

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Barnabas and St Paul's Church of England Aided Primary School

off Oakenhurst Road

Blackburn

Lancashire

BB2 1SN

Diocese: Blackburn

Local Authority: Blackburn with Darwen

Headteacher: Mrs. E.B. Smith

Inspection date: 8th March 2006

Date of previous inspection: 7th July 2000

Inspector: Mr. W.J. Holliday

School context

St Barnabas and St Paul's is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School situated in an urban regeneration area close to Blackburn town centre classified as an area of significant deprivation. There are currently 264 pupils on roll organized into 10 classes, including 3 mixed age classes. 81% of the school population is British born Asian, mainly of Pakistan heritage. 88% of the pupils have English as an additional language. 86% of the pupils are Muslims.

Summary Judgement

St Barnabas and St Paul's C of E School is a good church school with a distinctive Christian ethos in which the richness of cultural diversity is welcomed and celebrated

Established strengths

- The very caring Christian ethos which underpins all of school life
- The success of the school in creating an environment where cultural diversity is welcomed and celebrated and where children and families from other cultures and faiths are valued, supported and nurtured.
- The commitment of the governors, headteacher and staff to build upon and further develop the Christian ethos of the school for the benefit of all the pupils and the local community.

Focus for development

- To develop an effective system for self-evaluation of the church school ethos, building upon the work already undertaken, so as to highlight particular strengths and to identify areas for development to be included in the school development plan.
- To further develop the role of the subject coordinator for religious education so that in addition to monitoring planning and evaluations she is able to observe teaching and learning.
- To develop secure procedures for assessment in religious education matched to the national standards for religious education, including making use of assessment materials available within the Diocesan syllabus.

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

The school makes good provision through its distinctive Christian character to meet the needs of all its learners. The children feel happy and secure in school. They are valued as individuals and benefit from the warm family atmosphere created by the staff and the high level of care and concern shown. The emphasis on the three school sayings of 'Respect', 'Learn', 'Enjoy' provide a good focus for the pupils and the school makes good provision to meet their needs. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is well provided for through the curriculum, Collective Worship, extra curricular activities, a range of trips, a link with another school, and in making use of visiting artists and performers. The Christian ethos is well represented throughout the school: in displays, with crosses, prayers and blessings displayed in most classrooms and in the hall. There are very good relationships in the school community. The staff provide good role models, they are very supportive of the schools ethos and work well as a team. Behaviour is generally good although a small number of children display challenging behaviour which at times affects work in class and the experience of children in the playground. The school has put in place good strategies to address this including providing a system of peer mediation at lunch times. The school council contributes ideas for developments in school and older children confidently fulfil a range of extra responsibilities which aid their social development. There are strong positive links with parents and they are regularly consulted through questionnaires. Parents are aware that the school is a Church of England school and they are very supportive of its ethos. There are good relationships with the parish church and foundation governors are active and supportive in school.

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

Collective worship makes a good impact on the school community. Worship occupies an important place in the life of the school and is a key element in its Christian witness. Worship is well planned and provides a good balance of topics including the major Christian festivals. The children take part enthusiastically in singing and enjoy contributing answers to questions raised. They can draw upon their learning from previous collective worship and make connections with knowledge of their own or other World faiths, including Christianity. The school is very sensitive to the beliefs and traditions of the pupils while maintaining acts of worship which are recognizably Christian and honour the Anglican tradition. Christian symbols are well used and a good atmosphere is created. Skilful story telling draws children into the content of worship, as was observed in an act of Collective worship on temptation linked to Lent. Acts of worship provide well for the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, including those of other faiths. Opportunities are provided to celebrate festivals of other World faiths important to the families within the school community such as Eid-ul-Adha and Diwali. The children appreciate being able to contribute their worries and concerns for use in times of prayer during Collective Worship and this is accomplished very well. Opportunities for silence and reflection, in order for pupils to make their own individual responses, are sometimes missed.

How effective is the Religious Education in the school?

Religious education is good. Religious education is recognized as being of particular importance in the school. Many children demonstrate a very good knowledge of aspects of religion, some gained from studies outside of school as well as through the religious education curriculum. The Blackburn Diocesan scheme of work for R.E. is used appropriately, ensuring a balance between Christianity and other World Faiths. Teaching observed was mainly good and provided pupils with a range of appropriate activities within lesson times, including drama, and good use was made of interactive whiteboards. In Year 1 children can reflect upon their own ideas on stories from the Bible and apply them to their own lives. In Year 6 pupils can draw upon their own knowledge and apply it when exploring biblical

texts. Good links are also made between other subjects and religious education, in literacy and art and design. Secure procedures for assessment in religious education linked to the appropriate national standards are not in place, there is no portfolio of work reflecting levels of achievement and the assessment activities in the Diocesan Syllabus are not being used. The coordinator has made a good start in her role in monitoring teachers' planning and evaluations, and in providing ideas for delivering the religious education curriculum. This role should now be extended so that her monitoring includes observation of teaching and learning in class and also assessment procedures.

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 quality of leadership of the headteacher contributes greatly to the success of St Barnabas and St. Paul's as a church school. The Christian purpose of the school is very clearly expressed in the school mission statement, which has recently been revised in consultation with governors, staff and parents. Governors are very committed to the further development of the school and to the raising of standards. They are supportive and involved in school life through the governor / class link programme and actively promote the values and vision of the school. Some work has been undertaken, particularly by the headteacher, on self-evaluation of the church school ethos. This needs to be built upon using a clear structure based on the recently provided materials by the Diocesan Board of Education, so as to identify particular strengths and areas for further development to be included in the school development plan.

SIAS March 2006 St Barnabas and St Paul's Church of England Aided Primary School
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