

## Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

### St Richard's Church of England Primary School

Feltham, Hanworth, Middlesex, TW13 6UN

<b>Current SIAMS inspection grade</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<b>Diocese</b>	<b>London</b>
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	N/A
Local authority	Hounslow
Date/s of inspection	22 November 2017
Date of last inspection	Not previously inspected
Type of school and unique reference number	141517
Headteacher	Dionne Hurst
Inspector's name and number	John Viner NS144

#### School context

St Richard's is a smaller than average primary school with a nursery and a specialist unit for autism, located in Feltham and serving the parish of St Richard of Chichester, Hanworth. The school opened in 2015, converting from a community school. Its 204 pupils reflect the rich diversity of the immediate area. A higher than average proportion speak English as an additional language. There are higher than average proportions of pupils with special educational needs. A much higher than average proportion of disadvantaged pupils receive additional government funding. A small percentage of pupils attend church. Most pupils make good progress and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are around the national average. The school was recently judged by Ofsted to require improvement.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Richard's as a Church of England school are satisfactory

- The school is uncompromising in the promotion of Christian values as its foundation and this has had a significant impact on pupils' behaviour, attitudes and attendance.
- Collective worship is at the heart of the school and has a positive impact on all aspects of its life.
- Religious education now has a high profile in the school, contributing to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders and governors have worked tirelessly to secure an ambitious Christian vision for the school that is leading to steady and lasting improvement.
- Although some aspects of the school are not yet good, it has made the transition from community school successfully and has established itself as a distinctive Church school.

#### Areas to improve

- Establish a school-wide shared understanding of spirituality that will help pupils to engage with deep questions about meaning and purpose.
- Improve the provision and effectiveness of religious education (RE) by:
  - Reviewing the arrangements for the leadership of RE.
  - Raising teachers' levels of knowledge and confidence.
  - Giving pupils more to develop their thinking and engage with deep questions.
  - Ensuring that, when they leave the school, pupils complement their good knowledge of Christianity with a secure understanding of the other faiths they have studied.
  - Improving the systems for the assessment of RE so that teachers have an accurate understanding of their pupils' progress relative to the expectations of their age.

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

Although this feature of the school's distinctiveness is satisfactory, some aspects of it are good and all are improving. Through its motto, 'inspiring belief in God and one another', the school makes an uncompromising declaration of its Christian distinctiveness. The underpinning Christian values of friendship, trust, endurance, and hope, are made explicit to all and provide a clear anchor for the school's operation. As a result, behaviour has rapidly improved since the school opened as a Church school and standards are slowly rising. Pupils' progress is improving, often from very low starting points and absence is declining. Although disadvantaged pupils have not always made the progress they could, recent external data for 2017 clearly shows that, in reading and writing, although not yet in maths, disadvantaged pupils made much better progress than national expectations of all pupils. Pupils in the autism unit do well.

Pupils can explain how the school's values influence their attitudes to work and behaviour but they do not yet make the connection that these are also Christian values. Therefore, they do not universally recognise that the respectful, positive and trusting relationships between and among adults and learners have a Christian basis. Pupils say that this is a school where people look after each other and they always know who to turn to for help. Parents say they appreciate the improvements in behaviour that the school's Christian character have brought.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, although there is not yet that shared sense of spirituality that promotes deep thinking about meaning and purpose across the curriculum. However, the school is a diverse community and, now it is a Church school, religious education is taken seriously and given a high value. As a result, pupils develop positive attitudes of tolerance and respect, regardless of faith or background. They agree that they like this new emphasis on RE, are generally interested in it, and are beginning to see that Christianity is a world faith in the context of a multicultural society. Parents of all faiths say that they appreciate this increased focus on RE as they recognise its importance. Therefore, while pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is currently uneven, religious education makes a strong contribution to the school's Christian character.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

Collective worship has a central role in the life of the school. It takes place each day in a variety of forms and all pupils know that it is an important event. This is an opportunity for the school to come together as a worshipping community where its Christian values are made explicit. Because worship is inclusive and welcoming, it affirms all who attend, adult or pupil, regardless of background or belief. Pupils reflect on acts of worship that have changed their thinking, for example one who said that it has stopped her using bad words. Irrespective of their own faith or belief, pupils say that they feel close to God through worship. Pupils of other faiths agree that the opportunities for quiet reflection help to strengthen their personal faith. Pupils say that they enjoy attending worship. They gather reverently, sit attentively and participate enthusiastically. There are many good opportunities for them to take part and they say that they especially enjoy the times when they can read a prayer or enjoy the singing.

