



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

St Luke's VA Primary School

Ruscoe Road

Canning Town

E161JB

Diocese: Chelmsford

Local authority: Newham

Dates of inspection: 13th February 2014

Date of last inspection: 23rd September 2008

School's unique reference number: 102766

Headteacher: Theresa Aanonson

Inspector's name and number: Iain Gunn 727

School context

The school is an averaged sized primary school in a diverse London Borough. This diversity is reflected in the makeup of the pupils at St Luke's. The school serves an area of high social and economic disadvantage. The school is oversubscribed and has waiting lists in most year groups. A high proportion of the pupils have English as a second language.

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

- The involvement of the whole community in the life of the school particularly the ways in which parents are involved on a daily basis.
- The effective use of data to ensure high standards in religious education [RE.]
- The inspirational leadership at a variety of levels within the school that drive forward developments
- The deeply embedded core Christian values that influence the beliefs and behaviour of the pupils.
- The inspirational experiences that the pupils get through the curriculum and worship within the school.

Areas to improve

- The expectations for quality marking are made more frequent so children can benefit from the excellent practice that is already in place.

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

The school is based around a deeply embedded set of Christian values that all members of the school community can articulate and also relate to the daily life of the school. It is evident as soon as you walk into the school that you are entering a church school; from the fantastic displays through which it is clear that worship and RE are embedded into all areas of the curriculum, to the actual building itself with a

chapel and beautiful worship spaces. This is a place of real learning where the pupils enjoy school and are incredibly proud of their achievements. Pupils at the school feel safe and valued and they are not scared to challenge themselves. The behaviour in the school is excellent and the pupils relate this to their core values of respect as well as forgiveness. The pupils could give examples of when they had argued but then made friends as forgiving each other is what they learn at school. The wide variety of opportunities for spiritual reflection and prayer result in spiritual development for pupils and staff being a particularly strong feature of the school. The curriculum and worship also develop a strong sense of spirituality where the pupils learn about Jesus as a person and how his teachings help them to behave towards each other. One reception pupil, after learning about the story of the lost sheep said that 'they were not afraid of the dark as Jesus is the light of the world'. There was some particularly impressive and moving work by Year 6 looking at spiritual journeys, with pupils using art to describe their feelings. The school develops a strong sense of community, with the parents of younger pupils working in school at the start of each morning. The pupils also sing for the elderly, have community meals and the school itself is the local church. They understand why it is important to help others and actively raise money for others both in this country and abroad. They could relate these actions to their core values saying it was only fair to share Gods provision with everyone as we are all equal. Through the curriculum and the wealth of visits and visitors pupils, have a high degree of understanding and respect for diversity and difference both within Christianity and other faiths. The local community is used really well to enhance this as well as the schools involvement with schools in Ethiopia and Burma. The attendance of the school is well above the national average and this is a direct result of the pupils enjoying coming to school. A parent commented 'I like the fact that Christianity is actively celebrated, the approachability of the teachers and the strict emphasis on punctuality supports the pupils in every way'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship really is the lifeblood of the school and is given a very high priority by all. The worship is based around the principle that each act will honour Jesus. This is achieved through bible teachings, readings and reflective prayer. It is the main vehicle through which the strong core values are shared .The pupils can relate the way they behave and treat each other directly to teachings from worship. They understand that worship is a time to be closer to God and the whole school community is involved daily in the worship. The pupils spoke with great passion about the different approaches that the variety of leaders employ. These approaches ensure that worship is always, inspirational, inclusive and engaging. One pupil remembered worship when the hall was made completely dark to emphasis a sense of awe and wonder. The pupils particularly enjoy worship when they are actively involved through drama or discussion with their partner. The key elements of worship are naturally integrated .The pupils are able to engage with them as well as articulating the main features, talking about the gathering, use of prayer and their favourite songs. The worship observed had a strong focus on the Trinity and the pupils have a very deep understanding of this concept. One pupil described it as three interlocking clocks that all showed different times showing God could be in three places at once. A real strength is the wealth of visitors from different Christian traditions that are invited into the school to deliver the very well-coordinated worship. This leads to a very rich experience for the pupils who all had different favourite worship leaders. All worship takes place in the hall, which is also the local church; however the hall changes depending on the worship theme. It has been transformed into a variety of settings including a bedroom which really enhances the pupil's engagement. The use of personal prayer is highly developed from the staff who pray together regularly, to the pupils who could articulate times in and out of school where prayer helps them. The example given by the pupils ranged from prayer to help them in challenging circumstances to prayers that helped others. The pupils have a secure understanding of the seasons of the church year and can talk with understanding about a variety of key festivals. This understanding is a direct result of carefully planned worship and a very sound RE curriculum. The planning involves a range of members from the community including the local clergy team. The monitoring of the worship is effective and feedback is collected after each act of worship. This leads to action and improvements .One example of this was that the pupils asked to be more involved and it was clear from speaking to them that this has been effectively implemented.

