

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. John Baptist (Southend) Church of England Primary School			
Address	Beachborough Road Bromley Kent BR1 5RL		
Date of inspection	14 March 2019	Status of school	Voluntary Aided Primary
Diocese	Southwark	URN	I00728
Overall Judgement			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?			
Additional Judgements			
The impact of collective worship			Excellent
The impact of religious education			Excellent
School context			
St John Baptist is a primary school with 210 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national averages. The majority of pupils are of Black African/Caribbean heritage and many pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are considered to be disadvantaged is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The area served is in the highest quintile for social deprivation.			
The school's Christian vision			
At our school, every child flourishes and becomes a 'shining light'. We achieve this by following Jesus, loving learning, being a friend and standing strong. Guided by our Christian Values, we celebrate our diversity with joy. 'As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' John 13:34			
Key findings			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inspirational headteacher seeks to give opportunity to all, passionately supporting inclusion and diversity. This enables every member of the school to achieve and feel valued in the love of Christ. • The excellent, values-led curriculum has a major impact on all members of the school community. It meets the academic and spiritual needs of all pupils and adults outstandingly well. • Connections with St. John the Baptist Church, located next to the school, are exceptionally strong. This makes a powerful contribution to outstanding, uplifting collective worship. • The strong, supportive governing body is relentless in the pursuit of excellence. They exemplify the vision and seek to serve their diverse community, celebrating and valuing difference as a significant strength of the school. • RE has high priority in the school and provides a safe place to explore the theological, philosophical and social human sciences. Academic rigour is evident in learning and the subject is exceptionally well led. 			
Area for development			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed links and partnerships with schools or communities in other areas of the world. This is to enable pupils to continue to champion global issues, such as inequality and injustice, through a wider curriculum lens. 			

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

St. John Baptist School's vision is founded upon deeply embedded Christian values rooted in biblical teaching. 'As I have loved you, so you must love one another' (John 13) infuses and shapes all aspects of school life. Every single pupil is truly regarded as a shining light by staff who believe and subscribe unequivocally to servant-hearted leadership. As a result, pupils flourish outstandingly well, working together in friendship, love and harmony. The school's Christian values, blended seamlessly with the 'learning powers' of resilience, reflection, collaboration and problem-solving, nurture everyone's skills and abilities. Consequently, pupils develop a deep love of learning and respect for all in God's world.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve very well academically and results are consistently above national expectations across the school. Many pupils join the school with very poor language skills, but because of outstanding, loving teaching, they quickly make remarkable progress. The governors, together with the Faith Group, are very effective in ensuring that the school's strong Christian ethos is systematically sustained. St John the Baptist Church is an integral part of the whole school community and clergy provide invaluable spiritual and pastoral support.

Under the headteacher's long tenure, the school has become a centre of excellence and a beacon of hope for generations of pupils. A former pupil, now a parent himself at the school revealed, 'this school is unbelievable, unlike anywhere else'. The school frequently hosts visits from other schools to demonstrate their excellent practice. This sharing of expertise, such as the highly effective values-based curriculum, has transformed hundreds of people's lives in many schools and settings. The school undertakes numerous innovative enterprises, including the successful 'Zoom Project', boosting parental engagement with their Year 1 children. The recommendation from the previous inspection has been addressed fully.

The school's outstanding 'irresistible' curriculum is structured in a way that ignites curiosity and spirituality in every pupil. Its clear link to the school vision ensures that values such as empathy, resilience and kindness are applied in a real context. This could be seen during an 'Operation Forgiveness' workshop, delivered by family members of a knife-crime victim. They commented on how pupils used the school values, especially great compassion, after hearing their very sad story of loss.

