

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

<b>St John &amp; St James' Church of England Primary School</b>			
<b>Address</b>	Isabella Rd, London E9 6DX		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	06 March 2019	<b>Status of school</b>	VA primary, part of Primary Advantage Federation
<b>Diocese</b>	London	<b>URN</b>	132137

<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Excellent
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>Additional Judgements</b>		
<b>The impact of collective worship</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Excellent
<b>The effectiveness of religious education (RE)</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Good

### School context

St John & St James' is a primary school with 263 pupils on roll. The school has a high level of religious and cultural diversity and many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above national averages. The school is one of eight primary schools within the Primary Advantage Federation. This federation consists of both Church of England schools and Community schools.

### The school's Christian vision

'Love your neighbour as yourself; by learning together, journeying together, praying together'  
The school vision is deeply rooted in the Bible, and in Jesus' teaching. We have embedded one of Jesus' greatest commandments into our school ethos. By treating others how we wish to be treated, we promote a school culture ingrained in mutual respect, understanding and compassion for those around us.

### Key findings

- The relentless and passionate commitment to social justice and service demonstrated by all leaders, reflected as an outworking of the school's Christian vision, is making a long-term difference to the life chances and choices for all pupils.
- The school enjoys exceptionally strong partnerships with the local parish church, which makes a profound contribution to the collective worship and the overall Christian character of the school.
- Relationships at all levels are informed by the vision and underpinned by an explicit set of Christian values which guarantee superb levels of pastoral support for all members of the school community.
- The deeply Christian vision shapes, supports and sustains the excellent academic achievement, personal development and wellbeing of all pupils.
- The school vision ensures Religious education (RE) has a high priority within the curriculum, is well planned to meet the needs of pupils and enables and encourages pupils to reflect on their own learning.

### Areas for development

- Develop the school's own RE syllabus to ensure theological concepts are tackled with sufficient depth through an enquiry-based approach.
- Develop consistency of excellent practice across the school and share this within the federation structure and beyond.

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**

Relationships between all members of this school community are built on a deep sense of trust, love and responsibility to one another. At the centre of these relationships is the school's vision which is made explicit throughout the life of the school, forming the very heartbeat of the school day: 'Love your neighbour as yourself; by learning together, journeying together, praying together'. All those involved in the school make reference to the vision when communicating high expectations and aspirations for every child in this diverse community, where levels of deprivation are higher than the national average. This is seen both in the strong progress all groups of pupils make, and in their preparation as life-long learners.

School leaders and governors show determination in ensuring that a drive for high standards is achieved through a focus on the spiritual development and wellbeing of pupils. They describe the way in which the school's Christian character and vision are at the centre of its success. This is evident in the school development plan, behaviour and equalities policies and workings of the school which demonstrate a deep understanding of the Christian foundation. The vision is well established, grounded in a clear Christian theology and articulated and understood by all members of the school community. It directs the school's priorities and shapes the thinking of all, as can be seen in the high level of pastoral care provided for pupils, parents and staff. School leaders work in closely with the clergy team and together show a high degree of pastoral concern for pupils. Parents feel strongly that each child is nurtured, cared for and celebrated as an individual and that senior leaders and members of the clergy are always present and available in and around the school. The staff team possess an extraordinary ability to notice the needs of a family and act appropriately, impacting positively on family life. The ability to go the extra mile to make a positive difference demonstrates how the school lives out its vision to 'Love your neighbour as yourself'.

Reports from governor visits are exemplary, highlighting the strengths of the school whilst providing incisive challenge through carefully considered questions. Consequently, they ensure that both worship and RE meet statutory requirements. The diocese provides support to leaders across the federation and ongoing RE subject leader training to share best practice and to keep the school informed of national developments. This has resulted in the school accurately identifying areas for development in the RE syllabus and its implementation. Evaluation and monitoring systems used by governors and school leaders are incisive, clearly defined and impact on ensuring best practice is developed in both collective worship and RE. As a result, school leaders have identified the need to sharpen the focus of learning in RE through the development of learning intentions which provide age appropriate theological and philosophical informed accounts of Christianity and other religions.

Collective worship invites children and staff at the beginning of every school day to 'learn together, journey together and pray together'. Pupils respond to worship and moments of reflection with sensitivity and maturity. Themes link to the school's Christian vision, underpinned by a clear set of values and a 'word of the week' and are followed through in RE and values lessons. The collective worship observed focused on 'forgiveness' and 'understanding' and these words are expressed best by pupils who use them naturally when describing relationships at all levels. The learning environment of each classroom reflects clearly the weekly theme from collective worship. As a result, collective worship and the vision and values have a profound impact on pupil's behaviour and their spiritual and mental wellbeing. Pupils have formed a collective worship council and are actively involved in the planning and evaluation of collective worship. The impact of this can be seen in the positive observations the children make regarding the changes to music, hymns and prayer. Evaluations demonstrate that children and adults find worship highly engaging, inclusive and inspirational. Every act of worship is distinctly Christian in character, seeks to deepen the children's theological understanding and provide pupils and staff with time to reflect on how it will impact on their daily lives. This, together with the prominent place of prayer across the school, ensures that worship is a spiritual experience of real significance. The clergy team from the parish church meet frequently alongside senior leaders and pupils to plan worship. The high level of commitment and engagement has led to worship that is inspirational and impacts deeply on the daily life of the school. Prayer happens at least twice a day. In classrooms prayer boxes and books are available for pupils and these prayers are used effectively to support collective worship. Worship allows pupils the opportunity to begin to develop an age-appropriate understanding of complex Christian beliefs such as that of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Staff and pupils spiritual and mental wellbeing have been carefully considered through a number of innovative practices. All staff may attend weekly drop in sessions with a clinician from the school's mental health and wellbeing support team. Staff speak positively about their induction processes and affirm the view that school leaders consider their working practices and wellbeing when making decisions about school policy. Pupils have many creative indoor and outdoor areas for reflection. A pergola creates a quiet outdoor space for younger children to reflect, with attractive prayer stones prompting their thoughts. The reflection area for older pupils has been carefully considered and designed by pupils as an area for peace, prayer and stillness. As a result this well used area provides the children with a wonderful space for spiritual reflection and growth.

Pupils are able to make clear links between the school vision and choices they make, referencing the biblical text, 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. The school assists the children in developing a deep knowledge and understanding of their role as citizens within their community. Both parents and pupils speak of hope and high aspirations for the future as a result of the school living out its vision in practice. Links to charities are closely connected with the charitable work of the parish church. Children talk positively about making a difference through the charity work they have supported in relation to the homeless shelter established by the church. The clergy team all take active roles, seeing the school as an integral part of their mission. They share the school's vision of 'journeying together' and as a result are highly effective in working alongside the school to provide charitable links to local, national and global organisations.



**The effectiveness of RE is Good**

All pupils make good progress within lessons and over time. The school has worked closely with the diocese to establish carefully framed questions to assess pupil knowledge and understanding in RE. This has led to a robust assessment process. Pupils are stimulated to grapple with the big questions within Christianity and other world faiths. They frequently make comparisons between religions, considering their similarities and differences. The impact of teaching over time is evident in the pupils having been well equipped with appropriate language to discuss religion. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons observed was consistently good, with some examples of excellence seen where all children are deeply engaged in reflecting and discussing key questions. Marking provides opportunities for reflection. Pupils enjoy RE and find some of their lessons highly engaging. Pockets of excellent practice in RE exist but are not yet consistent enough to inspire all learners.

Head of school	Jo Smith
Inspector's name and number	Allan McLean (NS 823)