



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Faiths Church of England Primary School

Alma Road
East Hill
SW18 1AE

Previous inspection grade: Good

Diocese: Southwark

Local authority: Wandsworth

Dates of inspection: 4 December 2014

Date of last inspection: 23 November 2009

School's unique reference number: 101043

Headteacher: Stephan Cook

Inspector's name and number: John Viner NS144

School context

St Faith's CE is a small primary school with a single form of entry. It is housed in attractive modern buildings located in the London Borough of Wandsworth and serves the parish of St Anne's with St Faith's Wandsworth. Its 203 pupils reflect the rich diversity of the area. A lower than average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and around a third speak English as an additional language. A handful of pupils and families attend church. Pupils make good progress from their starting points and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above the national average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Faith's as a Church of England school are outstanding

- Christian values underpin the school and are evident in every aspect of its work. They inspire the excellent relationships between adults and learners and contribute to the over-riding sense that this is a school family.
- Collective worship is inspirational, touching lives, and uniting all who attend in a community of faith.
- Pupils develop a strong foundation of knowledge about Christianity, understand how to apply their learning to their own lives and develop as well-rounded, compassionate individuals.
- The headteacher, governors and key staff share and live out an ambitious Christian vision for the school so that it is a beacon of faith, hope and courage to the community it serves.

Areas to improve

- Review the balance of the religious education (RE) curriculum so that pupils' excellent knowledge of Christianity is balanced by the quality of their learning about other faiths.
- Further strengthen the links between the school and the parish church of St Anne's with St Faith's so that the spiritual life of the school is enriched.

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

This is a school that makes its Christian character explicit in every detail. Parents and pupils recognise that Christian values underpin the school and are embedded in its work. Irrespective of their faith and belief, parents recognise that there is something special about the school that meets their children's needs and gives them a moral compass through the Christian teaching it provides. Pupils say that they love to come to school because they know that, in this rich Christian environment, they are valued, safe and special. As a result they behave well, work hard and make good progress. Relationships between and among adults and learners are driven by the school's Christian principles and characterised by high levels of trust and mutual care. The school identifies itself as a Christian school with a multi-cultural ethos and is uncompromising about the gospel values it teaches. Pupils recognise this: they understand that Christianity is a multicultural world faith and that God loves all humanity. They value their diversity and enthuse about the mix of cultures. One pupil remarked, 'because we are all different, we learn new things from each other' and this shines out in their care and respect for each other. Pupils are enthusiastic about RE and learning about their own and others' religions. Not only do they learn to value the views of others but they develop a real sense of spirituality that enriches their personal development and gives them a strong foundation for their lives.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is of central importance to school life. Pupils embrace it enthusiastically and many say that it is their favourite aspect of school and the height of their day. When the school community gathers for worship they do so reverently and with anticipation. Parents, who come in great numbers to Friday's Family Worship, speak movingly of the power of this time, the impact it has on their children's lives and the richness it adds to their experience. Pupils enjoy all acts of worship but speak especially warmly of the class worship time when, in the intimacy of trusting relationships and small numbers, they can share their deepest feelings.

Worship is carefully planned around a series of themes that deepen pupils thinking, for example, when thinking about how they can demonstrate compassion or generosity. Worship is distinctly Christian, focused on the person of Jesus. It is also set round the Anglican calendar and teaches pupils about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils have many opportunities to experience and share in Anglican traditions and practices, such as lighting a candle or sharing the peace. A variety of leaders ensure that worship sustains its freshness and pupils especially enjoy the regular visits of the parish priest and the opportunities he gives to them to act out stories from the Bible. Prayer is central to all acts of worship and to the whole life of the school. As well as learning The Lord's Prayer and other prayers by heart, pupils and parents make active use of a central prayer box, to which they can commit to God their hopes, fears and concerns. Some of these prayers are used in Family Worship and all are kept as a precious record of the spiritual life of the school. Since the last inspection there is a much stronger focus on the formal and informal evaluation of worship by pupils, staff and governors. This information provides an insight into the value of worship to the school community and helps to inform future planning.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

RE has a high profile in the school and pupils say they enjoy it because teachers make it fun. As a result they make good progress and the standards they attain match the high levels in other core subjects. There have been many improvements to RE since the time of the last inspection: monitoring is now regular and rigorous and pupils are now regularly assessed so that planning is more effective. As a result, RE is now good and some aspects of it are outstanding. As a result of effective planning and good teaching, pupils develop a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. They are familiar with the Bible and make connections between its teaching and their own lives. In all years, from the time they start

school, pupils begin to learn the language of faith and develop positive attitudes to religion. Older pupils' work is characterised by a developing sense of spiritual maturity. The curriculum is broad and encompasses many other world religions but they are sometimes taught superficially so that pupils do not know key facts securely. As a result they are unable to learn the same high quality lessons from these religions as they do from Christianity. A consistent assessment system has been implemented since the last inspection so there is a better understanding of pupils' learning. However, it does not enable teachers easily to involve the pupils in their own assessment. RE is strongly led by a knowledgeable specialist who is new to the role. She has a clear understanding of the improvements that are needed if RE is to become outstanding. There are robust plans to improve the curriculum and its assessment and to provide professional development to further raise teacher's knowledge and skills.

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

The headteacher, key staff and governors share and articulate an ambitious Christian vision for the school that is recognised, understood and valued by parents and pupils. This strong Christian leadership promotes the distinctively Christian character of the school and has a high impact on pupils' achievement and wellbeing. As a result the school is a dynamic community of faith where pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development thrives. The Faith Committee, representative of stakeholders, ensures that leaders and governors have a thorough understanding of the school's Christian distinctiveness. They also understand the school's future leadership needs and plan to meet them. Working with diocesan officers, governors have reviewed their performance and now play a developing role in holding leaders to account. They are active in school life, supporting and challenging the headteacher through monitoring visits and their links with the wider community. Parents are enthusiastic promoters of the school; they respect the headteacher and senior staff and trust their judgement. They enjoy the many opportunities they have to join in with the life of the school. There are many good links with the local community that, with the high levels of parental involvement, make a significant contribution to the school to the mutual benefit of all. The links with the parish church of St Faith have strengthened considerably since the time of the last inspection. However, this partnership needs further development if its potential for enriching the school's spiritual life is to be realised. Although links with the church are more explicit and the incumbent plays a role in leading school worship, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to experience worship in church. Despite this continuing weakness, otherwise strong leadership and governance secures the judgement of outstanding.

SIAMS report December 2014 St Faith's CE Primary School, Wandsworth SW18 IAE