

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Rectory Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Rectory Road
North Ashton,
WIGAN,
Lancashire
WN4 0QF

Diocese: Liverpool

LA: St. Helens MB

Dates of inspection: 24th May 2006

Date of last inspection: January 2001

School's Unique reference number: 104797

Headteacher: Mrs J E Prowse

Inspector's name and number: Graham H Nuttall

School context

Rectory C E School has seven classes ranging from Reception to Y6 with 166 pupils on roll. Less than 2% of pupils originate from ethnic minority groups. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is considerably higher than the national norm and there are an exceptionally high proportion of children with additional needs. Pupils are drawn from mixed housing stock but a significant proportion of pupils live within some pockets of high social and economic deprivation. Governors have undertaken a planned programme of building improvements within the last eighteen months and further building work is planned in order to upgrade KS2 accommodation during 2006/7.

Summary Judgement

Rectory C E School is an outstanding church school with many strengths. The innovative and dynamic leadership of the fairly recently appointed Headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher are to be commended. Christian values are at the heart of school life and relationships within the school community are of a very high order. The school ethos encapsulates positive values and attitudes within both teaching and learning and these values are clearly reflected in its mission statement, which is rooted in love, care and respect.

Established strengths

- The pervading Christian ethos which permeates all aspects of school life and within which pupils are nurtured and valued highly.
- High quality acts of worship which significantly contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.
- The dynamic leadership and vision of the Headteacher and the Assistant Headteacher.
- Excellent links with the local church and the wider community.

Focus for development

- Establish more detailed strategies for assessing pupils' work within Religious Education.
- Purchase additional resources for use within world faith modules of study.

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

The contribution of the school's distinctive character towards meeting the needs of all its learners is good. The school makes good provision to meet the needs of all its learners and especially those with special educational needs or physical disabilities. High quality relationships exist throughout the school and this enables pupils to feel secure and valued as individuals. Christian values are evident within the school and this impacts directly on the quality of care to be found at Rectory C E School. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the way they are treated with respect from all members of staff and the school demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusion. Children considered that they were well looked after and that members of staff were very caring and mindful of their needs. The School Council and the Rectory Forum provide very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility both within their school and the wider community. This helps to prepare for continuing education and adult life. The behaviour of pupils, their manners and respect for each other are generally good and have improved considerably over the past two or three years, this being one of the priorities of the newly appointed Headteacher. The school exudes a

warm, friendly and caring ethos within a happy atmosphere where pupils are keen to succeed. The Christian tenet of inclusivity, together with a genuine openness and mutual respect create a learning environment within which pupils can positively achieve. The school provides some good curriculum enrichment in a variety of ways including many after school clubs and activities. In order to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II the school organised a "Home Front" event. This was an outstanding example of work and clearly demonstrates the commitment of the school to strengthening firm relationships both within the parish and the wider community.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding. Acts of Worship are well planned and very thoughtfully presented. Worship is considered to be a most important part of the school day; the quality of worship being extremely high and skilfully delivered. Effective questioning techniques ensure that children are readily responsive; they make thoughtful and positive contributions through sung praise and reflective prayers. Worship time at the school is highly valued and this element contributes significantly to the positive spiritual ethos which is to be found within the school. Worship is soundly based on Christian principles and follows the Anglican tradition both in faith and practice. The themes and content of worship helps pupils to focus upon Christian values and this impacts positively upon their standards of general behaviour and manners. The parish Rector leads worship once each week with regular services being held in church during Advent and Lent; these being in addition to celebrations of other major festivals. Pastoral care within the wider community is enhanced by the work of the long-standing and knowledgeable Rector who has close ties with many extended local families.

How effective is the religious education?

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good. Religious Education (RE) is recognised by Governors and senior management as being of significant importance in this Christian school. The quality of both teaching and learning overall is good and pupils' standards of achievement in relation to their backgrounds and prior attainment is good. The subject makes a distinctive contribution to learners' spiritual and moral development. The school is aware that assessment strategies within RE are not yet fully in place and that this is an area for future development. Staff utilise ICT and drama effectively to ensure that the subject "comes alive" and there are good links between RE and PHSE. Schemes of work fully reflect the school's Christian foundation, with some appropriate weighting being given to other world faiths. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. There is a need to purchase some additional resources for use within some world faith modules of study. Whatever their faith background, pupils' enjoy the subject and acknowledge its relevance to their own lives.

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

Leadership and management of the school as a church school are outstanding. Both the Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher provide innovative, firm and dynamic leadership giving the school a clear purpose and direction. Their leadership style is warmly welcomed because it emanates from aspiring high standards and an enthusiasm for the future development of the school. The school's many strengths and areas for improvement were quickly and accurately identified shortly after taking up their posts. The school's Christian purpose is clearly expressed within its Mission statement, prospectus, written policies and in many areas around the building. Governors have a good understanding of their role; are supportive of their school leadership and actively promote the Christian ethos. Members of staff, parents and pupils feel involved and appreciated and therefore relationships are of a very high order. The Headteacher is supported by a very able RE co-ordinator who manages the subject well. Rectory CE School has a special quality which is distinctly Christian and this impacts positively on learners. The school provides a secure learning environment within a very caring Christian ethos and enriches pupils appropriately within their continuing development.