

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St Martin's Church of England Primary School

Rowan Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7UF

Current SIAMS inspection grade	Good
Diocese	London
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	N/A
Date of academy conversion	01 September 2015
Name of multi-academy trust	Fray's Academy Trust
Date/s of inspection	27 March 2018
Date of last inspection	N/A
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy 140484
Executive Headteacher / Head of School	Christopher Cole / Russell Learmont
Inspector's name and number	Emily Norman (912)

School context

St Martin's is a recently opened Church of England primary school, which is part of the Frays Academy Trust. It currently has two forms of entry from Reception up to Year 2, with the intention of developing year on year as far as Year 6. The school also has a one form nursery and a specialist resource base for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, which serves the local area. The number of children eligible for free school meals, and the number of children who speak English as an additional language, are both lower than the national average. The school is linked with its parish church, St Martin's Church.

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

- Leaders demonstrate great passion and commitment to their Christian vision for securing the best possible outcomes for their pupils, whatever their circumstances.
- There is a clear focus on Christian distinctiveness, whilst maintaining an open and inclusive school environment, which ensures that everyone feels welcome in this church school.
- Varied and diverse collective worship is enjoyed and valued by the whole school community and impacts upon the behaviour and aspirations of pupils and their families.
- Creative approaches to religious education (RE) are helping children to develop a good knowledge of, and the ability to reflect upon, the Christian faith.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that improvements made to the school as a church school are fully embedded, so that as the school grows and develops, the Christian character maintains its high profile and can be confidently articulated by all members of the school community.
- Further develop pupils' understanding of a range of world faiths and global communities, so that they are better prepared for life in today's world.
- Increase the impact of worship on pupils' lives by giving them more opportunities to contribute to and, where appropriate, lead acts of worship.

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

St Martin's school is completely committed to being a school which is distinctively Christian, whilst ensuring that it is open and inclusive to all. Parents and pupils of all faiths and none say they feel welcome and included, whilst also valuing what the Christian character and the school's Christian values bring to their lives. The school's vision to deliver excellent primary education in the context of its Christian founding principles is resulting in particularly strong outcomes for children in the Early Years, and a commitment to improving outcomes across Key Stage 1, so that all children can 'realise their God-given potential'. The school's eight Christian values are well-known by even the youngest children because of the simple pictorial way in which they are displayed, and the teaching that has taken place around these. Pupils are developing their ability to articulate the difference the values make to their lives, for example how trust and forgiveness help to 'make me trust my friends again after they have done something wrong', and 'trust yourself – if you have done something wrong, you can ask God for forgiveness'. Parents also speak about the impact these values have on their children's attitudes and behaviour, and how they too reinforce the Christian values at home. The school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour, including pupil exclusions, and attendance is based on its Christian character and their core belief that 'every person is loved and accepted by God'. There is a strong emphasis on empathy with pupils, and ensuring that pupils get the support they need. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is well-attended to. The school's creative approach to developing pupils' spirituality, in partnership with the parish church, means that pupils of all abilities – including those with profound needs – are able to engage in prayer and reflection in their own way. The 'Easter Experience' seen during the inspection, for example, gave every child the opportunity to explore the Easter story in a tactile, visual and experiential way. Prayer corners in each class also demonstrate the age-appropriate approaches to prayer that are employed by the school to develop pupils' emerging spirituality. Pupils conduct themselves very well around the school because they are aware of what is expected of them, and their parents clearly link this behaviour to the school's Christian values. Pupils speak enthusiastically about how much they enjoy learning about other faiths and there is a clear respect within the school for different cultures and religions. The school rightly acknowledges that it could still do more to develop pupils' understanding of global communities and to deepen children's knowledge and understanding of a range of world faiths. Pupils' knowledge of Christianity, however, is secure and they understand what it means for a Christian to 'follow in Jesus' footsteps'. They can directly link what they learn in RE to their need to be kind and respectful to others. RE and the school's Christian character are also significant in raising pupils' aspirations and older pupils speak about their dreams and hopes for their lives after St Martin's.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship at St Martin's is fun, varied and enjoyed by the whole school community. The creative ideas of the vicar, head of school and collective worship leader combine to give pupils a broad experience of Anglican worship, and an age-appropriate understanding of the Bible. It is clearly an important part of the life of the school, with a high priority in the school's timetable. Pupils from the Oasis resource unit are able to take part in worship, because the school makes sure that worship is as inclusive as possible. All of the teaching staff are expected to lead worship, and this further increases the range of styles the children experience. Children visit the church every week and are developing their understanding of the life of Jesus, St Martin and elements of Anglican practice. They are familiar with 'the Father, Son and Holy Spirit' in the context of worship and can talk about a number of Bible stories and Christian festivals. Pupils learn about behavioural expectations through worship, and the links with the school's Christian values, British Values and biblical teaching helps them to be kind and respectful to each other. They receive awards for this, which spur them on to conduct themselves sensibly in school. As a result of their worship, pupils engage in charitable and social action projects in the local community and have high aspirations for their own futures. The themes in worship have been adapted from the academy trust's plans to make them relevant and appropriate for the children at St Martin's. They give pupils the opportunity to gain a thorough understanding of the life of Jesus and the beliefs of the Christian faith. Pupils speak very enthusiastically about opportunities to get involved in worship and love lighting the candle and saying prayers. They would like to contribute more to leading acts of worship and the school agrees that this is an area they could develop further. Prayer corners in classes help pupils to pray in a way that is appropriate for them, with 'sorry strings' and areas for children to write their own prayers, which they do with sensitivity. Leaders have a very clear idea what worship is like because they observe and evaluate it. They also seek out feedback from staff and pupils to ensure that their needs are being met through worship. Parents are engaged through home-school projects, such as a posada which went from home to home, and increasing opportunities to attend school worship.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Pupils enjoy RE because the lessons are fun, creative and interactive. They are developing age-appropriate skills of reflection and description well, and can say what they learn from their RE lessons that helps them. One Year 2 child wrote 'RE is important because learning about different religions makes us better people'. RE is particularly strong in the Early Years, where children are immersed in exciting and meaningful experiences which develop their understanding of biblical stories. For example, Nursery pupils made hot cross buns with their parents present and were linking these with the Easter story, while Reception children made palm leaves to wave while retelling the story of Palm Sunday. RE is considered an important subject within the school and children are progressing well from term to term in RE, particularly in learning from religion. As a result, the majority of learners are achieving in line with national expectations in the subject. Teaching in RE is generally good, and teachers use assessment to differentiate work for pupils working at different ability levels. Their understanding of Christianity is stronger than their understanding of other faiths. They have learnt about a number of different faiths and cultures, but they are not yet able to fully distinguish between them. The school has plans in place to strengthen pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths through the newly implemented diocesan syllabus, and leaders will need to ensure that these plans are implemented. RE activities are not just confined to RE lessons, and children learn from a rich range of whole school events and activities as well as their RE lessons. Because of this, RE makes a good contribution to pupils' SMSC development. Pupils also make links between RE and other subjects, such as history in which they studied the practices and beliefs of the Mayans. During the inspection, all classes were reflecting upon the 'Easter Experience' in different ways depending on the age of the children. Pupils were generally able to articulate what the story meant for Christians, and for them, in a meaningful way relative to their age. The standards in RE are achieved because of close attention by the RE leader, who has closely monitored and evaluated the quality of learning in the subject. He is aware of the strengths and areas for development within the subject, and the quality of teaching in each class, and has a plan in place to address this. Other leaders, including governors, are aware of what teaching and learning is like in RE because this is communicated to them clearly and efficiently. Governors also undertake their own monitoring, such as learning walks, to check. Staff are supported and given training, as needed, to ensure their teaching meets children's needs, including training from the local vicar.

