

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Paul's Cray Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	
Buttermere Road, St Paul's Cray, Orpington, BR5 3WD	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	Rochester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Local authority	Bromley
Date of inspection	31 March 2017
Date of last inspection	19 March 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	101647
Headteacher	Jackie Tranchina
Inspector's name and number	Anne Southgate 820

School context

St Paul's Cray is an average sized primary school with a maintained nursery. It is currently expanding to become a two form entry school. There has been extensive building work to accommodate the nursery and the additional classes. The headteacher has been in post since September 2015. About half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is significantly higher than the national average. Ofsted judged the school to require improvement in July 2016.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Paul's Cray as a Church of England school are good

- The exceptionally supportive and loving environment for pupils and their families ensures that almost all pupils make good progress.
- Strong governance supports school leaders, and governors help to create clear and effective improvement plans.
- The good behaviour and calm atmosphere enable pupils to learn well.
- The highly effective partnership with the church is mutually beneficial.

Areas to improve

- Create opportunities for younger pupils to lead worship more often, so that they have greater ownership of and engagement in worship.
- Ensure that religious education (RE) and collective worship are always separate activities so that pupils of all beliefs and of none feel fully included in RE.
- Ensure that all stakeholders understand the biblical basis to the school's Christian values, so that they fully appreciate that the work of the school community is underpinned by explicitly Christian teaching.

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

St Paul's Cray is a highly inclusive church school, which cares deeply for the welfare of each individual in the school community. A clear set of Christian values drives school improvement and underpins the school's motto and vision statement. These values of trust, compassion, hope, forgiveness, thankfulness and friendship, are used by pupils and by adults to support the effective behaviour strategies in the school. Pupils are very clear that there are consequences for poor behaviour, but they speak confidently about forgiveness and about having a fresh start. Consequently, behaviour is commendable and there is a very calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school. The school environment proclaims the Christian character of the school. An example is the message, 'we work with God's love' being displayed over the entrance to the school. The attractive and interactive displays around the school and in outside areas challenge pupils to think deeply. This leads to pupils reflecting on the school's values and on Christian beliefs, such as the resurrection. The school's values are very well known and used by all stakeholders. Leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of the biblical basis to the values, but pupils and parents are less secure in this understanding. There are a wide variety of opportunities to pray, and many pupils choose to use these. This includes in the the nursery, where the youngest pupils respond thoughtfully to the display, 'what shall we thank God for?' Pupils appreciate that the prayers which they write in class are often prayed by the teacher at the end of the day, and that they are hung on the school's prayer tree. The forest school adds to the enjoyment of learning, and it enables pupils to experience wonder at nature. As a result of the nurturing and challenging environment, and of the wide variety of clubs available, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils have a highly developed awareness and appreciation of diversity between people. Older pupils have a clear understanding that Christianity is a world-wide religion, and for example, that 'there are more Christians in India than in this country'. RE enables pupils to ask searching questions and they generally learn and progress very well. However, RE is sometimes confused with worship.

Pupils' self-esteem is built exceptionally well, so that they have hope and high aspirations for their futures. As a result, pupils, including the disadvantaged, make good progress, often from low starting points. The school community is impressively optimistic and happy. Everyone believes that they can achieve their best, so that they can become the person God created them to be. Staff welfare is taken seriously, so that adults feel supported to enable pupils to achieve. Attendance is improving rapidly because of the very strong care and support offered to children and to their families. The level of trust that has been built with parents is exceptional. This enables all adults to work together to enable pupils to experience life in all its fullness.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship provides an important time of reflection, during which pupils become familiar with Bible stories and hear about the Christian basis to their school's values. However, few pupils are able to make clear links between biblical stories and the values. Everyone is included and made to feel loved and welcome, including those of other faiths and those of none. A significant number of parents frequently attend collective worship at school and at the church. The very strong partnership with St Mary's church enables pupils to have a good understanding of local Anglican practice and of the main Christian festivals and beliefs. Pupils show an impressive understanding of the major Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter, but few have a developed awareness of other festivals such as Pentecost. Older pupils have an age appropriate understanding of beliefs such as that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pupils recognise the significance of the main features of a church building and they say that they feel welcomed and at home in the church. Anglican sentences and responses are regularly used at the beginning and end of all acts of worship, so that pupils are very familiar with these. Older pupils often lead aspects of worship and they plan church worship with the vicar. Younger pupils lead worship in their classrooms and they often take part in drama in worship. However, they would like to be more involved in leading whole school worship. School leaders, the vicar and the chair of governors lead worship regularly. Representatives from the Spinnaker Trust also lead worship. This ensures that pupils experience a range of styles of worship. The chair of governors monitors worship formally. This and other informal monitoring has led to improvements, such as creating the outside reflection area and adding the dismissal sentence at the end of all acts of worship. However, the views of other stakeholders, including pupils and parents, are seldom collected formally.

Worship often inspires pupils to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour. Consequently, some pupils refer to the message of worship throughout the day. They apply it to their interactions with others and sometimes offer

prayers in class and around the school. They treat each other very well as a result and they often raise money for charities, such as the Make a Wish Foundation.

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

Leaders are very clear that Christian values are at the heart of their practice. They are committed to increasing the life chances of local children and have put structures in place to support pupils and families experiencing difficulties. Senior leaders and governors work effectively together to help pupils realise that everyone is a child of God and that they should all fulfil their potential. The headteacher is determined to create a secure, loving environment in which children trust adults and learn well. This has resulted in a very loving and supportive Christian community, whose established values are continuing to have a positive impact on standards and progress. The very strong partnership with the local church means that parents are happy to attend the church with their children. The vicar views the school as another worshipping community within his benefice and he contributes significantly to the work of the school. The partnership is regarded as part of the church's mission to the local community. There are also strong partnerships with the diocese and with parents. Leaders regularly access diocesan training, which has helped them to strengthen the Christian character of the school. Staff are provided with helpful training to enable them to develop as teachers and leaders in church schools. Some governors also attend diocesan training and they bring useful expertise and wisdom to the school. The chair of governors ensures that all governors understand their responsibility to uphold the Christian character of the school. Governors have worked well with school leaders to produce effective development plans. Governors and school leaders have written a clear vision document, based on Christian values, which is helping to drive school improvement. Self-evaluation as a church school is accurate and it clearly identifies strategies to continue to improve. The development areas from the previous denominational inspection have largely been addressed, although the Christian basis to the core values is not explicitly known by all stakeholders. RE is led by the deputy headteacher, because it is regarded as an important core subject. She monitors standards rigorously and supports other teachers to improve, although some teachers sometimes confuse RE with worship. Statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met.

SIAMS report March 2017 St Paul's Cray CE Primary School, St Paul's Cray, BR5 3WD