

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Overton St. Helen's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Lancaster Road,  
Overton,  
Morecambe  
LA3 3EZ

**Diocese: Blackburn**

LA: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: March 28<sup>th</sup> 2006

Date of last inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> May 2000

School's Unique reference number: 119539

Headteacher: Mrs S. Clarke

Inspector's name and number: Miss Heather Starkie 179

#### School context

Overton St. Helen's Church of England Primary School has 182 pupils on roll and the school is regularly over subscribed. The school serves the villages of Overton and Middleton, Sunderland Point and Heaton-with-Oxcliffe, all of which are in the Parish of Overton. The school also draws significant numbers of children from outside of the Parish, within the Heysham, Morecambe and Lancaster areas. The attainment of pupils on entry is consistently above the LEA average. The number of children with Special Educational Need is low. The Headteacher has been in post for two terms having undertaken the role of Deputy Headteacher in the school for the previous fifteen years.

#### Summary Judgement

Overton St. Helen's Church of England Primary School is effective in promoting Christian principles and values within school and amongst its pupils. The recently appointed Headteacher has worked hard to promote the distinctive Christian character of the school and this is now beginning to have an impact on all members of the school community.

#### Established strengths

- Very good relationships between all members of the school community which are based on Christian values
- Christian principles and values are promoted effectively within the school
- Supportive Governing Body and supportive parents
- Established links between the school, the church and the local community

#### Focus for development

- To implement effective systems of monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision in Religious Education, in order to raise children's standards of attainment
- To provide more opportunities to develop children's understanding of other cultures and faiths
- To develop whole school self evaluation of the distinctive Christian character of the school and to include all members of the school community within these procedures

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

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, makes satisfactory provision to meet the needs of its learners, including those with special needs. Christian principles and values are promoted well through the curriculum, through the use of the outdoor environment and through the general daily organisation and routines. The school is friendly and welcoming and the caring and supportive atmosphere enables children to feel happy and secure. The distinctive Christian character of the school is evident to a limited extent, particularly within the main entrance area and school hall but this now needs to permeate and become embedded within the wider, whole school environment. Some opportunities for the children's spiritual development are provided, mainly through worship and circle time activities. Good relationships are evident within the school between staff and children, amongst children and between staff. The older children act as "buddies" for the younger children. Effective behaviour management systems are in place and this has a positive impact on the children's moral development. A range of fundraising activities take place on a regular basis, often initiated by the children themselves. This enables

children to think about and show care and consideration towards other people in the world who are less fortunate. Currently the more able children are not sufficiently challenged. There are also limited opportunities to explore the beliefs and traditions of other cultures. These are both areas for further development.

**What is the impact of collective worship on the school community?**

The impact of worship on the school community is satisfactory. Collective Worship contributes to the teaching of Christian principles and values and through acts of worship children are able to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. The Headteacher, who is the Worship Co-ordinator, has a very clear vision of the role and place of worship within the daily life of the school. Worship is planned with clear Christian based themes and/or moral issues. There is no structured monitoring and evaluation of worship. This needs to be developed to ensure consistency of provision and to ensure worship impacts more fully on the children and the whole school community. During worship children are attentive. They respond well to questions and contribute to the sharing of ideas. Worship begins and ends with an opening and closing response which, together with appropriate music and the worship table provides an effective focus and atmosphere for worship. Reverend D. Newton regularly leads worship in school and there are established links with the church and local village community. Visits to the church for worship are made by the school on a regular basis.

**How effective is the religious education?**

The effectiveness of Religious Education is satisfactory. The school follows the Blackburn Diocesan Syllabus which provides the children with a broad and balanced curriculum framework for RE. Religious Education is taught in a range of creative ways including drama and role play. Within the RE lessons observed very good opportunities were provided for the development of the children's thinking skills. This enabled them to reflect very effectively on the Easter story and its meaning. Quality of teaching and learning within RE are inconsistent across the school. Standards of children's attainment in RE and the presentation of work are issues of concern. There is little evidence of monitoring and evaluation of the RE curriculum and RE provision. Assessment strategies within RE are not fully in place although some staff training has recently been undertaken to develop this. There are some opportunities for the development of the children's knowledge and understanding of World faiths but there is no consistency with the planning of world faith units across the school. Further development of the role of the RE Subject Leader in the management of RE would ensure consistency of provision in RE and help towards the raising of standards of attainment in RE.

**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 are satisfactory. The recently appointed Headteacher together with the Chair of Governors have worked hard during the past two terms to develop the Christian vision for the school and to ensure the Christian character of the school is more evident within the school environment. This now needs developing further, embedding within the school and sharing more fully with the Governing Body, particularly the Foundation Governors, staff team, parents and children. The Headteacher is very good in seeking the views of parents. Currently there are limited opportunities to enable the children's opinions to be valued and for them to be involved in some of the decision making within the school. The recently formed School Council will enable the school to address this issue. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of both teaching and learning, particularly within RE, needs to be implemented and embedded within whole school self evaluation procedures. Self Evaluation procedures also need to review the school's distinctiveness as a church school in order to enhance current provision and enable the school to develop further to become even more effective as a church school.

SIAS report March 28<sup>th</sup> 2006 Overton St. Helen's Church of England Primary School  
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