

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

### St Alfege with St Peter's CE Primary School Greenwich

Creek Road, Greenwich, London SE10 9RB

**Current SIAMS inspection grade**

**Outstanding**

**Diocese**

**Southwark**

Previous SIAS inspection grade

Good

Local authority

Greenwich

Name of federation

Eltham CE Primary with St Alfege

Date/s of inspection

05 May 2017

Date of last inspection

17 April 2012

Type of school and unique reference number

100174

Executive Headteacher

Matthew Bulpitt

Inspector's name and number

Nicola Morgan 778

#### School context

St Alfege with St Peter's is a one form entry primary school situated in a culturally diverse area of London. 87% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, 60% having a first language other than English. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils, and those receiving free meals, are in the highest quintile nationally. A large percentage of pupils are from practising Christian families with a small minority coming from other faith backgrounds. Since January 2017 St Alfege with St Peter's has been federated with Eltham CE Primary with the existing head of Eltham taking responsibility for both schools as Executive Headteacher.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Alfege with St Peter's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Embedded Christian values, shared and articulated by all, underpin the daily life of the school. They are lived out in all aspects of its work and mission.
- The headteacher, SLT and governors share and express an aspirational Christian vision for the school which is recognised and valued by staff, pupils and parents.
- The close involvement of the incumbent and parish in the life of the school brings them together in a spirit of service to the wider community.
- The school's Christian ethos brings together all learners and adults in a loving, inclusive community where faith is nurtured and spirituality is developed.
- Collective worship affirms those who participate, regardless of faith, and provides the basis for personal reflection and a deeper understanding of pupils' own spiritual development.

#### Areas to improve

- Governors to increase their understanding of expectations in Religious Education (RE), enabling them to work more effectively with senior leaders in the monitoring of standards, and improve outcomes for all learners.
- Embed the new curriculum units and the school's supplementary material, thereby ensuring that all learning is inclusive, dynamic and consistent.
- Strengthen shared expressions of Christian distinctiveness within developing partnerships, leading to a deeper mutual understanding of the school's and partner school's vision and values.

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

The school's ethos is expressed as, 'Dream, Strive, Achieve and Celebrate with God as our Guide' and this inclusive statement underpins the work and mission of the school. Openly identified Christian values and high expectations are at the heart of all aspects of school life. The school's work and ethos is supported by the collective focus on one core value each half-term and using that focus as a foundation for all their work and attitudes. The Christian values and ethos are deeply embedded. They are made explicit through the school's policies and practice which result in strong attainment and outcomes for almost all pupils. Where pupils are seen to be struggling, a targeted programme of learning support is immediately put into place. All stakeholders recognise and can articulate the way in which the ethos underpins the school's work, helping to make every child feel valued, safe and special. The result of this is that all pupils, including some of the most vulnerable, are making at least good progress from a range of starting points. The attractive banners in the Hall school are an excellent visual representation of the Christian values reminding pupils daily of the school's expressed ethos. Within vibrant displays, the values such as love and forgiveness are overtly linked to the Bible and teachings of Jesus. The strongly articulated Christian ethos has a positive impact on pupils' personal and academic aspiration so that they are keen to come to school and to do well. As a result, attendance and attitudes are extremely good. The school's distinctively Christian character is evident in the secure relationships between adults and children. The community attribute this to a shared understanding of Jesus' teaching on love and forgiveness which leads to behaviour and attitudes of the highest standard. In this school, with its rich cultural diversity, pupils feel that their differences are celebrated and this helps them to develop understanding and respect for one another. They understand that the values they celebrate are also deeply human ones with relevance to each of their lives. The pupils see these values as attitudes that bind them together as pupils of St Alfege with St Peter's school. Pupils are enthusiastic about and really enjoy RE because they understand the importance of faith and beliefs in their daily lives, and love learning about them. They have a secure understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith and appreciate learning more about the teachings of Jesus and the prophets through the RE curriculum. What pupils learn through RE makes a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing them with a Christian framework for addressing the 'big questions' and providing a strong moral compass.

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

Collective worship is seen as lying at the heart of the school. There is an opportunity to gather together each morning for a time of inspiration and reflection focused on faith and Christian values. Worship is defined as Anglican and thoughtfully planned by the RE leader to ensure a strong focus on Christian festivals, beliefs and practice. All who attend, both adults and pupils, speak of worship giving them time to be still and reflect in a busy world. Children aspire to be chosen for the weekly Ubuntu award, which is given to a pupil who has been inspired by the word of God to go out and show care and compassion toward another. Pupils of all faiths come to worship respectfully and quietly. They listen carefully and respond individually to questions asked by the Worship Leader. They enjoy the opportunities to contribute to worship, for example through lighting a candle, writing and reading prayers, or when they are able, engaging in role-play. Pupils talk about the impact of parable stories, helping them to make links with their daily behaviour. Feedback evaluation from pupils on collective worship is very positive. The Faith committee meet weekly to discuss ideas and improvements. The committee is made up of interested pupils, clergy, staff and a governor. As a result the school has sought to broaden the range of worship leaders, such as local community members talking about 'voicing our values' each half-term. This variety of input keeps worship both creative and interesting, offering adults and pupils a rich experience. Class-led, whole school worship is a regular feature and is highly regarded by pupils and parents. Each month a different class plans and leads midweek Family Worship at the church. This provides an opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their real engagement with faith and spiritual issues. Parents and members of the church congregation regularly attend and feel welcomed to participate fully in this inclusive experience. Worship is Trinitarian and biblical, rooted in the person and character of Jesus Christ. Through it pupils understand how Christians regard God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The lighting of a candle and the greeting / response 'Peace be with you/and also with you' or similar, signify the beginning of worship. Through visits to the church for significant times such as Holy Week, opportunity is provided for the children and adults to understand and celebrate significant days in the Christian calendar. By using traditional Anglican prayers such as The Lord's Prayer and the Grace, the incumbent and senior leaders are seeking to embed the children's understanding and experience of what it means to be a practising Christian within the Anglican tradition. Pupils are encouraged to write personal prayers during the day for family, friends and the wider world knowing that these prayers will be collected and offered up during the week. The focus on becoming a prayerful community is helping pupils and adults to develop their own personal spirituality. Worship opportunities help them understand the nature, strength and purpose of prayer and deepen their own faith. Senior leaders through careful planning and evaluation involve stakeholders in continuing to make worship accessible, lively and inclusive.

