacher	Ms Carol O'Brien
Type of School	Primary
Status	Voluntary Aided
Unique Reference Number	102136
Diocese	London
Local Authority	Haringey
Date of last inspection	12 th December 2007

Inspection date	24 th October 2012
National Society Inspector	Jayne Pavlou (NS 628)

The Education Act 2005 (Section 48) requires the governing body or foundation governors of Church of England Schools to appoint a person to undertake the inspection of denominational education and collective worship in schools with a religious character.

School context

St James is a one-form entry primary school with a Nursery class. The majority of pupils are from a White British background. The remainder come from a range of other ethnic backgrounds including Black African and Black Caribbean. A significant number of the children are from Christian families, many of whom attend St James Church, Muswell Hill. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is below average, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language. Compared to other schools, the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very low.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St James as a Church of England school are outstanding

All members of the school community are committed to their school mission statement, 'learning to live; living to learn; learning from Christ.' The Christian faith is clearly promoted throughout all aspects of school life and provides a powerful framework within which to support the spiritual and moral development of pupils. This is particularly evident in the positive attitudes that they display towards their learning and also to one another. The school is extremely well supported by St James Church, with whom it enjoys close links.

Established strengths

- A strong Christian vision shared by the Headteacher and Governors, effectively supported through strong links with the church.
- The impact that the Christian ethos has upon the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.
- High quality RE teaching which supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The impact of Christian values upon the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils, especially towards one another.

Focus for development

- Sharpen existing assessment and record keeping procedures in order to provide a clear overview of standards in Religious Education.
- Formalise the evaluation of collective worship, using the feedback effectively to shape future planning.

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

The Christian ethos in the school is very strong and permeates every aspect of the school's life, from documentation and classroom displays through to classroom practice. All members of the school community recognise the importance of the school's mission statement and know that 'learning to live; learning to learn; learning from Christ', shape the direction and purpose within the school. Parents speak highly of the respect that children have for one another and of the maturity, care and concern they show their peers when faced with difficult situations. They feel privileged that their children belong to such a happy, safe and nurturing community where positive relationships are enjoyed. The exemplary behaviour of the pupils, along with high quality teaching, makes a significant contribution to the schools strong academic performance and achievement. RE teaching supports and challenges the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well and pupils enjoy opportunities to 'live out' some of what they learn in lessons by making active contributions to the local and wider community, such as involvement in the Soup Kitchen and Winter Shelter projects. The pupils are provided with a high quality learning environment which reflects the school's Christian foundation, with each classroom having a reflection area with a Bible and personalised prayer book. There are daily opportunities for prayer and reflection, both in Collective Worship and throughout the school day, which contribute to the spiritual development of the pupils. The school enjoys a very strong link with St James Church and is particularly well supported by the clergy and church staff team.

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

Collective worship is an important part of the school day. A daily act of Christian worship is held in school and regular services also take place in church to celebrate the key Christian festivals. The school works hard to ensure that all members of the school community, regardless of their faith background, feel included and affirmed by worship. As a result there are no withdrawals from collective worship or church services. Well thought out reflection areas are available in every classroom, providing the pupils with a quiet space for personal reflection and prayer. The pupils engaged with and responded well to the act of worship seen during the inspection. Careful planning by the church leader ensured that pupils had time to reflect and respond to what they had learned during worship. Collective worship clearly makes an impact on the school community and a number of children readily offered personal examples of specific acts of worship that they had found particularly helpful. Worship reflects the Anglican tradition of the parish church and the children are given some opportunities to experience the practices of the Anglican tradition. Prayer has a central place in worship and also in the general life of the school. This is reflected in both the way that Governors begin their meetings with prayer and through the group of parents who regularly meet together to pray for the needs of the school. Themes for collective worship are carefully planned and delivered by the leadership team and clergy. Although some evaluation of worship takes place by Governors, it is not clear how this feeds into future planning.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Religious Education within the school is good with many outstanding features. It is not yet outstanding because assessment and record keeping procedures are not fully or consistently used to inform teaching and learning. The school has rightly identified the need to address this, by incorporating it into their RE action plan. The limited data available indicates that standards in RE appear in line with other core subjects (which are above national levels) and pupils seem to make good progress in the subject. The quality of teaching observed was of a very high standard and teachers employed a wide range of strategies appropriate to the needs of the pupils. They demonstrated a good knowledge of the subject and provided many opportunities for the children to reflect and engage with their learning. In one particular lesson observed, pupils were asked to reflect on the meaning of hope and how stories in the Bible portray hope. One child, after taking time to reflect on this, explained that, 'when you are in dark times, hope is always by your side, a light at the end of the tunnel.' Children display a positive attitude towards the subject and this is reflected by their exemplary behaviour. They have a strong understanding of the Christian faith and the teachers effectively use RE to promote the distinctive character of the school. RE is clearly timetabled as a discrete subject. It is well planned and resourced, using a scheme of work which ensures good coverage of other world faiths. Although the majority of pupils come from a Christian background, those pupils of a different faith feel included, valued and affirmed within the school community.

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

The Headteacher, staff and Governors know and make known the strong Christian vision they have for the school. This vision is clearly reflected in all public documentation and forms the basis of the school's motto and mission statement. The whole school community knows and understands the vision. Parents speak positively of the opportunities that children are given to discover what their gifts are and how to utilise them, within the context of a supportive Christian framework. The children confidently discussed the two distinctive Christian values that each class has been given to explore throughout the year and explained how these values are weaved into their curriculum and collective worship. One such example of this was seen during the year one lesson, when pupils were encouraged to explore the meaning of compassion within the context of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The Foundation Governors, some of whom are significantly involved in the parochial church council, are well represented on the Governing Body and work hard to shape the direction of the school. The strong links with the parish church directly impact upon the relationships and values evident within the school. Clergy and other members from the church staff team are providing a good level of support and pastoral care to members of the school community. Strong partnerships are also evident within the wider community through such links as the Teatime

Group at church, the Soup Kitchen and the Winter Shelter project. The headteacher works effectively alongside the RE subject leader providing support with the monitoring, evaluating and reporting of the subject, ensuring that needs are rightly identified and reflected in the school development plan. Professional development is well promoted and opportunities are given to staff to take on responsibilities. The previous area for development from the last inspection has been fully addressed. The provision for collective worship, the teaching of RE and the strong leadership and management of the school impact strongly upon the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school.

SIAS report, St James Muswell Hill, October 2012



Judgement Recording Form (NSJRF)



Name of School: St James Church of England Primary School
Woodside Avenue, Muswell Hill, London, N10 3JA

Date of inspection: 24th October 2012
Type of Church school: Voluntary Aided
Phase of education: Primary
Number of pupils: 232
URN Number: 102136
NS Inspector's Number: 628

Rating 1-4*

How distinctive and effective is the school as a Church school?	1
How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?	1
What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?	2
How effective is the religious education?	2
How effective are the leadership and management of the school, as a church school?	1
The school meets the statutory requirement for collective acts of worship	Yes
The school meets the statutory requirement for religious education *	Yes

* Ratings: 1 Outstanding; 2 Good; 3 Satisfactory; 4 Inadequate