The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding

Links with the strong and embedded Christian values of the school and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are intrinsic to the RE curriculum. These well planned links enable pupils to make connections between what they learn and then apply the concepts to their everyday lives significantly impacting on the learners. The pupils enjoy, and succeed in RE and can recognise the wide range of learning opportunities that they are given. They particularly enjoy the trips, visitors and the chance to have in-depth discussions. The teaching in school is never less than good and much is outstanding. The lessons are well paced with quality differentiation meeting the needs of all pupils. The quality of questioning is excellent and a range of activities are used skilfully to engage the pupils. The excellent subject knowledge of the teachers and use of quality assessments give pupils regular opportunities to develop higher level thinking skills. This has been a recent priority and there is now clear evidence of the impact of this work across the school. The highly effective teaching of pupils in RE has resulted in standards in RE being above the national averages and pupils make rapid and sustained progress, from a below average starting point. Religious education has a very high profile and has been woven into all areas of the curriculum. There is much evidence of links with other subjects in books as well as in the very high quality displays around the school. There is evidence of quality next step marking in all RE books, so that pupils are able to understand what they need to do to improve their work. At present, however, the expectation is for only one piece of in-depth marking to take place each unit. There is a rigorous and extensive monitoring plan in place and a highly skilled subject leader works well alongside the assessment leader to drive forward improvement. The assessment data is of a particularly high standard and is analysed and acted upon with great effect throughout the school. This has a direct impact on the pupils who have a very extensive knowledge of their own levels and their next steps for learning. There is an appropriate balance between the teaching of Christianity and other faiths. The curriculum also provides quality opportunities for pupils to make links between other faiths. The pupils understand the importance of this and reported 'it is important to know about what others believe so that we can respect them and not offend anyone because we do not understand them'. This was demonstrated in a lesson in the school where two boys were having a deep discussion about images in each of their faiths. Both were comfortable expressing views about their individual beliefs.

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

The strong Christian leadership of the head permeates and inspires all at the school. This leadership promotes a vision for the school rooted in distinctly Christian values and a desire to do the best that they can for the pupils in their care. All of the issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed. Excellent use of the youth worker is now made both to enhance worship and also as a resource in lessons which greatly enhance the pupils experience at St Luke's. The school uses research, both in house and external very effectively to drive forward the school. The use of external research is particularly effective in getting a balanced view of the school that directly results in further developments. A great example of this was the research into the impact of collective worship on the school which collected views and opinions of all stakeholders and has resulted in much more engaging and inclusive worship. The self-evaluation of the school is extensive and accurate. The leadership of the school not only have the skills to evaluate their position but also have the resources to implement change either by using the skills in the school or through the extensive training the staff receive from a variety of providers. A strong example of this was the training given in school to develop higher level thinking skills. This has resulted in the effective use of approaches, skilfully delivered by staff, which enables the pupils to achieve higher levels of achievement. The subject leader uses data very effectively to identify groups of pupils who need extra support. The regularity of this monitoring means that underperformance is addressed early and very effectively. The governors of the school provide support and challenge and are well informed through regular, visits to the school and reports from the head and subject leaders. They receive regular presentations from the RE and worship leaders so that they are fully informed about the standards in the school. The development of staff and governors is planned through thorough continued professional development which strategically and significantly benefits the school.