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

Pupils across the school make at least good progress in RE and groups of pupils for example, those for whom English is an additional language and those receiving Pupil Premium, exceed the standards of attainment expected for their age. RE is very well led and there is now a robust system for assessing what pupils know about religion and how well they learn from it. The school is delivering the newly revised diocesan scheme so the curriculum is relevant, meets the needs of all pupils, and develops their understanding of the Christian faith well. A good balance in the curriculum between Christianity and other faiths taught, ensures that it is inclusive for all pupils. RE lessons provide high quality opportunities for deeper enquiry and a broader understanding of the key aspects of Christianity and other faiths studied.

The RE leader supports teachers extremely well in developing their confidence and ability to teach RE. Lessons engage pupils through exciting activities such as outdoor learning, art and drama as well as discussion. Pupils are confident to share their views with one another and say how much they enjoy learning through discussing 'difficult questions', both at school and at home. In tackling ideas around life and death a pupil explained that, 'it has taught me not to be frightened, that death can mean new life'. Pupils feel that through learning about Christianity, Jesus' teaching shows them how 'we can put his ways into practice in our own daily lives.'

The quality of teaching in RE is at least good. However it is not yet consistent across the school. In some inspiring lessons, teachers use an impressive range of practical and visual resources to support learning. Effective questioning in these lessons challenges pupils to think deeply, listen to and respect the opinions of others. Leaders monitor and evaluate pupils' progress accurately, implementing targeted interventions as required, thus optimising pupil progress in RE. The RE leader has a high level of subject expertise and keeps abreast of curriculum development through diocesan support and training. She clearly communicates priorities in the development of RE with senior leaders, governors and staff. Together they have identified that embedding and sharing good practice more widely will lead to more consistent improvement. As a leadership team in partnership with their federated school, they are focusing on further refinements to assessments and raising standards across both schools through shared moderation.

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

The executive headteacher, SLT, the RE leader and governors confidently articulate an aspirational Christian vision for the school providing strong, clear direction. Senior leaders readily express how the explicit Christian values of love and respect have led to sustained improvement in all areas. By creating a place of faith as well as of learning, the whole staff team are committed to nurturing relationships, and enabling all members of the community to flourish. The shared understanding that each child is loved and celebrated as a child of God, has a positive impact on the lives, welfare and academic achievements of all pupils. The federation work with Eltham is beginning to develop into a strong and effective partnership of mutual benefit to both communities. Supported by the diocese, the senior leaders are starting to have a real impact in both schools, in building up strong Christian communities. Strong teaching support benefits all, and in particular, those trying to overcome social and economic disadvantage. Staff are strongly committed to the ethos and values the school promotes and speak highly of the pastoral care, support and leadership they receive.

The school has very effective systems for keeping its Christian distinctiveness and character under review. The School Development Plan and RE Action Plan priorities are understood by all stakeholders. Self-evaluation is accurate because it is based on evidence which comes directly from listening to staff, parents and pupils and responding to their views. Through an effective working partnership, governors have a good appreciation of the school's areas of strength and those which require further improvement. A deeper understanding by the foundation governors of the new RE curriculum expectations would serve to ensure a strong focus is maintained on meeting the needs of all learners. The school has successfully addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Through involvement in The Bishops' Lent Appeal and The Southwark Diocesan Leavers' service, pupils learn what it means to be part of The Anglican Church worldwide. Their recent campaign for a local foodbank inspired by the Bible verse, 'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat' has led to a deeper understanding of local need and resulted in real benefit for the community. Leaders and governors show commitment to the development of church school leadership. They have recently been awarded The Bishop's Certificate of Church School Governance and staff regularly undertake diocesan training. Parents are extremely supportive. They have a clear understanding of the school's values and ethos and are appreciative of the ways in which they see this lived out in relationships and in opportunities provided for spiritual growth. They confirm the school's impact on the wellbeing and aspiration of pupils but also on their own sense of being valued and welcomed into the school community. School leaders and clergy work closely together. Their shared vision and coordinated work results in St Alfege with St Peter's having an effective Christian influence in the diverse community it serves.