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

Leaders at all levels in this school believe passionately in raising aspirations for all their pupils, and are extremely committed to their Christian vision for doing so. They speak inspiringly about how the Christian distinctiveness of the school underpins their work to secure high quality outcomes for the pupils, and their families. Engagement with parents is becoming a strength of the school, with parents invited in to learn alongside their children and to continue the school's work at home. The executive head and head of school are very aware of both the strengths and the needs of the school, and their clear, accurate self-assessment of the school as a church school demonstrates this. As a result, they are taking positive action to address any underperformance, making use of the school's own areas of strength and of strengths within the academy trust. Members of the school community comment that the distinctive Christian character of the school has developed even further since the new head of school took up his post. Clearly planned collective worship, which is adapted from the academy trust's planning to meet the needs of St Martin's pupils, helps pupils to understand the school's eight Christian values of generosity, justice, trust, perseverance, courage and forgiveness. Leaders ensure that teachers take opportunities to link learning to the values so that pupils develop their understanding of them. The partnership with the local parish church is of great benefit both to the school and to the wider community, as they work together to serve local people. Pupils enjoy visiting an old people's home locally, and regular visits to the church have resulted in pupils and their families owning St Martin's as 'their church'. Both the church and the school are aware of the need to improve children's understanding of global communities. The diocese has been instrumental in setting up the academy and have worked with the school to help develop its Christian distinctiveness to its current level. The emergent nature of the school has meant that there are plenty of opportunities for aspiring leaders to develop and grow, and the school is committed to supporting them in this. The collective worship leader, who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator and oversees the Oasis resource base, is one such leader who demonstrates the effectiveness of the school's development of its leaders. She is very aware of how her area could be developed even further and has a vision to do so, as does the RE leader. Governors support and challenge the school and have a clear view of the leadership of the school and what needs to be done for the school to continue to move forward. They show a strong commitment to the Christian distinctiveness of the school, and work hard to ensure that this is prioritised. The executive head and governors recognise that they need to fully utilise the best practice within the school, and continue to develop their staff as leaders, so that as St Martin's grows year on year the Christian character is strengthened not diluted. They are currently well-placed to do so. Due to careful planning by leaders, statutory requirements for RE and collective worship are met.