

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### St, Annes on Sea, St. Thomas Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

St. Thomas' Road  
St. Annes  
Lytham St. Annes  
Lancashire  
FY8 1JN

#### Diocese: Blackburn

LA: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006

Date of last inspection: November 2000

School's Unique reference number:

Headteacher: Mr. Ted Dempsey

Inspector's name and number: Mr. Neville Norcross

#### School context

St. Thomas' Primary School is an average sized school with 235 pupils on role. Most of the pupils are white British and live within the local area of St. Annes. The school has an above-average number of transient families. There has been an unsettled period for the past three years, during which, the school has had four associate headteachers.

#### Summary Judgement

St. Thomas' Primary School is a good church school. Its distinctiveness as a church school is well established and its effectiveness in fulfilling the academic and personal potential of each pupil is good.

#### Established strengths

- The strong links between the school and the Parish Church
- The quality of the relationships between all members of the school community.
- The commitment to provide challenging activities for the pupils in Religious Education

#### Focus for development

- Develop a system of evaluation of the school's distinctiveness and effectiveness as a church school and involve all members of the school community in the process
- Establish strategies for assessing pupils' work in Religious Education
- Develop a system for long and short term planning in worship to ensure that the pupils encounter a broad and balanced range of themes.

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

The way in which the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners is good. The school's systems for pastoral care and for celebrating the children's achievements enable them to feel valued and special. This in turn has a positive impact upon their self-esteem which allows most pupils to reach their full potential in both academic and personal development. The school has a strong Christian ethos which is characterised by good relationships between all members of the school community. Staff morale has been maintained and their teamwork has ensured continuity of provision for the children. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall is good. Their spiritual development is enhanced by the opportunities for quiet reflection in worship and by the open-ended questioning and challenging activities in Religious Education. The school provides good facilities for its pupils but more could be done to enhance the school's distinctiveness in the entrance hall and in the displays around the building. There is a strong relationship between the school and the Parish Church. As a result of this, the pupils have a positive view of the church and the school's underlying strengths have been maintained during a challenging time.

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

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good. Worship is recognised as being an important feature of school life. On the day of inspection all members of the teaching staff attended worship. The pupils have positive views about worship and they would value more opportunities to play an active part. The

vicar of St. Thomas' leads school worship on a regular basis both in the school and in church. He has played an important part in ensuring that daily worship is a positive and uplifting experience for both pupils and staff. On special occasions, such as Easter, the children play a major role in the church worship and they are very pleased to be involved in this way. This presents a positive view of the Anglican church to the children. Over the past two years there has been little systematic planning or evaluation of worship although individual acts of worship are well planned. The structure of worship is good but there is currently no guarantee that the children will encounter a broad and balanced range of themes.

**How effective is the religious education?**

The effectiveness of Religious Education is good. The children enjoy their lessons and have positive views of the subject. The standards being achieved are at least as good as national expectations. However the school does not have a formal system whereby the standards being achieved by pupils can be accurately assessed. This will enable the school to match its standards against national expectations. The quality of teaching overall is good. The most effective learning takes place in those classes where the teachers set challenging activities for the children. This, together with skilful questioning, helps the children in their understanding and makes a contribution to their spiritual development. The teaching about non-Christian faiths has an impact upon the children's cultural development as do those topics which explore the way in which Christianity is celebrated in different countries around the world. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about her subject and this, together with further in-service training will enable her to ensure that the subject continues to enjoy a high status in the school improvement planning process.

**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 good. The headteacher, leadership team and governors have contributed significantly to the school's success. There is a distinctive Christian vision for the school and this has been an underlying strength during the absence of a permanent headteacher. The appointment of a new headteacher will be an ideal time for all members of the school community to review the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school and ensure that issues which arise find their way into the School Improvement Plan. Parents have confidence that the school is meeting the needs of their children. The school has begun to collect and act upon the views of parents and pupils. This has been appreciated by the parents and pupils and led to some improvements being made in response. The current associate headteacher has worked hard to maintain a good environment for learning and he has been well supported by members of staff and school governors. This has helped to provide stability for the pupils and a good platform for further improvement when the new headteacher is appointed.

SIAS report April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006 St, Annes on Sea, St. Thomas Church of England Primary School St. Thomas' Road St. Annes Lytham St. Annes Lancashire FY8 1JN