

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Bolton by Bowland Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Guisburn Road,  
Bolton by Bowland  
Clitheroe  
BB7 4NP

### **Diocese of Bradford and Ripon and Leeds**

LEA: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006

Date of last inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> May 2000

School's Unique reference number: 8883809

Headteacher: Mrs. Kathryn Morris

SIAS Inspector NS 263:Brenda Clarke

### **Context**

The school draws children from a wide area surrounding the small, rural village of Bolton by Bowland. The school is small with 41 pupils on roll. The current head teacher has been in place since September 2004 and is supported by one fulltime and one part time teacher, plus a favourable level of support staff. A significant building programme has provided much needed additional teaching space, resulting in an attractive and functional interior to the school, built in 1874.

### **Summary Judgement**

This is a good Church school with some outstanding features. Christian values underpin all areas of school life, enabling pupils to develop mature attitudes to learning and to become confident, caring individuals. There are very good harmonious, productive relationships between staff, parents and the Church, supporting pupils very well. The school is well led and managed by the head teacher and governors who play an active part in ensuring that the school maintains its unique Christian ethos whilst continuing to develop and embrace new initiatives.

### **Established Strengths**

- Pupils' moral, social and spiritual development is outstanding.
- Because pupils' individual needs are met very well, they flourish and fulfil their unique potential.
- Christian values underpin all aspects of school life enabling pupils to develop mature attitudes to learning and relationships with others.
- Relationships between the head teacher and her staff, the Church, governors and parents are outstanding, placing the school at the heart of the community.

### **Focus for development**

- Improve opportunities for pupils to learn about differing lifestyles and cultures of others in neighbouring areas
- Re-write the RE policy to clarify the distinction between RE and Collective Worship. Revise the scheme of work to improve continuity and progression.
- Continue to develop the roles of Foundation governors to support, monitor and evaluate provision in RE and school-based acts of Collective Worship.
- Continue to develop provision for RE with a particular emphasis on developing a more systematic approach to learning and teaching about world faiths.

### **How well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?**

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners in an outstanding way. The Christian ethos in Bolton by Bowland School is **outstanding**. Pupils are taught to work hard, behave well, and to care and share. Because older pupils support younger children very well, in lessons and at play, there is a real cohesive, family feel to this small school. Pupils feel valued and special. Whatever their social background, special need or religious stance they are welcomed and their differing needs met. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding so they listen carefully and concentrate, enabling them to achieve well. The strong adherence to Christian values promotes a very moral environment so that pupils show great respect for others and differing life stances. Clearly thought out strategies such as working in teams, class discussion times and well-organised acts of Collective worship develop pupils' spiritual development very well. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils' have good opportunities to take part in village happenings, and enjoy a variety of trips and visits. Relationships at all levels are excellent. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. Pupils have very good opportunities to learn about their heritage through art, music and visits. Planned opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural diversity, for example in nearby towns, are at an early stage of development.

### **What is the impact of Collective Worship on the school community?**

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good. Worship makes a very significant contribution to pupils' moral development and supports their spiritual development well. The daily acts of Collective Worship are effectively planned to ensure relevant themes are covered e.g. Fair Shares at harvest time. They also cover special times in the Church calendar such as Candlemas. Collective Worship themes are child- centred, interesting and relevant so that pupils develop knowledge and understanding of key Christian beliefs. There are good opportunities to take part in Collective worship in Church at key points in the Christian calendar. This gives valuable opportunities for pupils to see Christians at worship. Pupils also contribute to Church services e.g. Education Sunday. The head teacher leads most acts of Collective Worship, with a weekly contribution by the Rector. The use of quiet music, flowers and candles as focal points gives a real focus for worship. Older pupils say they enjoy these times; "It calms us down and gets us ready for the day"! Pupils are taught to respond in Christian ways to the needs of others. For example, delivering Harvest gifts to the elderly or responding to charities.

### **How effective is the Religious Education in the school?**

Religious education is satisfactory with several good features. The school's self evaluation and development plan rightly identify RE as an area for further development. During the inspection the quality of teaching of RE was at least good, with some aspects very good. The teacher observed had very good subject knowledge, preparing interesting lessons that grabbed pupils' attention. Because the teacher started from children's own experiences, learning was relevant and planned in carefully engineered steps. The good use of well-trained support staff enabled pupils to be taught more specifically in smaller ability/ age groups. Pupils enjoy RE lessons and show real respect when learning about Islam. Standards are good overall. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith is good. Year 6 pupils name the key practices and celebrations in the Church Year and have a good knowledge of the Bible. Curriculum time allocation is unclear. At present there is a lack of clarity in the RE policy about the relationship between RE and Collective Worship. Whilst provision for teaching about Christianity is good, planning for learning about and from other major faiths is less systematic. Currently the R E scheme of work is unclear about which religions are to be taught at which Key Stage. Therefore, pupils have limited opportunities to reflect on their learning. This also limits continuity and progression in their knowledge and understanding. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding. RE makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and spiritual development.

### **How effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?**

The leadership and management of the school as a church school is good. The head teacher and governors have recently undertaken joint training sessions to revisit and reformulate the mission statement and school aims. This has brought about consensus, and developed a close partnership with a well thought out Christian purpose. This shared vision and corporate approach supports new governors very effectively. The Chair of Governors supports the head teacher very well on a daily basis and has input into all policies and also planning for Collective Worship. All staff work together as a cohesive team. All are energetic and committed and very involved in all aspects of school life. Foundation governors have recently formed working groups to begin to evaluate, plan and monitor provision for RE and worship. This development is at an early stage with plans for more rigorous governor participation in the Summer term. Because relationships at all levels in school, Church and community are outstanding this small school is supported very effectively and is central to the work of the Church and village community.

SIAS FEBRUARY 2006 Bolton by Bowland Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary  
School Clitheroe BB7 4NP