

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Luke's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Cookham Road Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 7EG

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Oxford
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Date of academy conversion	1 Dec 2014
Name of multi-academy trust	Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust
Date/s of inspection	22 May 2017
Date of last inspection	11 July 2012
Type of school and unique reference number	Primary Academy (Formerly VC) 141601
Headteacher	Amanda Hough
Inspector's name and number	Lynne Thorogood 799

School context

St Luke's Primary school recently converted to an academy within the Oxford Diocesan Schools' Trust. It is situated in a culturally diverse area of Maidenhead. It is an average sized primary school with similar proportions of pupils from White British and Asian heritage and a minority from families who have recently arrived from Central and Eastern Europe. A significant proportion of pupils use English as a second language. More than the national average of pupils leave and join the school during Key Stages 1 and 2. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and those who have special educational needs are higher than those found nationally. The school enjoys close links with the local St Luke's church.

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

- A Christian belief in the value of each person and careful interrogation of data drives provision for all pupils, regardless of background, ability and starting points. As a result all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable make good progress, often from very modest beginnings.
- Leaders have promoted and enriched a deeply embedded and widely understood Christian ethos that means the school's values have a clear impact on behaviour, attitudes to learning and pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Spiritual development is very good because reflection is encouraged in many contexts, including religious education (RE), collective worship and prayer. Pupils appreciate and use the quiet areas provided around the school for personal reflection.
- The school is inclusive and pupils value the contribution made by religious education to their understanding of their own and the faith perspectives of others. They have great respect for those of different faiths and cultures.
- The rich worship life of St Luke's, supported by close links with the local church and clergy, engages and inspires both pupils and adults in school.

Areas to improve

- Drawing upon existing good practice, introduce a systematic evaluation of collective worship that seeks the views of pupils and other members of the school community to ensure its on-going positive impact.
- Further develop pupils' awareness of Christianity as a world faith by developing links with communities or organisations overseas.

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

St Luke's character is shaped by explicit and well-understood Christian values including *koinonia*, and as a result there is a strong sense of community and sharing. It is an inclusive, multicultural church school, and the values run through every aspect of its daily life. They are a natural part of conversations and a focus in many lessons. Pupils routinely use them to discuss their learning right across the curriculum. These values are taken seriously and understood to influence the lives and choices of individuals, relationships, behaviour and the school community as a whole. They support the sense of 'the St Luke's Way' and what pupils describe as a welcoming family environment. They inform attitudes to learning, encourage good attendance and lead to pupils doing well, often from low starting points. There are reminders of the values all around the school on display boards which pupils recognise challenge their thinking. School staff live out the Christian belief that everyone is important and that social, emotional and wellbeing issues are as important as academic outcomes.

Parents confirm that the school has a strong pastoral ethos, exemplified for instance by their care for pupils who are fasting during Ramadan. This focus on individual needs and circumstances is also applied to the scrutiny of results. Where attainment and/or progress is not as good as it might be, staff demonstrate the school's values through careful and thorough analysis of data which leads to appropriate strategies to support improvements in learning. For example, new strategies, yielding good results, were introduced to support writing, and now pupils' standards significantly exceed expectations for their age. Across all subjects, including RE pupils achieve well. They enjoy how their achievements both in and out of school and across a range of activities are celebrated during collective worship on Fridays. This helps develop confidence and self-esteem. Learning is enhanced by a wide range of enriching experiences, which arise within and beyond all subjects of the curriculum and through collective worship, supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Examples of these experiences are musical activities such as the choir, which recently sang at the O2 Arena and the opportunity, supported by a local charity, for every pupil to learn to play a musical instrument. Trips and visits, including to places of worship, feature frequently and visitors to the school who have contributed to RE teaching include a rabbi and a Sikh parent. This provision has helped pupils to understand the school's Christian values from the perspective of other faiths. New initiatives for the teaching of RE through the creative curriculum, literacy and through theology week are also proving to be successful in developing active, cooperative and reflective learning. Skilled questioning in RE lessons encourages pupils to think deeply, as they are challenged to justify or explain responses or to raise new questions. This helps them reflect on the relevance of faith for themselves and develop respect for others who hold different beliefs, which further promotes SMSC development.

