THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND EDUCATION OFFICE

The Methodist Church

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

| St John's Church of England Primary School | | | | | |
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| **Address** | Markfield Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 6RN | | | | |
| **Date of inspection** | 23/11/2018 | **Status of school** | Voluntary Aided | | |
| **Diocese** | Southwark | | **URN** | 125164 | |
| **Overall Judgement** | | | | **Grade** | **Good** |
| How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish? | | | | | |
| **Additional Judgements** | | | | | |
| **The impact of collective worship** | | | | **Grade** | **Good** |
| **The effectiveness of religious education (RE)** | | | | **Grade** | **Good** |

## School context

St John's is a primary school with 472 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is slightly below the national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is in line with national averages. The religious background of the majority of pupils is Christian with around six percent attending church outside of their involvement through school. There has been significant changes to staffing, including the headteacher, since the time of the previous denominational inspection.

## The school's Christian vision

Guided by the Christian values of faith, love, respect and thankfulness, we strive for excellence and enjoyment, so that every member of the school community fulfils God's gift of reaching their full potential.

## Key findings

- Under the effective leadership of the headteacher and senior leadership team, ably supported by a committed governing body, the school's Christian vision is given a high priority and is drawn on well to support its ongoing life and work.
- Relationships are mutually respectful and pupils' behaviour is excellent, mirroring very well the school's Christian and inclusive vision and its associated values of love, faith, respect and thankfulness.
- As an outworking of the school's Christian care, pastoral support across the school is effective and supports teaching and learning well for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disabilities.
- Collective worship and religious education (RE) successfully express the school's Christian and inclusive vision, enabling pupils and adults to reflect and act on issues of spiritual and moral concern.

## Areas for development

- Refine governor practice regarding self-evaluation of the school's Christian vision and distinctiveness in order to formalise its theological underpinning and deepen its impact on school practice.
- Deepen the use of encouraging pupils to consider 'big questions' of spiritual and moral concern through embedding the newly introduced practice of Philosophy for Children (P4C) to complement the RE and personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes.

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How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?

**Inspection findings**

The school's Christian and inclusive vision underpins the good educational and personal development of pupils. Its associated values of love, faith, respect and thankfulness are well rooted in biblical teaching but the theological underpinning of the vision is less evident. Staff, pupils and parents recognise how the values impact positively on behaviour and attitudes both in school and beyond. The current headteacher has ensured that the school's Christian service to its local community has been kept to the forefront of developments. This includes its vision and associated values being reviewed. They are well used to provide a relevant underpinning for development. Key areas for improvement from the previous denominational inspection have been well addressed under his leadership.

The headteacher is ably supported by a committed senior leadership team and an engaged and thoughtful governing body. Productive partnerships with the parish church and other local churches, as well as with some local schools, enhances practice well. Training and professional development is focused, providing appropriate support for working in the church school sector. The evaluation of itself as a church school is detailed and accurate. It successfully incorporates its vision and values. An expression of the governing body's commitment is their recent completion of training to gain the Bishop's Certificate in Church School Governance. Governors are periodically involved in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's Christian vision, particularly through the faith group. However, this is not consistent enough.

Spiritual development has a high priority. Its importance for pupils' personal development is expressed well. Across the curriculum, there a range of experiences taken for reflection on personal responses to questions of identity and the purpose of life. Pupils respond positively and are open to discussion around, 'big questions', exploring different points of view well. There is a calm and well-focused climate for learning, aptly drawing on the school's Christian vision. Consequently, pupils of different abilities and backgrounds value themselves, each other and their learning. Many make positive choices so that they achieve well, even when the learning is difficult. There is a broad and balanced curriculum. An approach to planning for worship and across the curriculum has been developed based on windows (the focus), mirrors (how it applies to the individual) and doors (what one can do about it). This is impacting well on pupils' moral, social and cultural development, enabling them to consider a range of topics and how they can make a positive difference.

On entry, pupils' attainment is broadly at or below national average. The Christian vision appropriately informs the work of leaders, teachers and support staff. Thus, across the school pupils mainly make good, and sometimes accelerated, progress from their various starting points. Pupils with SEND are supported very well so that their progress is at least as good as their peers. Where attainment is below that of their peers pupils are making good progress. This reflects the positive impact of its Christian belief on nurturing the God-given potential of each individual. Pupils with health issues, including mental health concerns, are supported closely and well. Staff, whether leaders, teaching or support, are passionate about their school and its Christian service to all its pupils. Thus the school effectively helps those facing barriers to learning make progress.

The school's Christian vision underpins its celebration of difference and diversity very well through its inclusive nature. This in turn successfully impacts on its strong sense of belonging, supportive relationships and on pupils' excellent behaviour. It results in pupils developing in confidence. The school's behaviour and inclusion policies strongly support pupils flourishing academically and personally by ensuring a consistency of approach. This expresses its Christian values well.

The wellbeing of pupils and staff is given a high priority. It is evident in the strong relationships and effective pastoral support for both children and adults. Outside agencies are drawn on as necessary. Healthy relationships are encouraged through, for example, the PHSE programme and through the school's Christian vision of ensuring fulfilment in life and learning.

The worship programme is rightly recognised by staff and pupils as being central to the expression of its Christian foundation. It provides clear encouragement for the spiritual and religious growth of pupils and staff. This enables them to flourish through, for example, prayer, stillness and reflection. This helps to, 'put things in perspective' as a member of staff reflected. Worship is invitational and open. It reflects and enhances its Christian vision, and draws appropriately on biblical teaching. It develops a good appreciation of the importance of Jesus for Christians and of the significance of prayer and reflection. The daily programme is enhanced by periodic visits for worship to the parish church. The programme is well-planned, encouraging pupils and staff to live out the school's values, and consider key Christian beliefs such as that of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Christian festivals are incorporated well into the programme. Fitting links with RE and the PHSE curriculum are also made which deepens understanding.

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Pupils are well-engaged and involved with worship. They help to lead, plan and evaluate worship, especially through the pupils' faith group. The clearly structured and varied programme helps pupils appreciate aspects of Anglican forms of worship well. Pupils and staff join in enthusiastically with singing during worship. They listen attentively, answer questions and reflect or pray appropriately. Statutory requirements are met. The governors' and pupils' faith groups make effective contributions to the worship programme, which gives pupils a good range of opportunities to gather together, engage appropriately and respond positively.

RE is very well led. There is a good content balance between Christian, other faiths and moral and ethical issues. It draws well on the Southwark diocesan scheme of work, adapted to suit the school's context. The time allocation across each phase is used well. Consequently, pupils engage effectively in age-appropriate religious teachings and practices within a respectful and inclusive learning environment. Marking and assessment follows school practice and is accurate in supporting pupils' progress. Provision across the school meets statutory requirements and positively reflects the Church of England Statement for Entitlement. The subject leader is involved in a local RE network. She shares her expertise freely and effectively with her colleagues to support the delivery of relevant and stimulating RE.

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**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

Teaching is good with elements of outstanding practice in evidence. In-school monitoring takes place regularly and staff are well-supported with both subject content and approaches. A wide range of effective teaching strategies supports engagement and involvement. This enhances learning and leads to good standards of attainment and progress across the school. Most pupils reach at least age-related expectations. A few pupils with SEND do not reach their age-related expectation but nevertheless make good progress in RE from their starting point.

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| Headteacher | Robert Veale |
| Inspector's name and number | Pamela Draycott (161) |

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