

**STATUTORY
INSPECTION OF
ANGLICAN SCHOOLS**



Name & address of school: **St Mary's Bryanston Square Church of England Primary School**
Enford Street, Marylebone, W1H 1DL

Diocese of London
Date of inspection: 5th May 2009
Type of School: Voluntary Aided Primary
Executive Headteacher: Peter Hadfield

Local authority: City of Westminster
Date of last inspection: 20th November 2005
School's unique reference number: 101136
SIAS Inspector: John Viner (N.S. 144)

Context

St Mary's is one form-entry primary school and nursery serving the parish of St Mary's Marylebone. Pupils come from the immediate vicinity and reflect the rich ethnic diversity of the area. More than half are in the early stages of learning English. Approximately a quarter of the pupils attend St Mary's, or another local Christian church. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are around the national average. The recent OFSTED inspection graded the school's effectiveness as good.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Mary's Bryanston Square CE School as a Church of England school are outstanding.

St Mary's is an outstanding church school. The commitment to inclusion in the context of a Christian framework has created a school where all pupils feel unique, valued and cared for, irrespective of ethnicity or faith. Because Christian values underpin every aspect of the school's work it is a beacon of respect and encouragement.

Established strengths

- The inclusive Christian character of the school ensures that all pupils are affirmed and encouraged, whether or not they are of another faith or of none.
- The headteacher and foundation governors are united in promoting and sustaining a clear Christian vision for the school.
- Religious Education (RE) and collective worship are at the heart of the school and combine to provide a framework that sets the context for all other parts of the curriculum.
- Teachers know their pupils well and the good relationships they form help pupils to make good progress.

Focus for development

- Create more opportunities for pupils to make a personal response in reflection or prayer.
- Ensure that teachers' marking in RE is consistent in showing pupils what they have done well.

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

Christian values underpin the school and can be seen in every aspect of its work. They are made explicit in the school's public documentation, on its website and are declared in its mission statement, displayed in the entrance lobby in English and Arabic. Although many of the pupils are Muslim they are equally affirmed by the school's values and their parents agree that this is a school where they are comfortable because God is honoured. Many parents choose this school because it is so successful in promoting and celebrating its diversity. One commented that, 'It's such a spiritual school, although it's not in your face.' Parents like the fact that their children learn positive values that enable them to become well-rounded individuals, able to contribute to society. Pupils agree and say that 'everybody respects each other.' This can be seen in the way they often go out of their way to show care to one another. One child commented, 'everyone is accepted for who they are.' Because they feel safe, valued and special pupils gain in self confidence and make good progress. The Christian character of the school has a major impact on pupils' spiritual development. Parents note that this is visible and they are aware of their children developing prayerful attitudes. Although the school environment contains many examples of Christian signs and displays there is not a focus that will help pupils to develop their spirituality through personal reflection or prayer and so the opportunities for these are limited. The school carefully monitors and reviews its Christian distinctiveness and it is the overall commitment to a truly inclusive community that makes this aspect of its work outstanding.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective worship is at the heart of the school. It is a special part of the school day and, because it enjoys high priority, every pupil knows the current theme upon which it is based for that term. Worship is very carefully planned by the headteacher as part of a wider programme of study that is linked to RE. The planning is shared with all those who lead worship so that it is of a consistently good quality and teachers are able to build their RE work on it. Worship is evaluated regularly so that it is kept fresh and interesting. The school is well served by the clergy and staff team from St Mary's parish church who provide regular weekly leadership of collective worship and support the six services that take place in the church each year. The school's Anglican character is affirmed, in particular, by the three Eucharists. There is an excellent partnership with the nearby Royal Academy of Music, which provides students to lead the weekly praise assembly so that they are of a high standard. Pupils say that they enjoy all the occasions for worship. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically and like the many opportunities for taking part. Each week a class leads an act of worship. These occasions are highly valued by parents, who attend in good numbers. Those acts of worship that include opportunities for reflection and personal prayer make an especially good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Worship is outstanding because of its centrality to school life and the way that it affirms pupils of all faiths and of none.

The effectiveness of Religious Education is outstanding

Religious Education is linked to the themes for collective worship so that they can be developed and built on in class. This then provides a Christian context for the whole curriculum and it is this – and the very good provision of RE – that makes it outstanding. The RE programme of study includes Islam and Judaism, in addition to Christianity and is well supported by visits to places of worship in the local area. Good use is also made of visitors who come to the school to talk about their faith. Pupils enjoy RE and say that they learn a lot because their teachers make lessons fun. They like the great respect with which all religions are treated and say that this helps them to feel secure in their own faiths while valuing the beliefs of others. Parents say that their children acquire very good Bible knowledge, which helps to affirm their own faith, regardless of whether or not it is Christian. RE is well taught by knowledgeable teachers who help pupils to reflect on what they have learned. Pupils respond by working hard and producing some thoughtful work. Teachers' marking, however, is inconsistent; some is encouraging and developmental while some is minimal and does not show pupils what they have done well. The assessment of RE, identified at the last inspection, is now good, further improving as it becomes embedded and teachers are more familiar with knowing how to judge their pupils' progress. The headteacher provides strong, clear and focused leadership and, as a result, pupils make very good progress.

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

The headteacher, key staff and foundation governors are very clear in the way they promote and develop the school's Christian character and share a strategic vision that is communicated to all stakeholders. Parents who send their children to St Mary's are left in no doubt that it is explicitly Christian and Anglican and say that this enriches the school. One parent commented that, 'What St Mary's does is to teach respect about other religions and have confidence in one's own'. Parents value the strong leadership of the headteacher and say that they have great confidence in him. Foundation governors, who know their school well, are active partners with the headteacher whom they regard highly and trust implicitly. Governors and headteacher are committed to the principle of serving the children of the parish, regardless of faith or ethnicity. This has led to many strong partnerships with the local community and the school has rightly earned a very positive local reputation. These partnerships, and the support that the school gives to local charities, make a very good contribution to community cohesion. The partnership with the parish church has developed since the last inspection. The strong links enable the school to benefit from a range of skills and support provided by parish staff while parents, including those who do not attend the church, have access to the wider support that the church provides. The way that the school's leadership works together to secure improvement, promote achievement and create an environment where pupils are nurtured and supported is outstanding.