Pupils understand that Christianity is a world faith, and describe churches in countries they have visited or lived in. The school recognises that this is an area worthy of further development. Pupils discuss raising money for local, national or overseas charities, "so we can share what we have with people in need and give them faith that there is a God". Quiet areas, the sharing of prayers and frequent opportunities throughout the day for reflection enable pupils to express thoughts that are important to them, further enhancing their spiritual development.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is a rich experience and a central pillar of life at St Luke's. It is distinctively Christian, explicitly expressing Christian beliefs about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the importance of Jesus. However, pupils recognise it as sufficiently inclusive to enable 'everyone to find their own path' or 'pray their own way'. Its value is acknowledged by pupils, including those of other faiths, staff, parents and governors. When invited to speak about it, pupils quickly and enthusiastically recall examples that have made a particularly powerful and memorable impact on them, influencing their attitudes and behaviour. On three days a week the whole school worships together. This develops a strong sense of the school as a family and a worshiping community. Themes relevant to all, around the school's Christian values and the Church year, are carefully planned by the worship co-ordinator and the vicar. The 'Open the Book' team, led by the vicar, always includes pupil contributions in their weekly services. Pupils say they particularly enjoy the dramatic and musical aspects of these acts of worship. Pupils develop an understanding of how the messages in Biblical sources such as parables are relevant to the day to day life of the school community and the individuals within it. Pupils listen attentively during worship, and behaviour, relationships and commitment to social and charitable action indicate that they take the messages to heart.

Pupils and teachers lead class worship, thus strengthening their personal engagement with the Christian nature of the school's values. Pupil involvement in planning and leading worship is one of the developments made in response to recommendations the last SIAMS inspection. As a result, pupils develop a deeper understanding of the values, key Christian festivals, some Anglican liturgy and the significance of prayer. Pupils know the Lord's prayer and are encouraged to write their own prayers for use in worship services. There is never a shortage of volunteers to

write and lead prayers for the whole school, and pupils from all classes have opportunities to contribute regularly, bilingual pupils occasionally reading a prayer in their mother tongue.

The vicar, who is also a governor, leads staff prayer and reflection services at several points during the year and Governors' meetings begin with prayer. The place and practice of prayer and worship have been given particularly careful thought by senior leaders who have provided guidance for new staff on this aspect of the life of a church school.

Good use is made of the church for services celebrating Christian festivals and seasonal events. Parents respond enthusiastically to invitations to attend church-based events and many, including those of other faiths pack into the church for special services. The church is also used as a resource in RE teaching, helping pupils to develop their knowledge of the Anglican tradition.

Pupils speak confidently and openly about collective worship and they have a variety of views and ideas. Worship is monitored and evaluated by staff and governors informally. However, there is no strategic process through which all members of the school community can regularly express their views about worship.

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

Leaders, including governors, have a strong and enthusiastic commitment to the Christian vision, ethos and values that have shaped and continue to shape St Luke's. They are, however, not complacent about the demands of the continuing journey and constantly review and evaluate the school's needs, progress and achievements. Leaders and managers have an excellent understanding of the school and have a strong commitment to enabling all members of the school community to achieve their maximum potential. This means they are forensic in their approach to data and all other indicators of progress and wellbeing. This leads to appropriate interventions for pupils and professional development for staff that make a discernible difference. Provision of enrichment activities for socially disadvantaged pupils and those eligible for the pupil premium funding is an example of intervention that has raised standards in both academic progress and personal wellbeing. Christian principles guide strategic and financial planning and decision making, for instance in allocating funds beyond that available from the pupil premium grant to support this initiative. Governors know the school well and challenge appropriately, including in relation to its Christian distinctiveness.

New staff know when they apply for a job that this is a distinctively Christian school and they receive good induction when they take up their post. Analysis of need leads to purposeful training provision for staff and governors, either in groups or individually, through which they continue to develop their skills all in the service of ever more effectively supporting pupils' learning, personal development and well-being. The head teacher has recently provided Christian leadership to another church school in the multi-academy trust and two senior leaders have been promoted from within St Luke's staff. This confirms the school's capacity to develop leaders for church schools.

Both collective worship and RE meet statutory requirements. Importance is accorded to both areas as two essential aspects of school life and its distinctive character. Senior leaders oversee both aspects, ensuring their importance is understood and that practice in both areas is of the highest quality. Leaders and managers have ensured that all areas for development highlighted by the last SIAMS inspection have been fully addressed.

There is excellent communication with parents, who all say they value the Christian foundation and ethos of the school. They are welcomed into the school and are involved in many different aspects of school life. As the school is a member of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, this has enabled the development of some positive networks, with the sharing of good practice beneficial to all parties. A very strong relationship between the school and the local church benefits both.