Worship is carefully planned by the headteacher and clergy team around a series of seasonal themes and the school values. A range of leaders, including senior staff, teachers, clergy and outside visitors ensure that it is always fresh and interesting. Worship is distinctly Christian and biblical, rooted in the person of Jesus. Leaders are careful to ensure that, when the school assembles for weekly singing practice or to celebrate achievement, these events too include elements of collective worship. Through worship pupils develop an appreciation that Christians regard God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and even young pupils can explain this at their level. The use of the parish church is limited by its dual use, however, its clergy are committed to the school and very involved in planning and leading acts of worship. Through this regular involvement of clergy and seasonal use of the parish church for major festivals, pupils have a good experience of Anglican tradition and practice.

The pupils' school council help leaders and governors to evaluate worship so that planned improvements can be made. For example, it was their suggestion that songs should be sung standing rather than sitting and adults agree that this has improved the quality of singing and the enthusiastic participation of the pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to engage in prayer through worship, at lunch and at the end of the school day. They learn some prayers by heart and are steadily coming to understand the nature and purpose of prayer as a part of faith. There are also good and developing opportunities for pupils to engage in personal reflection and prayer, for example through the increasing use of reflection areas and class prayer books and boxes in each classroom. This good collective worship is helping to develop the sense of spirituality that pupils need to transform their deep thinking.

### **The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory**

Most pupils make steady progress in religious education and the school suggests that they achieve standards that are around national expectations. However, work is inconsistent between year groups so pupils' progress is variable and standards hard to verify. When compared with work in other core subjects, that in RE does not always reach the same standards of quality or presentation. Teaching is also inconsistent between classes and, because the quality of teaching is variable, so is the quality of learning. The school has recently introduced a new and more demanding programme of study that is still in the early stages of implementation. Teachers do not yet always have the knowledge or confidence to teach with sufficient accuracy, precision or at a depth that challenges pupils' thinking. As a result, while pupils learn a lot about Christianity, by the time they leave the school they do not know enough about the other faiths that they have studied. Neither do they develop the skills of enquiry, reflection and analysis that deepen their learning about the nature of faith and belief. As a result, those pupils with the deepest understanding are frequently not challenged enough. Nevertheless, most pupils are enthusiastic about RE, say that they look forward to it and that their teachers often make it fun through the activities they set.

While there are established systems for the regular assessment of pupils' progress and attainment in RE, they are not sufficiently robust to give teachers an accurate understanding of how well their pupils are progressing relative to the expectations for their age and stage. As a result, teachers do not always know how to deal with pupils' misconceptions and their written feedback is frequently not pitched accurately enough to deepen their pupils' thinking. At the moment, the leadership of RE is undertaken by the headteacher. While this ensures that there is knowledgeable and committed leadership, she is unable to apply the singularity of purpose necessary for effective subject leadership because of her many other duties. Consequently, although she ensures that the subject is monitored, there are not the strong support systems in place that will equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to deliver a demanding curriculum.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory**

Although leadership and management are currently satisfactory, many aspects are good and developing strongly. The headteacher, key staff and governors have worked hard to develop and articulate a clear and ambitious Christian vision for the school. This has been transformational in its conversion from a community school. As a result, there have been significant improvements in behaviour and attendance and pupils feel safe and valued. Although teaching is variable, progress is improving and standards are slowly rising. However, while standards and progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving, it is too early to measure the lasting impact. Leaders and governors have established a distinctly Christian school where religious education and collective worship are part of the fabric of its life. Nevertheless, the specific values they promote, although explicit on the school's website, are not yet clearly and consistently Christian in the way they are presented to pupils.

Although they have not yet secured all aspects of necessary improvement, governors contribute to monitoring the school's progress and play a key role in its self-evaluation as a church school. They recognise that their initial focus was more on raising standards than on religious education, although they have ensured that both RE and worship meet statutory requirements. Nevertheless, they share the vision for a school that serves the families of the parish and are rightly proud of the school's achievements. Governors and parents respect the headteacher, trust her judgements and say that she gets things done. Governors plan for securing the school's future leadership needs through training and staff development, but current needs are not yet fully met, for example in the leadership of religious education.

There is a very effective partnership with the parish church, whose clergy make a significant contribution to the school through collective worship, governance and pastoral care. Although only a few families attend the parish church, the incumbent and children's worker are familiar visitors in the school and parents value their contribution. Governors and leaders are very well supported by diocesan officers and plans are well advanced for the school to become a part of the diocesan Academy Trust. There are already good and productive links with local church schools and membership of the Trust will further strengthen the levels of mutual support available. Through their effective partnership, church and school are making a significant contribution of Christian service to their community.

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