

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

Parish Church of England Primary Academy

London Lane, Bromley, BR1 4HF	
Current SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Diocese	Rochester
Previous SIAMS inspection grade	Outstanding
Name of Multi-Academy Trust	Aquinas Trust
Date of inspection	12 December 2016
Date of last inspection	n/a
Type of school and unique reference number	Academy - Voluntary Controlled Equivalent 139984
Headteacher	Rachel Coleman
Inspector's name and number	Pamela Draycott 161

School context

The academy is a larger than average and popular with a long history of Christian service to its community. There are longstanding links with Bromley Parish Church where it was originally situated and with St Mary's in Plaistow where it is currently located. In 2013, it became a founding member of the Aquinas Trust which now consists of one secondary and eight primary academies. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion with English as an additional language is around average and the percentage for whom there is extra funding due to social disadvantage is below average.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Parish Primary Academy, Bromley as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The academy benefits from its membership of the Aquinas Trust which impacts positively on its management, life and work as a church school.
- Based on its key values, which are explored within a Christian context, there is a purposeful learning environment where pupils make very good progress and where they are valued as individuals.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and relationships across the academy are strong. This reflects the academy's Christian and inclusive priorities very well.

Areas to improve

- Ensure that spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) opportunities through religious education (RE) are refined by ensuring a consistency in the range, quality and depth of written work so that this reflects the high standards evident in discussion, in display and in creative work.

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

The academy's explicit Christian foundation closely focuses work on both academic attainment and on pupils' personal development and wellbeing. It is well summarised in its motto, 'building learning, friendship and faith'. This means that attainment is at or above the national average and that pupils make at least good, and often very good progress, from their various starting points. Its values of integrity, respect, generosity, care, trust and honesty are well known across the academy and they are appropriately linked to biblical teaching. The broad and balanced curriculum is closely designed to meet the learning needs of all pupils as 'created equal and loved by God'. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning, behaviour is excellent and attendance is high. There are a few occasions when behaviour or attendance gets in the way of learning. In line with its Christian and caring ethos, the academy works closely and compassionately with these pupils and their families to support progress. Strong and supportive relationships impact positively on the affirming climate for learning. This makes it a happy and welcoming place with a strong sense of community. Parents see the approachability of staff, including the headteacher, as an expression of the Christian care and concern evident across the academy. Pupils respond well to the wide range of opportunities for SMSC development provided by the academy. These are set within the context of the academy's Christian foundation and appropriate links are made with the Department for Education's focus on British values. Active and engaging learning activities encourage pupils to think deeply and reflect on issues of spiritual and moral concern. RE, literacy and topic work address such issues successfully through the school's creative curriculum. However, written work in RE does not consistently display the depth or range of responses evident in oral work and through display. SMSC is further expressed through the academy's involvement in exploring ecological and sustainability issues which pupils take very seriously. Charitable giving is clearly seen as an expression of Christian love and concern for others and as an expression of the academy's Christian ethos. By delivering RE, through the locally agreed syllabus, issues of difference and diversity are addressed well. As a Year 6 pupil commented, 'As a Christian school, we should accept and respect people of different beliefs and of none'. The academy is currently involved in following a course which is developing new approaches to teaching about Christianity. As yet, this development is not clearly linked with the requirements of Bromley's locally agreed syllabus for RE. The 'fruit of the spirit' based on a biblical text from Galatians chapter 5 is successfully being used to drive forward both pupils' and adults' understanding and appreciation of the way in which faith impacts on life. The well attended 'Bible is Fun' (BIF) lunchtime group meets weekly and enhances the religious and spiritual awareness of those who attend.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

The central importance of the varied daily worship programme on the academy's life and work is clearly seen. Staff and pupils recognise its inspirational impact on the community and also on themselves as individuals. One Year 4 pupil said, 'being together to think about God and pray is important. It helps us be quiet and reflect'. Another commented that, in worship, 'Prayer is when you go to a quiet place in yourself and talk to God'. Worship is very well planned and correctly includes a focus on the academy's Christian values, the Church's year, aspects of the curriculum and British values. It is led by senior leaders, all teaching staff and local clergy which reflects its importance to the academy's community. The programme is enhanced through regular involvement in worship activities with other Aquinas Trust schools. This includes events at the two Anglican churches with which it is most closely involved and attendance at the diocesan school leavers' celebration. A detailed focus on biblical teaching supports pupils in developing their understanding of the importance of Jesus and of the Bible for Christians. However, pupils' appreciation of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is underdeveloped. Pupils and staff actively and confidently engage in worship by, for example, reading, singing, responding to questions and offering ideas and through prayer or reflection. Opportunities to reflect or pray are integral to the worship programme. These are excellently extended through the reflection areas around school. Here pupils can sit quietly, read prayers or write their own. Pupils know what prayer is. As a Year 2 pupil pondered, 'Prayer is a way of showing you love God and God loves you'. Many say that they pray at home.

There is a good understanding about the need not to be selfish when praying. A Year 6 pupil thought that, 'There is a difference between wants and needs. We should pray for our own and others' needs. Then God will answer'. The Lord's Prayer is said regularly and pupils have a developing, age-appropriate understanding of its importance to Christians. A recent development in whole school worship is for a representative of each class to bring a lantern from their classroom to place at the front during worship. The lantern symbolically represents bringing learning into worship and taking worship back into learning. Pupils are beginning to realise its significance. A candle is lit to open worship and opening and closing sentences and responses are said. These aspects of worship encourage pupils to understand and appreciate Anglican worship practices. These are extended through special services at church which pupils from the Parish Disciples group have a key role in planning and delivering. Leaders, including governors, monitor and evaluate the quality of worship and feed these comments into improvements. Pupils have a developing role in this process.

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

The current headteacher has been in post since September 2016. She has spent her teaching career working at Parish in different capacities. She and the deputy headteacher work closely and effectively together to support the ongoing development of the academy's already embedded Christian ethos. The vision for refreshing its values is firmly based on a Christian understanding of providing an education in which all pupils can flourish as 'children of God.' Membership of and support by membership of the Aquinas Trust positively impacts on the academy's life and work. This includes thorough monitoring, training and enrichment activities for both RE and worship. The recent restructuring of the academy's governance procedures is already impacting positively on its life and work. There is close monitoring and evaluation within the academy and across the Aquinas Trust, which means that strengths and areas for improvement are well defined and acted upon. This leads to strategic and accurate development planning with clear outcomes and accountability built into the process. Staff are encouraged to pursue their careers and to build up their skills and capacities whilst working in Parish, and to draw upon opportunities provided by being part of the Trust. Effective induction and ongoing training of staff include a clear focus on working within the church school sector. This is helpful in supporting the professional development of staff and in identifying possible leaders for church schools. The academy has both pupil and staff wellbeing groups which is a clear expression of the academy's caring and Christian foundation which drives the priorities of senior staff and of the Trust. Arrangements for RE and worship meets statutory requirements. Both areas are very well led and managed. The RE subject leader is enthusiastic and works effectively to support staff in teaching RE. Links with the two local Anglican parishes are mutually supportive. Some appropriate use is made of support provided at diocesan level, for example, through attendance of staff and governors on courses provided by the Diocese or by a staff member from the Diocese leading a course across the Trust. Relationships with parents are strong and they are appropriately informed about and engaged in their children's education. Parents are supportive of the school's Christian ethos which they rightly see as impacting positively on their children's attitudes, behaviour and progress.

SIAMS report [December 2016] Parish CE VC equivalent primary academy, Bromley, BR1 4HF