

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Coulsdon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Bradmore Green, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1ED

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Southwark
Previous SIAS inspection grade	Outstanding
Name of Local Authority	Croydon
Date/s of inspection	8 December 2016
Date of last inspection	November 2011
Type of school and unique reference number	Voluntary Aided - 101792
Headteacher	Annie Mitchell
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott 161

School context

This small school has more boys than girls on roll. The majority are from White British backgrounds but the percentage of those from ethnic minority backgrounds is higher than average. The percentage for whom extra funding is received due to social disadvantage is below the national average. Just over 80 percent of pupils come from Christian backgrounds. Since the previous denominational inspection the percentage of pupils with special educational needs or disability (SEND), especially those on the autistic spectrum, has increased. It is now slightly above the national average. There has also been a change of headteacher.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Coulsdon Church of England Primary School as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The school's strong Christian ethos impacts positively on all aspects of its life and work to the benefit of pupils' academic attainment and progress as well as to their personal development and wellbeing.
- The school's worship programme and religious education (RE) both make very good contributions to supporting and extending the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils.
- Qualities such as love, joy and peace, reflected in a Christian understanding of 'the fruit of the spirit' (Galatians chapter 5) explicitly underpin and are expressed through the school's life and work.
- There is a focused learning environment where pupils are appropriately supported and challenged so that they develop well in 'mind, body and spirit'.

Areas to improve

- Embed the requirements of the new guidelines for RE from the Southwark Diocese so that the curriculum is refreshed and teaching and learning strategies are extended further.

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

The focus on 'the Fruit of the Spirit' taken from the teaching of St Paul in his letter to the Galatians plainly influences school life and work. This focus is shared by all and underpins the school's life and work. This means that its Christian ethos contributes effectively to buttressing pupils' successful learning and progress alongside supporting their personal growth and wellbeing. Attainment is consistently above the national average and the progress made by all pupils, from their various starting points, is at least good and often outstanding. There is no significant difference in progress made by different groups of pupils. Christian 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control' permeate the school's purposeful learning environment. This 'fruit' is clearly seen in the strong, open and respectful relationships in evidence between all members of the school community, both adult and pupil. It is also evident in the exemplary behaviour of pupils which is well supported through consistent approaches by adults across the school. The school is a happy, supportive and caring place. Attendance is on an upward trend and is now slightly above the national average. As an expression of the school's Christian foundation, on those few occasions where behaviour, attendance or SEND gets in the way of learning, the school works realistically and in a caring fashion to support the pupil and their family. Based on the school's longstanding motto of, 'Together, growing in mind, body and spirit' pupils rightly recognise that the school helps to develop them academically, physically and spiritually. The motto is drawn from the story of Jesus as a boy in the Temple (Luke 2.52) and thus is well linked to Christian teaching. Display around the school celebrates its Christian distinctiveness as well as pupils' attainment and progress. This contributes effectively to the school's strong provision for SMSC development. Pupils are encouraged to present their own ideas on matters of spiritual, religious or moral concern. They do this confidently whilst listening respectfully to others. Charitable giving is clearly recognised as an expression of Christian care and concern. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others both locally, nationally and internationally through participating in such fundraising activities. The worship programme and the RE curriculum are key drivers in supporting SMSC development and the school's Christian ethos. Appropriate opportunities in other areas of the curriculum are not missed. Pupils enjoy RE and see that it helps them develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths so that, 'we can respect and learn from others'.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Acts of worship take place daily. Adults and pupils take part in worship with enthusiasm and recognise its positive impact on school life and work. It is clearly planned, based on diocesan guidelines, suitably adapted to meet the school's needs. The incumbent, curate and youth worker are closely involved with the programme. This involvement fittingly raises pupils' awareness and understanding of the importance of the school's link with its parish church. The school has identified the need to expand the number of visitors who lead worship in order to broaden pupils' appreciation of diversity within Christian practice. There are embryonic plans in place to invite leaders from any churches connected with school families other than the parish church to join the worship programme. The school's Christian motto and values are suitably reinforced during worship and pupils are helped to relate these values to their own lives. The acts of worship reflect the school's foundation as an Anglican school and aspects of Anglican liturgy and symbolism are used as a framework. For example, a cross and candle, different coloured cloths for different times of the church year and opening sentences with responses are well-embedded in school practice. Biblical stories underpin worship and lead to pupils seeing the importance of the Bible and of Jesus for Christians. 'Jesus is important because he is God's son, the saviour' as a Year 4 pupil reflected. Aspects of the church calendar and major festivals are well celebrated by the school. Such special times are often reinforced through pupils' work in RE. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 'One God with different faces' as a Year 3 pupils said. Pupils know the Lord's Prayer because it is said regularly as part of the school's worship times. They have a basic understanding of its significance for Christians. Pupils are aware that there are different types of prayer, for example, 'when you pray you can ask God to make something or someone better or you can thank God for beautiful things'. Many also express how prayer influences them and how they find it helpful, 'to be quiet and peaceful inside'. Worship in school is well extended through special services in church. Parents attend acts of worship both in school and at church. These occasions are appreciated by parents who recognise the impact of the worship life of the school on the spiritual and moral development of their children. Views about worship are regularly sought from staff, pupils and parents. These are taken into account as part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of worship through the faith group of the governing body and indeed by the junior faith group. Some suggestions made have been acted upon to improve worship further. Worship is inclusive and inspirational and promotes at a very high level the school's distinctive Christian character. Its impact on pupils' personal and spiritual wellbeing and development is strong.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE is rightly treated as a core subject alongside literacy and mathematics. Pupils' attitudes to RE are extremely positive and it enjoys a very high profile across the school. There is a good balance between teaching which focuses on Christianity and that which focuses on other world faiths, including for example Buddhism and Sikhism. Teaching is often outstanding and at least good. Staff create an atmosphere in class which allows pupils to share ideas and listen respectfully to others. Pupils are attentive and thoughtful and take a pride in their written work which reflects high levels of understanding and engagement. Lessons are well planned and systematically take into account diocesan guidelines. As these guidelines have just been renewed the school is reviewing its current practice and adapting it to take into account the new scheme. A variety of tasks are set, which include some art and drama, to enhance enjoyment of the subject and consequently improve learning. This means that RE makes a very strong contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. Consequently, standards achieved in RE are above the national expectation. Pupils make at least good and often very good progress from their various starting points. For example, Year 2 have a highly developed understanding of religious symbolism for their age as they explore the meaning of Jewish and Christian symbols. Year 6 pupils can, for example, compare and contrast the beliefs and practices of Buddhists and Christians displaying a deep level of understanding. They relate religious belief to contemporary issues as they discuss whether or not the true meaning of Christmas is lost amidst its commercialisation. Assessment procedures give clear steps for pupils to improve their learning. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the strengths and areas for development for individual pupils and plan work appropriately. Due to national changes to assessment practice the school is keeping under review how it assesses RE. The incumbent is the link governor for RE and worship and a member of the governors' faith group sub-committee. He regularly monitors practice and reports to other governors about progress. The leadership and management of RE is strong and effective. The RE subject leader is well informed about local and national developments in RE and shares these appropriately with colleagues to enhance learning in RE. This ensures that practice is refreshed. There is a clear and accurately focused action plan in place for continued improvement. This includes pursuing an external accreditation of good practice in RE called the RE Quality Mark.

