



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Stephen's CE Primary

Winchester Road
Twickenham
Middlesex TW1 1LF

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: London

Local authority: Richmond upon Thames

Date of inspection: 21 June 2016

Date of last inspection: November 2010

School's unique reference number: 102915

Headteacher: Elizabeth Stubbs

Inspector's name and number: Gladys Vendy (299)

School context

Since the last denominational inspection St Stephen's school has changed from a three form entry junior school to a two form entry primary school. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, the majority of whom are of White British heritage. The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language, who are supported by the pupil premium funding or who have special needs or disabilities is below the national average. The majority of children are not from practising Christian families. The school was inspected by Ofsted in October 2014 and judged to be good.

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

- the outworking of the Christian values which provide the school community with a framework for living.
- effective working relationships between the Headteacher, Religious Education (RE) leader, worship leader and the ethos committee which make a significant contribution to high standards in RE, worship and spirituality.
- the strong partnership with St Stephen's church has a significant impact on the Christian distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school for the community.
- all children feel included, valued and nurtured in a calm and relaxed learning environment.

Areas to improve

There are no significant areas for development.

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

The securely embedded Christian values, underpinned by biblical teaching, provide the whole school community with a framework for living. They support the school's nurturing environment where all children are included and treated as unique to God. Because they are happy and feel safe in the calm and relaxed environment, children thrive and academic results are above the national average. Personalised learning programmes enable vulnerable children to make very good progress. Parents speak warmly of the support and love shown for their family's well-being which continues when children move to secondary school. Attendance is high because when there are problems the school asks how it can help and then actively does so. Each year group adopts a value and studies it in depth thereby making a strong contribution to the outworking of the Christian ethos as shown through service to the wider community. Relationships between all groups of the school community are positive and reflect the school motto 'to encourage each other and to build each other up'. This is evident in the very good behaviour of the children and the respect they show to each other whatever their faith background. Suggestions in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development policy impacts upon the whole curriculum and contributes to the outstanding development of pupils. Spiritual development is furthered by a Bible club for the younger children run by one of the support staff. Children show an awareness of the needs of others, initiating fund raising in their house groups to support charities, often responding to unforeseen disasters. The school has links with overseas Christian communities and is now developing links with Brazil to where the curate from St Stephen's church has recently moved. This means that children have a very good understanding of Christianity as a multi-cultural world faith. Children are excited by RE which is regarded as a core subject and which makes a strong contribution to the Christian character of the school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Distinctively Christian worship is at the heart of school life. The enthusiastic worship leader plans closely with the clergy so that worship has cohesiveness and continuity. Themes reflect the liturgical year and include Bible stories and spiritual values so children understand the distinctive features of Anglican practice and the importance of Jesus Christ in the Christian faith. Worship is highly regarded and attended by all teachers and extended staff. The weekly pattern enables children to experience a wide variety of opportunities. They particularly enjoy class worship which gives them the chance to consider themes more deeply - 'we can express our opinions and ask questions if we are not sure' said one child. The worship and RE co-ordinators together with the church team, train and support the teachers so that they are confident to lead worship. Children are able to explain the impact of worship 'it teaches me stories with morals that change me in a good way' said one child. Another child felt it helped her 'to find her inner peace'. Children take an active part in worship through dramatic presentations, writing prayers and reading from the Bible. Monitoring and evaluation have the clear purpose of improving practice as well as defining the distinctiveness of the school as a church school. Children's evaluation of worship has led to changes of approach so that they now have more input into worship. Children's understanding of the Trinity is impressive with one child saying 'God gives us gifts through the Holy Spirit which helps me to have more self-control'. As well as excellent opportunities for reflection in worship, prayers, including the school prayer written by the children, are said throughout the day. Pupils confidently express their ideas and understand the place of thanksgiving, repentance and intercession. The well-used prayer areas in classrooms are a constant reminder of the focus on spiritual development.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

RE is a central part of school life that inspires children because they can link what they are learning about to their own lives. The RE leader, who is passionate about RE, has had a strong impact on the improved teaching. Teaching about Christianity is at the heart of the scheme of work. Analytical assessment procedures and embedded evaluation, which are a direct response to the issues raised in the previous denominational inspection, have significantly raised standards. Teachers effectively use the 'I Can' statements so that work is differentiated and

pitched accurately. Because children develop skills such as interpretation, empathy and synthesis they are able to make links with themes in worship. As a result the quality of teaching in RE is outstanding. Children's standards of attainment are above the national expectations and often higher than those in other subjects. RE and collective worship impact across the curriculum. For example, older children who were learning about World War II understood the links with Judaism and the spiritual value of courage. The rich and creative approach to the RE curriculum gives children opportunities to acquire a sound understanding of faiths other than Christianity. This is supported by carefully planned visits to places of worship of other faiths. Children who had visited a Buddhist temple were observed reflecting on their learning, making observations and asking thought provoking questions. Leaders and governors regularly monitor RE together. Feedback is given and evidence from the evaluations is used to plan professional development and next steps for learning. As a result teachers are secure and confident in their teaching. RE books which are passed on to the next class teacher show children's learning journeys. Marking is reciprocal and inspires children to ask the big questions such as 'why did Jesus choose to be humble and not use his power?' Each class has an 'Our RE journey' book which records oral and creative activities so that children can both celebrate and reflect on their learning.

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

The enthusiastic Headteacher together with the ethos committee, which includes governors and members of staff, articulates a clear Christian vision for the school which is understood by the whole school community. The role of the ethos committee has had a direct impact on strategic planning and fully addresses an issue from the previous inspection by driving forward the Christian vision of the school. It achieves this by drawing together the different strands of worship, RE, spirituality and the Christian ethos of the school through regular monitoring and evaluation. As a result self-evaluation is accurate and standards of achievement in RE have been raised. Information about progress on the five year vision plan is regularly shared with other members of the staff. Rich and open dialogue with all groups of the school community and church has enabled the school to make a successful transition to an all age primary school. For example, when the mission statement was discussed with pupils, a Muslim child asked 'will it work for everyone?' Governors know the children as individuals and are seen as part of the wider community. Carefully managed professional development has led to the promotion of members of staff into leadership roles creating a stable environment. This can be seen by the successful appointment of the knowledgeable RE and worship leaders. The head teacher and members of staff have forged effective links with neighbouring Anglican schools to share good practice for the benefit of the wider school community. The strong links with the vicar and staff at St Stephen's church are mutually supportive. Children accept responsibilities in many ways and their opinions are valued. For example the school council members brought many suggestions to a meeting about the content of the forthcoming RE day. The active and energetic parents association support the life of the school in many different areas. St Stephen's is a distinctive and effective church school for the local community because, through the outworking of its Christian ethos, it serves, welcomes and engages with those of all faiths or none.

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