

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

### Christ Church VA Church of England Primary School

#### Vision

The Christian faith is at the heart of our school community.

At Christ Church we all care, learn and work together for God and others.

'For we are all God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do' (Ephesians 2:10).

Christ Church Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

#### Strengths

- The Christian vision is deeply embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. Leaders inspire in others a commitment to the vision that drives the schools actions and enables pupils and adults to flourish.
- Collective worship contributes richly to the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults. Underpinned by the school's vision and values, and in partnership with the local church, it is highly valued and enables opportunities for deep reflection and enhancing the life of the school community.
- Pupils have a strong sense of justice and responsibility. They think deeply and talk confidently about issues that affect others as well as themselves. They are well prepared to become active citizens and considerate agents for change.
- The school goes above and beyond to prioritise the wellbeing of pupils and adults in its community. The desire to do good for others lies at its heart and promotes a culture of care, kindness and trust.
- Religious education (RE) is well planned and holds an important place in the school curriculum. Pupils learn about, and reflect on, Christianity, other religions and other worldviews through strong teaching and effective assessment. This enables pupils to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding, sense of self and their religious literacy.

#### Development Points

- Build on pupils' strong sense of justice and responsibility by providing further opportunities for pupil leadership. This is to enable them to further develop their agency and advocacy skills.
- Enrich and deepen further the wide range of evidence gathering and evaluation activities. This is so that leaders and governors can support the school in continuing to build, based on that secure evidence, on the good and innovative practice.



## Inspection Findings

The Christian vision and values are deeply embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. Leaders are committed to doing the 'good works' that they have been prepared by God to do. This means serving each individual in their school community with care and compassion. Positive trusting relationships are cultivated throughout the school community alongside an inclusive and personalised approach to curriculum planning, teaching and support. As a result, pupils and adults feel known, valued, inspired and are enabled to flourish in a spirit of togetherness. Governors are committed to the vision and know the school well. They are fully involved in its life and work by visiting weekly, regularly talking to staff and leading an after-school club 'Jesus and Me'. This enables governors to understand and evaluate the school as a Church school and ensure that it is true to its vision. Strong partnerships with the diocese and the local church strengthen and support the school's vision. These help to ensure that the Christian faith is at the heart of the school community.

The school's aspirational and broad curriculum allows pupils to develop as deep thinkers and reflective learners. Reflecting the Christian vision, leaders have ensured that opportunities for spiritual development are prioritised within the curriculum. This has been developed to reflect the diversity of the school. In Year 5, for example, pupils have studied 'hidden figures' and explored the topic of segregation. This prompted them to reflect on why some people are left out of society. Such opportunities engage pupils in deep thought and spiritual development. Extra-curricular activities are provided that enrich pupils' experience such as visits to the science museum and Regents Park. Pupils with additional needs are supported through inclusive teaching. As a consequence, the varied, relevant and rich curriculum provides possibilities for pupils to flourish.

The daily act of collective worship contributes richly to the spiritual flourishing of pupils and adults. It is central to the life of the school. Supported by the local vicar who works closely with leaders, it is carefully planned to create a range of opportunities to foster pupils' spiritual understanding. Collective worship is inspiring, inclusive and invitational. Pupils are encouraged to participate through a range of meaningful activities including readings, prayers, acting, singing, presentations and discussion. Pupils also have the opportunity to be 'faith ambassadors'. They provide feedback and select pupil prayers from the prayer tree. As a result of all of this, pupils and adults enjoy collective worship and value the time it offers for contemplation. One pupil said that it helps them 'get closer to God.' Pupils are encouraged to continue to reflect throughout the school day, and invited to say a prayer before they leave. This pattern of worship is embedded within the school culture. As a result, pupils stay connected to the vision and values as being part of their daily experience, enabling them to flourish spiritually.

The respectful and caring relationships between members of the school community are a clear expression of the Christian vision to 'care, learn and work together'. Pupils are considerate of one another and recognise that they are all different yet all part of the same school family. This is very important to them. They value opportunities to think about others such as becoming a playground friend or participating in world kindness day. Leaders have built a culture of trust and openness, going above and beyond to respond effectively and compassionately to the challenges people face. They ensure that disadvantage is addressed by providing additional support to families such as a breakfast club or providing school uniform. This means that pupils can focus on their learning. Parents talk about the school's love and how pupils are taught to be caring. Wellbeing for pupils and adults is a priority. Leaders and governors have invested in support for mental health services, which is of particular benefit to vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. This is provided on site and available to both pupils and adults, with extended



support accessible to parents. Pupils know how to find support and feel cared for and looked after. The introduction of 'trauma informed practice' has empowered staff to provide further personalised support for pupils and for one another. They speak of how they feel highly valued. One staff member described the school as a 'safe place to be' and another highlighted how the vision provides a sense of love. They welcome the open and compassionate school culture that considers their wellbeing and workload.

Pupils are provided with an impressive range of opportunities to discuss issues of inequality and consider events of global significance. For example, they have committed to the 'peace pledge', participated in racial justice workshops and celebrated diversity in their equality week. A group of girls were invited to speak about their vision for equity for women and girls at a summit held at the Houses of Parliament. Pupils are also involved in the 'Community Champions Young Guardians project' to find ways to improve the local area. As a result of these and other events, pupils' sense of justice and responsibility is strong and well developed. They talk meaningfully about equality. One pupil described justice as 'fairness not being out of balance' and on equality another said 'we do not need to worry about being different'. The school contributes to many charities and pupils embrace the chance to serve others. For example, in the reverse advent calendar project, pupils provided gifts for each advent window. In turn these gifts were given to others in challenging circumstances. These charitable projects strengthen pupils' understanding of the school's vision to be 'God's handiwork' and 'do good works'. This helps them to develop a sense of justice and responsibility.

RE has a high profile within the school. The well-planned curriculum, that builds on the diocesan syllabus, carefully develops pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding sequentially. In addition to Christianity, a range of world faiths and worldviews are explored reflecting the school's Christian vision. The curriculum is brought to life in the classroom by volunteers who visit from different faiths. Visits to the local church and other places of worship such as the synagogue, mosque or Hindu temple enrich pupils' experiences. Big questions challenge pupils to think about what they are learning and how it applies to others. These questions get increasingly complex as pupils move up the school. As a result, pupils willingly participate in thoughtful discussions in lessons.

RE is consistently taught well. Teachers' subject expertise is supported by regular training from the diocese and the subject leader. Carefully planned questions and activities build on pupils' knowledge and links are made to prior learning. Key words and vocabulary are explicitly taught. As a result, pupils speak confidently about the subject and use religious terms appropriately. Partnership working with other schools has strengthened marking and assessment, which is both rigorous and effective. Pupils are assessed at the end of each topic and leaders regularly review their progress in discussion with their teachers. This enables teachers to consider the needs of their pupils and personalise their teaching. As a result, pupils make good progress in their RE knowledge, understanding, sense of self and religious literacy.

## Information

Address	Redhill Street, Regents Park, London NW1 4BD		
Date	22 January 2025	URN	100029
Type of school	Voluntary Aided	No. of pupils	174
Diocese/District	London		
Headteachers	Paula Aitcheson-Walker, Amy Stroud		
Chair of Governors	Gill Green		
Inspector	Sally Yarrow		