

**STATUTORY
INSPECTION OF
ANGLICAN SCHOOLS**



Name & address of school: **St Mary Magdalene's Church of England Primary School**
Rowington Close, London, W2 5TF

Diocese of London

Date of inspection: 6th July 2007

Type of School: Voluntary Aided Primary

Headteacher: Denise Paramore

Local authority: Westminster

Date of last inspection: November 2001

School's unique reference number: 285981

SIAS Inspector: Diane von Kesmark (NS 85)

Context

St Mary Magdalene's C of E School is a one form entry primary school, with a Nursery Class, serving an area of social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. Pupils come from a wide mix of ethnic backgrounds and the number of pupils having English as an Additional Language is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has achieved the Gold Artsmark Award.

Summary Judgement

St Mary Magdalene's C of E Primary School is a satisfactory school. The teamwork of the whole school community is a commendable strength and is reflected in the school's environment. The current Improvement Plan has prioritised pupils' Personal Development and, consequently, this is beginning to have an effect on their attainment. Pupils like to attend their school, and feel confident in always having an adult with whom to share their concerns. Parents speak with appreciation of the care given to their children, and many speak of their satisfaction with teaching and learning at the school. The head teacher has accurately identified areas where the school needs to improve as a Church School, and she is now well placed to lead her staff team in achieving the targeted outcomes. The Christian ethos of the school is evident through artefacts and displays and also through the general behaviour of most pupils, both in and out of the classrooms.

Established Strengths

- The Christian ethos that is reflected in the school's environment.
- The teamwork of the whole school community.

Focus of Development

- To provide appropriate training for all involved in leading worship.
- To develop the evaluation of worship with the regular involvement of governors.
- To develop consistent practice in monitoring the use of assessment to inform planning in Religious Education.

How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?

The school is satisfactory in meeting the needs of all its learners, based on Christian values. The school uses its Christian character to nourish and encourage appropriate attitudes and behaviour among pupils. In the playground before school, two parents of year 3 children spoke of their confidence in the school when teaching pupils about the way they should behave, and also in caring for pupils during school time. One said that she liked the school “because it accepts all children regardless of where they are from or how bright they are.” A group of pupils from Key Stage 2 spoke confidently about their school, what they like about it and what they would like to see improved. Two children said they wanted more pupil involvement in their acts of worship. Behaviour is mostly good, both in class and in the playgrounds. Pupils appreciate all staff, including kitchen staff, the lunchtime supervisors and the classroom support staff, for their fairness and kindness. Pupils with Special Educational Needs are supported by appropriate Education Plans. Due to the efforts of the site manager, the school is well maintained and beautifully clean, and this provides an admirable setting for the interesting displays that support religious education and general learning.

What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?

The quality and impact of worship is satisfactory. The school has a daily act of worship, which is overtly Christian. Most pupils understand the importance of worship and the Christian values promoted by the school. Acts of worship are led by the head teacher and her senior management team, with the parish priest leading an act of worship in church every week. The act of worship observed was led by the parish priest, with teaching staff taking part as worshippers and pupils behaving in an appropriate manner. Pupils know the school prayer and engage with “The Lord’s Prayer”. A teacher commented that the children were always well behaved and respectful in church although they have to sit for a long time, listening. Pupils from year 5 described acts of worship that were memorable to them, and commented on their preference for being more actively involved. The links between the school and the parish church are established, and ready to be developed further through the head teacher and the recently appointed parish priest working together to produce an age-appropriate programme of worship. Training has not, as yet, been made available to staff who may be interested in leading worship.

Worship themes are planned to tie in with the events of the Christian year and they tend to follow guidelines from the website of The London Diocesan Board for Schools. Although records of acts of worship are kept, they are not sufficiently detailed and as yet there is no evidence of evaluation. The school has many Christian artefacts, including statues of saints and crosses, and children understand their significance in relation to worship and are able to discuss them. Governors do attend acts of worship from time to time, but there is no evidence of formal monitoring or evaluation by them.

How effective is the religious education?

Religious Education is satisfactory. Both lessons observed were satisfactory overall, but with many aspects that were good. Due to the unexpected illness and unavoidable absence of two teachers, those observed had had very little warning and had moved their lesson times to accommodate the inspection. The lessons both included the active involvement of pupils, and pupils’ behaviour was good. In the Nursery class a story illustrating moral guidelines was told and children understood the hurt caused by unkind remarks and could relate this to their own experiences. In year 6, pupils were learning about the prophecy of Isaiah and were able to discuss its relevance to their own lives. One boy spoke of wanting to “hang out with his friends, but knowing Gran would be sad if (he) did not visit”. In Year 2 the lesson planned by an absent teacher was sufficiently strong that it was easily followed by a supply teacher. This lesson was not observed but pupils’ subsequent written work in this lesson was seen to be of high quality. Work in RE was compared to that in Literacy and found to be of a comparable standard.

Pupils' work for Religious Education is displayed in classrooms and pupils were able to talk about the lessons when this work was produced. Two Year 6 pupils spoke confidently of their learning about "the Beatitudes being beautiful attitudes that Christian people should try to have."

The subject coordinator is keen to promote Religious Education through creative learning activities and this proposition has been met with enthusiasm from her colleagues. The school is at an early stage of developing systems for monitoring and of using assessment to inform teaching in Religious Education, but these are areas identified as a priority in the School Improvement Plan.

How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

The leadership and management of the school as a church school are both satisfactory. The prospectus, newsletters and an excellent website proclaim the school's Christian ethos. Effective leadership is being encouraged by the active involvement of governors. The Head Teacher, who has only been in the substantive post for one year, particularly values the support given by the Chair of Governors. The head teacher, staff and governors succeed in applying the Christian values of a church school by modelling and encouraging the qualities of respect, tolerance and forgiveness. Two members of the support staff team spoke of their appreciation of the team spirit within the school and likened it to a large family. Staff members seem happily committed to working together to increase and improve learning opportunities for their pupils, by identifying preferred learning styles. The school was involved in the last Proms Praise at the Royal Albert Hall and it is intended that this will become a regular item on the school's calendar. The head teacher has identified ways in which she intends to promote the Christian ethos of the school beyond the local community, possibly by rekindling links with a school in The Gambia. Pupils and parents regularly give to national charities, such as The British Legion and The Marie Curie Foundation, and they also help local charities such as St Mungo's through the donation of Harvest and Christmas gifts of food.