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

This church school is capably led by a headteacher whose vision of 'a holistic Christian education' is deeply shared by senior colleagues, staff and governors. She has a longstanding commitment, having been a teacher and deputy at the school before becoming its headteacher. Families see this vision this 'in action' and recognise its impact on the academic and personal development of their children. They are full of praise for the staff in terms of their Christian care and concern. They say this is demonstrated not only in care for pupils but for the whole family. The relationship with parents is strong and they are appropriately informed about and engaged in their children's education. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, leads in a collegiate fashion. This means that there is a consistency of approach to learning and teaching and to managing behaviour which ensures that the school's Christian values are well known and implemented by both staff and pupils. The successful approaches to attendance, inclusion and behaviour is well rooted in the school's Christian vision. The governing body, especially through its faith committee are knowledgeable and appropriately supportive of the school's Christian distinctiveness. Issues identified for improvement in the previous denominational report have been carefully addressed and enhance both provision and practice. As part of this the ongoing development of the peace garden as an outside reflective and prayer space, was specifically designed to take into account the school's motto, 'Together, growing in mind, body and spirit'. The school's current self-evaluation is accurate and leads to clear steps for improvement. The headteacher, well supported by the governing body, seeks to provide appropriate opportunities for staff to develop professionally during their time in school. Arrangements for RE and worship meet statutory requirements. Both areas are well led and managed. Enthusiastic and effective leadership of RE is in place. As part of the professional development opportunity the school wishes to provide they have identified the need to encourage a member of staff to 'shadow' the RE subject leader. This is a clear indication of the importance placed on RE by senior leaders and its positive impact on school life and work. Links with the parish church are long established and 'run deep'. Appropriate use is made of support provided at diocesan level through, for example, attendance at courses.

SIAMS report [December 2016] Coulsdon CE VA primary school, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1ED