Pupils are relentless advocates of change, saying their values help them to 'stand strong' when challenging injustice and inequality. This is evidenced in the way the school council actively and enthusiastically represents the school during numerous campaigns supporting local issues. These include clearing the local area of rubbish and organising signage to be erected to protect local geese. Safe parking in the neighbourhood has also been addressed. The school undertakes many charitable activities, including supporting a local food bank, showing that 'loving one another' includes the homeless. Links with schools in South Africa, Kenya and Pakistan are at an early stage of development. The school's charity, The Candlelight Trust, helps to fund many extra resources and experiences that benefit everyone. This illustrates how the outward-looking, inclusive vision enables every individual at St John's to shine and flourish.

The school has many community links enabling pupils to acquire empathy and compassion, including a long-standing link with St Christopher's Hospice. Pupils visit patients with life-limiting illnesses, work together on art projects and share life stories. This is mutually beneficial, allowing all to come together in love and support. The school devised an information pack that is now used in hospices and care homes around the world. The long-held partnership with Greenvale Special School also offers invaluable support for pupils with severe learning and physical difficulties. This practical expression of the school's Christian vision helps to open pupils' horizons by giving them a concern for others.

Leaders ensure emphatically that any barriers to inclusion that might limit the life chances of pupils are significantly reduced. For example, all Year 5 pupils have the opportunity to learn to sail with the Ahoy Centre charity. Events like the annual Cultural Week promote diversity, tolerance and respect and an appreciation of difference. As a result of this and many other excellent experiences, pupils are comfortable as the person God made them to be.

Highly effective induction and professional development are prioritised for all staff and governors and the school benefits from excellent diocesan training provision. As a result, several members of staff have moved on to headships and deputy headships in the diocese. A member of staff affirmed, 'I choose to work at St John Baptist because I wholeheartedly believe in the vision and ethos'.

The school supports the mental health of both pupils and adults outstandingly well. This is because leaders are proactive in embracing initiatives such as 'Roots of Empathy'. This has a significant impact on all who are

involved, teaching them how to respect and empathise with others. The school employs a psychotherapist who provides outstanding practical and compassionate bespoke care for the more vulnerable pupils.

Adults and pupils alike confirm that collective worship is at the core of daily life at St. John's. Pupils are central to this, regularly leading aspects of worship such as the gathering, prayer and responses. They provide succinct, honest evaluation that leads to improvement. Pupils' behaviour and attitude to worship is exemplary. Worship is a joyful and strengthening experience led by a wide range of people. Pupils visit the church weekly, for the hugely anticipated Thursday worship. Many undertake Eucharist preparation, enabling them to explore its meaning and take communion regularly. This has a considerable impact on the spiritual development of both adults and pupils. Music is a significant strength at the school and exquisite singing by pupils enhances the overall outstanding quality of worship. Prayer contributes positively to pupils' sense of spirituality. It also influences actions such as praying for members of the school community who are suffering loss or in need. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the value and use of prayer in their lives.

RE enjoys a very high profile at the school and the robust, vibrant curriculum reflects the Christian vision exceptionally well. Learning activities provide fully for the needs of all pupils, inspiring them to develop higher skills of analysis, enquiry and reflection. The most vulnerable pupils, in particular, are able to reflect impressively on what they have learnt from their studies. The school's RE provision more than meets the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.



The effectiveness of RE is Excellent

Standards are very high and all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, flourish academically in RE. Because of the innovative, values-based approach of the RE leadership, the subject is managed and monitored exceptionally well. RE teaching and learning is consistently graded good or higher. Progress and attainment for all pupils is above or at least in line with other core subjects. RE is highly effective in challenging pupils to explore and enrich their own beliefs and values. This can be seen in the way Year 6 pupils take part in an annual pilgrimage programme, visiting several different cathedrals. RE is effective in enabling pupils to develop an extensive knowledge and understanding of Christianity, as well as other major world religions. All pupils are given opportunities to visit a diverse range of places of worship throughout the year. As a result, pupils express their ideas and insights in a remarkably informed way, demonstrating their deep level of theological and philosophical understanding.

Headteacher	John Goodey
Inspector's name and number	Jenny Earp 288