



Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd

19th June 2014

Mr Martin Clark
Head Teacher

85 Angell Road
London
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Summary

St John's is a one form entry Church of England inclusive primary school in an area of cultural diversity and high deprivation in Brixton, south west London. There are 236 pupils on roll, including 35 in the nursery. 99% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with 60% of pupils being from Black African backgrounds and 35% from Black Caribbean backgrounds. Around 80% of pupils have English as an additional language, including speakers of French, Spanish, Portuguese and Polish. The school deprivation indicator is twice the national average and 59% of pupils are on FSM but many other families are similarly deprived. A high percentage of families live in overcrowded households and a number of children live with family friends or relatives due to difficult family circumstances. Gang and street culture, including knife crime is a serious concern in the local area, where 4 young men have been killed as a result of knife crime in the recent past, including relatives of pupils currently at the school. On entry, children have very low starting points, especially in personal development, language and communication with developmental ages of between 16- 22 months. There are significant numbers of pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with disabilities, autism and a range of other needs.

'We are learning to make the world a better place, providing a happy, secure and stimulating learning environment where Christian values are embraced by all' says the school's mission statement. On arrival at the school, an atmosphere of dynamism, happiness and positive activity pervades. This positive ethos is further revealed during collective worship, where pupils behave beautifully, listen to each other with respect and do readings with calm confidence. The superb school choir leads the singing and, watching the assembly it is hard to imagine the challenges these children face in their social backgrounds. The head teacher sets the tone for the supportive ethos: his charismatic, lively, happy and energetic personality combined with his warmth and concern for all those in his care, including children, staff and families provides an excellent role model for everyone in the school.

From very low starting points, where virtually no children have average attainment on entry, pupils at this school make exceptional progress. By the start of KS1, 50% already have reached average attainment; by the end of KS1 this has risen to 75% and, by the end of KS2, the figure is well over 90% with over 60% reaching L5 in Maths and 59% in Reading. This remarkable progress is made as a result of the wonderful work of the head teacher, deputy head teachers and all the staff of this school who work consistently as a team and go to great

lengths to ensure the very best outcomes for their children. The head teacher and two deputies lead by example and set the tone for the excellent team effort put in by everyone in this school to make it such a positive place of learning for its pupils and staff.

One deputy focuses on achievement and teaching and learning and is rigorous in ensuring that data analysis provides the information the school needs to ensure all pupils make progress. He also ensures that teachers receive the support and training they need to provide engaging and challenging lessons that move their pupils forward. The deputy head teacher in charge of inclusion ensures that all pupils' needs are met and that all interventions are in place and are of a very high standard. It is not easy to encapsulate the amazing work of the head teacher and staff of this school but there are some key examples that help to highlight their achievements.

Firstly, the school's work with parents is astonishing. In a very moving meeting with a group of parents, which has to be described in detail because of the profound statements that were made, several cried as they explained how much the school means to them and the many different ways in which the head teacher and staff have supported them. They explained that the head teacher and all staff are always there to help them. Staff understand the families' needs in depth and have helped them in many ways, not only with the educational needs of their children. Parents mention the counselling they have been given for their own depression and the advice and support they have received when there were very serious family concerns - which they found much more helpful than anything provided by any other public service. They spoke about the amazing work staff have done with their children, including help for a child with epilepsy; advice in getting a serious allergy diagnosed; occupational therapy support for a fragile child; speech and language therapy for a child with a stammer; extra support for a child with ADHD; wonderful support for a child with ASD; counselling for children facing family bereavement and a phonics club with exciting activities that has helped a child to have the confidence to do her homework. All parents were full of praise for the ways in which the school has helped them. One parent said "I would not be here now if it was not for this school." Another commented "I always come to the school if I need help of any kind, for example, with my finances or housing." Another parent who had faced very serious poverty added "The school fed me and my family, even giving me breakfast and lunch in school and food to take home, when we had nothing to eat in the house." Finally another cried as she spoke of her experiences "When I came from Iran 12 years ago, I had no family, no friends and no support. The school gave me lots of support and over the years they have given me hope" and yet another cried as she talked about the support she has received during the terminal illness of a close relative.

Parents are also delighted with the excellent progress their children are now making. They mention the "6 Pillars" of character building, which is key to the school's ethos and which one parent keeps on her fridge as a reminder to her children, and which another parent took to her own church as a model. They also talked about how children help each other and they mentioned how lovely it is when children see each other when they are out in the community because they greet each other with warmth, whoever they are and whatever their ages. "You never see children getting angry here," said one parent. "You make the family better than they could be," said another to the deputy head teacher. Parents also mentioned the wonderful courses the school has provided for them, which have not only helped them to help their children but have also helped them to improve themselves, with one of the group, for example, now being a teaching assistant in another school. Secondly, a tour of the school provided a clear insight into the interesting, focused, fun activities that pupils engage in in their lessons. Everyone is working hard and enjoying their learning; displays are beautiful and classrooms, while very small and housed in old buildings, are very attractive, well organized places of learning. Pupils' independent learning is being developed through the use of Ipads in lessons and all pupils were thoroughly engaged with their work in all

classes. Another lovely aspect of the work in this school is the provision of twice weekly dance lessons to all pupils and the classes seen were having a thoroughly enjoyable time using their energy and enthusiasm to great effect and, at the same time, building their self-confidence and coordination skills. The school is full of smiling faces and laughter and not one raised voice was heard all day. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and a meeting with the school council gave a further insight into the polite and confident way in which pupils speak to each other and to adults. A pupil in year 6 led a discussion about the role of the school council and she did this with calm confidence. A younger girl arrived a little late and another year 6 council member stood up and asked her to sit down in his place. All this is part of the normal ethos of this school. When asked to comment on their school pupils mentioned how the school is "different from other schools: it has its own ideas and is surprising and unexpected in the help it gives". "If you are confused your teacher will pick someone to help you." "The school always supports us to do our best"

Thirdly, discussions with teaching and support staff gave an insight into the outstanding work that they all do to support their pupils and into the excellent team work that helps this school to achieve remarkable results with their children. Teachers spoken to emphasized their 'can do' approach to meeting all the different needs of their pupils. All staff take responsibility for knowing the children in their classes, and their families, in detail. Teachers have high expectations and one mentioned how they never give up – they will always find a solution to a child's needs. They mentioned the support they get from SLT as crucial and they emphasized that their work with parents is crucial to the success of the school. Interventions are well thought through and groups are based on needs rather than on pupils' ages. The educational psychologist, who is employed by the school to work there one day per week and who works with pupils and families, mentioned that the staff of this school are caring with everyone and they all model the appropriate behaviour for children. Teaching assistants also have excellent support and training and work as a team to ensure pupils get the support they need. Staff travel a very long way to get to this school and they stay at the school for a number of years. This speaks volumes for the love and commitment staff have for the school and their pupils.

Members of the community, including governors, a cluster coordinator and an LA officer all reinforced the wonderful work done to include all children in this school. Everyone spoken to emphasized the strong commitment to inclusion, which is at the heart of all the work done at this exceptional school.

I am of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark. The areas for development outlined in this report are minor and are taken from the school's own development plan. I recommend that the school be awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark and be reassessed in 3 years' time. I also recommend that, since the school is already such a beacon for inclusion, the school considers becoming a Centre of Excellence for the IQM in the future and continues to Flagship status so that their outstanding work on inclusion can be shared with other schools.

Assessor: Pauline Roberts

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:



Joe McCann MBA NPQH
Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd