



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Macaulay CE Primary School

Victoria Rise
Clapham
London
SW4 0NU

Diocese: Southwark

Local authority: Lambeth

Dates of inspection: 4 July 2014

Date of last inspection: June 2009

School's unique reference number: 100612

Co-Headteachers: Jo Samways and Celyn Davies

Inspector's name and number: Shaun Burns 808

School context

Macaulay Church of England School is a Voluntary Aided primary school in Clapham. It has one form of entry with a Nursery. The school serves an inner-city area. 61.8% of pupils are from Minority Ethnic Groups with the proportions of pupils having English as an Additional Language and those eligible for Free School Meals being just above the national average. The number with Special Educational Needs is also significantly above average. Many pupils are from practising Christian families whilst other faith groups are also represented. The school is currently led by two co-headteachers, one who will take over as headteacher in September 2014.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Macaulay as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The Christian distinctiveness at Macaulay profoundly influences all aspects of school life, being deeply embedded into every policy and leading to practice that results in an outstanding experience of church school education for all pupils.
- All members of the school community share a common understanding of the school's Christian ethos which they are able to articulate passionately and relate to the school's living out of distinctively Christian values and its very high effectiveness.
- The school is a worshipping community building itself firmly upon prayer and reflection and offers the school community inclusive and creative worship opportunities which inspire all individuals, enabling pupils to relate Christian teaching and their experiences to school life and beyond.
- Religious Education (RE) is given a very high priority by the school with it strongly endorsing its provision of an understanding of other faiths alongside the main study of Christianity. This enables pupils to develop a thorough understanding of Christianity whilst also a sincere respect and understanding of different faiths, all present in their local

community.

Areas to improve

- Refocus how the school assesses RE so as to make assessment a more effective and accurate tool in developing learning.
- Develop Faith Groups for adults and pupils as a means by which to closely support the continual growth of the school's outstanding Christian distinctiveness.

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

'God's hand is in this school'. This is what one parent of a child with Special Educational Needs said about Macaulay School commenting about the care, love and living out of the school's distinctively Christian values by the school community. Indeed this is evident in every corner of the school, where there is a very strong Christian character running through the way that it operates providing a highly effective educational experience for all pupils. Progress, achievement and attainment are high for all groups of pupils. Their wider God-given talents are celebrated and recorded in individual Achievement Folders, giving them a 'moment to shine.' The rich range of enrichment opportunities provided for all pupils is informed by the school's understanding of each child as unique in God's sight. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development, (SMSC,) firmly rooted within distinctively Christian values, is strongly felt throughout the school. It is promoted in the learning environment and across the whole curriculum, e.g. on a visit to World War One graves in France which evoked poignant spiritual reflection linking with Christian themes. It grows out of a shared understanding of the importance of nurturing this dimension of pupils within a Christian education. Relationships between all members of the school community are built upon the school's twelve distinctive Christian values, sustained by buddy systems in which pupils support and serve others. The value of forgiveness colours the way in which conduct is managed to guarantee exemplary behaviour and caring relationships. There is very high attendance and no exclusions, not least because of the school's inclusive policy, 'We don't write anyone off . . . because we are all special in the sight of God.' Showing that the school's Christian character touches deeply into the experience of pupils, another parent said, 'I have a sense that my child is learning about God through all that they do.'

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Collective Worship is given a central place and all understand its worth and relevance to life in and out of school. This is encouraged by the parting challenge for each day's worship to consider how to apply Bible teaching to individuals' life in school and beyond. Worship benefits from being led by a range of staff, the incumbent and other local clergy. Themes based on the school's distinctively Christian values have a focus on Jesus Christ and pupils are able to express clearly the difference that he makes to the way in which they approach everyday issues in life. A focus point of an 'altar' and bible with the lighting of a candle in the appropriate liturgical colour creates a prayerful atmosphere, developing identification of features of Anglican traditions in worship. A Year 5 pupil commented, 'It's a time in your life when you can just pray and be calm!' Prayer is central to school life, being made by all classes at regular times of the day. Visual and invitational reminders of the significance of prayer are displayed throughout the school, an area addressed from the previous inspection. Prayer also features in newsletters and a Parents' Prayer Group regularly prays for the school. Recently a Prayer Spaces Day has been organised in which pupils were inspired to consider different types of prayer. Many spoke of how this had affected them deeply in their individual faith journeys. Pupils are given opportunities to participate in leading Collective Worship as seen in the inspirational worship observed during the inspection where one pupil led the rest of the school spontaneously in prayer. Year 6 pupils also have the opportunity to develop worship skills by each planning and leading an act of worship for younger pupils. Monitoring of

Collective Worship, an issue from the previous inspection, is undertaken by the subject leader and governors and through a school Collective Worship book for pupils, staff and parental comments collected from services. Evaluation shows that worship significantly influences the Christian nature of the community.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

The priority that Macaulay gives to RE enables it to be a major contributor to the school's Christian character. As a result, pupils show a strong knowledge of the key aspects of Christianity whilst also developing an integral awareness and respect of other world faiths. This manifests itself as a good understanding of other faiths developed through the RE curriculum and demonstrated in the way different beliefs and practices are respected throughout the school. This exemplifies pupils' understanding of the value of RE; all clearly express its relevance to their lives and how it impacts upon the school as a community of faith. One pupil said, 'It brings us altogether when we do RE.' Pupils are given an RE curriculum that is enriched with visitors and visits, securing a subject that enthuses pupils and is a key contributor to their SMSC. Pupils are proud of their RE work which shows a range of creative learning opportunities that challenge them and, develop a range of skills. This includes RE work that culminates in class pieces donated to the local community, e.g. an Easter garden created and given to the local parish church. RE features in other curriculum areas and leads some cross-curricular topics. The majority of teaching is good meaning that all pupils make good progress and achievement attaining at least in line with national expectations, but a significant number higher. There is a detailed assessment system in place to match the other core subjects, which addresses an issue from the previous inspection. However it is not highly effective in giving information about pupils' progress, achievement and standards separately in learning about religion and learning from religion. The RE Subject Leader keeps the subject central strategically. She has high aspirations for it and works hard at ensuring continual improvement in teaching and learning is informed by current developments and guidance in the subject.

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

All leaders and managers share an aspirational purpose and a united understanding arising from an explicit Christian vision. This is used as a reference point; one leader spoke about "Everything that we do is referenced back to the teachings of Christ, that is our 'default setting.'" The Christian distinctiveness of the school has become more prominent over the past couple of years. All leaders, managers and other staff are aware of the importance and centrality of faith and share a joint sentiment as being custodians of Christ's teaching. The school has very good active relationships with many partners, not least the local church and diocese. These greatly benefit the education and Christian care that the school provides for all it serves. Governors are currently involved in revisiting the vision for the school's Christian distinctiveness. This is leading to greater understanding and ensuing impact upon the whole life of the school. Many stakeholders have some voice in self-evaluation, however this does not have a broad enough base to be completely representative of all groups in the school community. Opportunities have not yet been developed for a regular and tightly-focused structure of evaluation that is as effective as it could be. A strong continuing professional development programme has included some training from the diocese. This support has ensured the growth of staff and governors which has built up the admirable Christian character of the school. There is living proof of growing future church school leaders through the school's co-headteachers. Both of them have spent most of their teaching careers here and have brought stability whilst successfully leading and enhancing Macaulay in its effectiveness as a church school. The permanent arrangement, from the new academic year, of one of the co-headteachers becoming headteacher supported by the other as deputy headteacher offers great capacity for maintaining and growing Macaulay further in its outstanding distinctiveness as a Church of England school.

