

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

<b>St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary School</b>			
<b>Address</b>	48 Brayards Road, Peckham, London SE15 3RA		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	9 May 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	Voluntary Aided Primary
<b>Diocese</b>	Southwark	<b>URN</b>	<b>100836</b>

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Additional Judgements</b>	<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>
	<b>The impact of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Good</b>

### School context

St. Mary Magdalene's is a primary school with 189 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of Black African/Caribbean heritage. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. There has been a large turnover of staff in recent years.

### The school's Christian vision

Building on a foundation of core Christian values, we inspire and equip our children to acquire confidence, encouraging a thirst for lifelong learning.

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me': Philippians 4: 13.

### Key findings

- The dedicated leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher ensures that this church school is a community where everyone is enabled to flourish because the academic and spiritual needs of all are met.
- There is a proactive commitment to the wider community, to the work of charities and to social action locally, nationally and internationally. The vision is fully achieved in this respect because pupils are very mindful of their responsibilities to others.
- Collective worship reflects the school's vision well, offering pupils a secure space for thinking and reflection in order to ask and answer the big questions of life.
- Religious Education expresses the school's vision, but teaching and learning in RE is not consistent across the school.

### Areas for development

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in RE by ensuring there is greater consistency across the school in terms of high expectations in order to provide challenge, particularly for the more able.
- Ensure that there is an effective process in place to involve all members of the school community, including parents, in the ongoing evaluation of St Mary Magdalene as a church school.

## **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**

St. Mary Magdalene's distinctive Christian vision is firmly rooted in biblical theology. The school's 'culture of honour' shows love and care for others and is at the heart of its work and ethos. Ten Christian values, including honesty, love, trust, forgiveness and compassion are linked clearly to 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'. These are understood and actioned effectively by all in this nurturing school. The school has several mutually beneficial partnerships, including a close connection with the local church, the diocese and other church schools. Training provided by the diocese has had a positive impact on staff and leaders. As a result, all are developing a greater understanding of St Mary Magdalene's as a church school. Because of frequent, productive governor focus days, the school's effectiveness is monitored efficiently. Consequently, leaders articulate the school's vision well, ensuring that it shapes school policies and development plans. Parents appreciate being invited to school events and to church for worship. However, they are not currently involved adequately in evaluating the school's effectiveness.

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' is a transformative process which meets the academic and spiritual needs of all. This is because the strong vision of the headteacher and deputy headteacher drives the school forward. Together they ensure that all, including the most vulnerable, are enabled to flourish within a supportive Christian framework. Pupils' academic and personal development is being met within a broad and exciting curriculum, which mirrors the Christian vision. As a result, pupils' progress and attainment are often above national expectations. Initiatives such as Philosophy for Children ensure that each pupil is recognised as a unique individual. Pupils therefore develop independence and perseverance to overcome barriers to their own learning. A variety of extra-curricular activities include creative dance, gospel choir, gardening in the Muck and Miracles area and Kick London sports. These, as well as the Transformers Church Club, provide enrichment opportunities for pupils, ensuring the rounded development of the whole child.

Pupils are passionate about engaging in social action and are especially proud of their 'Love in Action' global projects. For instance, Year 2 pupils led the Samara's Aid Appeal, encouraging everyone to donate warm clothes to support refugees in Syria. Each class is working on different 'God's Global Goals' in order to fight inequality and tackle extreme poverty. Taking part in Christian Aid's Global Neighbours Scheme allows pupils to challenge injustice and demonstrate a sense of compassion. Support given to a link school in Uganda demonstrates the way the school puts its Christian values of love and compassion into action. Locally, pupils have a positive impact through donation of food to PECAN, the local foodbank This connects fully to, 'I can do all things through Christ'.

A programme of inviting inspirational speakers to school is firmly established. This helps to raise aspirations, reinforcing the vision and the school's motto, 'Be the best you can be'. A parent commented that pupils flourish 'because of the constant reassurance children receive that they can do anything they set their minds to'. The long-standing link with Greenhive Care Home gives aspiration for pupils and hope for the local community. Pupils enjoy making the residents feel happy when they make their regular visits to take part in collaborative activities and celebrations. Leaders ensure that there is support for good mental health in a number of ways. For instance, pupils and staff take part in daily 'Soultime', a meditation session with a Christian focus. This allows them to feel a sense of peace and calm following busy activities. Pupils behave well and relationships between members of staff are mutually respectful and supportive. The Three C's of commitment, control and challenge are used effectively to enable all to show resilience to the stresses of modern life.

One of the hallmarks of the school is the work they have engaged in to celebrate difference and diversity. Working in collaboration with Diversity Role Models, pupils learn to respect and celebrate their differences. Older pupils set a good example and say, 'If you line up properly, others will look up to you and do the same as you.' This commitment to dignity for all springs from the school vision and the desire that everyone is valued equally. A focus on the four B's of brain, book, buddy and boss helps pupils to work together respectfully.

Creative collective worship allows all members of the school community to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, music, stillness and reflection. Pupils learn about the teachings of Jesus and are able to connect them to their own lives and to today's world. They say that worship makes them 'feel peaceful and able to think about things'. Singing at the school is particularly uplifting, adding variety and value to worship. Both adult and pupil faith groups' shared approach to planning and monitoring ensures that worship is an expression of the school's vision. Pupils say they enjoy the responsibility of being actively involved and undertake their roles wholeheartedly. This means that they make a strong contribution to collective worship provision.

The Prayer Room, set up every half term, is a powerful and practical way of demonstrating the school's vision. It provides opportunities to pray and experience reconciliation and forgiveness. Pupils and adults alike benefit from the quiet space offered by the outdoor Peace Park. They appreciate having a place to read, pray and reflect. A Year 6 pupil's comment, 'I commit the day to the Lord's hands' was powerful in its interpretation of worship and the vision.

Leaders ensure that curriculum planning in RE is thorough and that provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement fully. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning in RE and have a thoughtful understanding of the significance of Christianity as a living, world faith. Woven throughout the curriculum is the richness of the school's vision and supporting values. Vibrant RE displays focus on the big questions and rich experiences pupils have for learning in the subject. Because of the rich diversity at the school, pupils particularly love learning from and celebrating cultural and religious differences.



### **The effectiveness of RE is Good**

Standards in RE are good overall and the school is enabling its vulnerable pupils to flourish academically. Well-constructed events such as RE Week allow pupils to reflect deeply and consider theological concepts. Pupils have a good understanding of major world religions and are able to articulate how they impact on society and culture. Some good practice is evident in religious education teaching. For instance, pupils are given opportunities to consider big questions. These include, 'What can we learn from wisdom?' and 'What is more important to Christians, the journey or the destination?' However, there is a lack of consistency in the standards of teaching and learning across the school. This is mainly due to the challenges of staff recruitment and retention. Consequently, some pupils, particularly the more able, are not being challenged enough.

Headteacher/Executive principal/Head of school

Jennifer Parris

Inspector's name and number

Jenny Earp 288