

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St. Edward's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Havering Drive
Romford
RM1 4BT

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Havering

Dates of inspection: 12th December 2014

Date of last inspection: 12th January 2010

School's unique reference number: 102328

Headteacher: Stephanie Ellner

Inspector's name and number: Virginia Corbyn 86

School context

St Edward's Church of England Primary School is much larger than most primary schools and serves an increasingly diverse community. The proportion of pupils with a Black African heritage about 29%. There is a below average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school deprivation indicator shows that the school is at the national average. The majority of pupils are admitted to the school on the grounds of evidence provided by their Christian minister.

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

- The leaders of this Church school articulate a vision which puts the uniqueness of each pupil as a child of God at the heart of all that they do
- Worship is given a very high priority with pupils having a significant influence on this aspect of school life through the pupil worship committee
- Religious education (RE) has been well led and managed with effective improvements made since the previous inspection

Areas to improve

- Ensure that an explicit set of Christian values is identified through consultation with all stakeholders, so that their impact can be confidently linked to pupils' achievement and that the values can be included in the relevant documentation and on the website
- Extend the teaching and learning in the higher levels for RE so that all evidence of higher order thinking is in line with the best practice identified within the school

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

St Edward's has a strong and embedded implicit Christian ethos based on Christ centred values. The model provided by Jesus forms the basis of the daily life of the school. This has a positive impact upon the achievement, wellbeing and personal development of all pupils and is commended by stakeholders. A clearly stated belief that all children are created in the image of God results in an individualised approach to meeting pupils' needs. All of God's children are encouraged to develop their talents. This means that gaps in achievement are identified and are being addressed. However, explicit Christian values are not identified or clearly defined and, therefore, they are not fully supporting the school's Christian ethos. These values are not clearly articulated to or by all stakeholders. Consequently, they are not explicitly related to the achievement of the pupils. Teachers use very positive behaviour management strategies based around forgiveness and reconciliation which encourage and foster excellent behaviour. This results in strong, trusting relationships between children and adults throughout the school. There is a range of opportunities for prayer during the school day. Pupils appreciate the accessible quiet spaces that have been developed both indoors and outdoors since the previous inspection. The school's implicit values enable pupils to develop a strong sense of what is right and what is wrong. They are, therefore, confident in making moral choices confidently. Pupils clearly articulate the importance of RE in broadening their understanding of diverse communities whilst understanding that their own faith remains strong.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Pupils know that worship is important and that their worship keeps them 'connected to God'. They are able to apply what they hear to the benefit of the school community, treating others as they want to be treated. It is important to them that they are fully involved in the planning and the delivery of worship. The headteacher has found innovative ways through which to move worship forward including by forming a pupil worship committee. This group meets regularly with some school leaders. This means that worship is owned and shaped by the children whilst being guided by the leadership team. Pupils lead class and key stage worship with confidence and with conviction. They enjoy finding ways to involve all of the school community in improving their experiences of worship. They made sure that favourite hymns were included in the school hymnbook and organised a competition to design the cover. Worship is Christian, Biblical and Anglican. Use of Trinitarian language and some detailed exploration of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit began with the previous incumbent. The community has a shared understanding of the importance of prayer. Pupils make suggestions for prayer themes during worship. They pray the Lord's Prayer during most acts of worship. They write their own prayers for worship and in their classrooms. Parents speak of their own appreciation of the major Christian festivals in schools and in church especially the traditional Nativity plays. All stakeholders commend the ways in which the clergy of St Edward's have made everyone feel welcome and supported by the church. Pupils suggest that more visitors be invited to lead worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Standards of attainment in RE are broadly in line with schools nationally with some attaining higher. Pupils understand the value of RE and they learn well. Teaching is good as evidenced through book scrutiny and lesson outcomes. This has not been confirmed through lesson observations carried out over time by senior leaders. Pupils speak about a variety of tasks in their RE lessons which allows them to learn about and from religion. At present, much of the planning for pupils of different abilities is mostly based on outcomes. This means that some pupils are not always adequately supported in the work which is set. Formal assessment procedures are now in place as recommended in the previous report. The higher ordering thinking and questioning which has led to some excellent assessment outcomes provides the future model for consistency across the school. RE has a high profile within the school curriculum and has been led by members of the senior leadership team until earlier this term. Learners display a secure knowledge of key Christian

teachings with the curriculum placing a significant emphasis on Christianity. Pupils enjoy learning about and from other religions as seen in a lesson which followed up an inspiring visit to a local synagogue.

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

The headteacher, in partnership with all the leaders of the school, articulates a clear Christian vision. The new chair of governors is ambitious for the school to fully realise this vision. There is a keen understanding of faith in practice especially in relation to the most vulnerable pupils but inclusive of all. Parents see St Edward's as having a strong Christian ethos whilst respecting the faiths and the beliefs of others. The issues from the previous SIAS inspection have been fully addressed. However, the school's explicit Christian values are not evident in documentation or on the website. Therefore, stakeholders are not able to explain these values fully especially in relation to the achievement of the pupils. Future leadership is being secured by all senior leaders playing their part in developing the school as a church school. There are also effective partnerships with other local church primary and secondary schools. Teachers new to the profession and to the school are well supported in developing their understanding of what it means to work in a church school. RE has been well led and managed by senior leaders for some time and is now being led by two of the teachers. There are strong links with the local church especially in the person of the Anglican curate. Following the departure of the previous incumbent, the curate is seeking to increase his support for the school community in a variety of practical, personal and spiritual ways. The school has good links with Chelmsford Diocese and a new Diocesan adviser has recently been appointed to support the school. Involvement in the local community includes support for the local food bank and for those in sheltered housing who are invited into school for carol singing led by pupils. Generosity for those in need is determined by the pupils, at present in the form of support for Save the Children and a local children's hospice, Richard House. Statutory requirements for worship and for RE are met. The school community is one characterised by its Christian faith which is explored, lived out and shared.

SIAMS report, December 2014, St Edward's VA Primary School Romford RMI 4BT