

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Caton St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Moorside Road,
Brookhouse,
Lancaster,
LA2 9PJ

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 24/05/07

Date of last inspection: 3rd February 2003

School's unique reference number: 119524

Headteacher: Mrs. C. O'Hare

Inspector's name and number: Mr. G. Yates

School context

The school is smaller than most primary schools but numbers are rising. It is situated in a semi-rural area a few miles outside the city of Lancaster. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. Most families live in private houses and the number of pupils who receive free school meals is below average. St Paul's Church is within easy walking distance.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Paul's Church of England School are good

Its Christian character has a significant impact on the personal development and well being of all pupils. There is a positive commitment by everyone involved in the school community to build upon these strengths.

Established strengths

- Pupils have sensible attitudes, are very friendly, behave well and have a willingness to help each other
- The school is led and managed well
- The pupils are proud of their school and appreciate everything it does for them

Focus for development

- The school needs to ensure pupils gain a good insight into Anglican faith and practice
- The school needs to ensure that when older pupils are asked to use their writing skills in religious education lessons the quality of their work consistently matches the good quality found in other subjects

The school, through its distinctive Christian character is good at meeting the needs of all learners

The Christian ethos in the school is strong. All children are treated equally, regardless of gender, ability or background. School Council members are proud to have a say in 'their' school and are quick to inform visitors how proud they are of their ideas being acted on by the school. All pupils' achievements are regularly celebrated, as is seen in the "super star pupil of the week" award for each class. Pupils readily say how happy and safe they feel within the school building and look forward in eager anticipation to see who will win the super star awards. They talk of the kindness and concern of the staff towards them and know that they can raise issues that worry them. One child commented, 'If you need help you get it!' The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils is good overall. There are

many opportunities given to broaden pupils' experience, including residential visits, end of term concerts and the opportunity to work with a local artist. The school's sponsorship of 2 children in Mombasa is an exciting initiative but its impact on pupils' cultural and social awareness has yet to be developed fully. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures different from their own is satisfactory but the school acknowledges that more can be done in this aspect of cultural provision. The annual "Maypole" dancing event that occurred on the day of the inspection provided a truly wonderful experience for pupils of all ages and the school hall was full of bursting with appreciative parents. The good standard of work seen in displays around the school indicates the impact of such opportunities on children's learning and development but displays of pupils' work relating to religious education are limited. Through their behaviour and attitudes the children show good understanding of the place of Christian values in school. For example, care and concern for others extends beyond the school environment to others as is seen in the regular support given to charities. Pupils also take the initiative in running their own fund-raising activities for charities, such as the Red Nose Day appeal.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is an important part of school life. All members of staff are present at morning assemblies and the vicar and ministers from all the Christian churches in the village are regular contributors to leading acts of worship. Pupils clearly enjoy taking an active part, as is clear from the pride shown by the school's violinists when asked to perform in front of the rest of the school. Collective worship has a distinctly Christian focus and includes prayers and songs as well as a celebration of work pupils have done. The plans for collective worship provide a good indication of the themes to be covered throughout the year but are not explicitly linked to events in the Anglican calendar. The school encourages parents, carers and friends to attend the weekly celebration assemblies in school and parents very much welcome this involvement. While the school does celebrate Christian festivals in church there is little evidence to suggest that links with the church are used to any great extent to develop pupils understanding of Anglican faith and practice. For example, older pupils do not have a clear awareness of the importance of the Holy Communion in Anglican traditions.

The effectiveness of religious education is satisfactory

Pupils say they enjoy lessons. They are keen to talk about the possible meaning of parables and are interested in finding out about Christian festivals such as Pentecost. They say the local vicar makes assemblies fun. Teachers' planning demonstrates that due attention is given to ensuring children gain a good understanding of Christianity as well as a satisfactory understanding of Islam and Judaism. A satisfactory range of teaching strategies are adopted to try and ensure the subject is relevant to pupils needs. Younger children are actively encouraged to use their writing skills well but this is not always the case with older pupils where there is inconsistency in the quality of written work produced in religious education. For example, the project work related to the theme of 'People Who Inspire Others' is of a very good quality. However, this is not matched by what is found in their religious education books where because tasks are undemanding and not matched to their attainment levels pupils' work is sometimes lacking in quality.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

The Christian vision for the school is clearly exemplified by the headteacher and deputy headteacher in their leadership of the school which is of a good quality. The governors fully support and uphold this. Adults working in school support the leadership by providing good role models for the children in promoting Christian values. Pupils achieve well in the core subjects and clearly enjoy school because of a varied and interesting curriculum being made available. Parents are fully supportive of the Christian ethos and feel it is a strong feature of the school. Their commitment is seen in different ways including offering classroom assistance and a high degree of support for school functions. The village community

particularly the Christian churches in the area are integral parts of school life. The Collective Worship and Religious Education coordinator was absent during the inspection but it is evident that all policies are up to date and pupils progress is evaluated. The school's prospectus provides all the required information but information with regard to the way worship is planned and organised is not a prominent feature. The issues from the previous inspection have been addressed successfully.

SIAS report May 2007 Caton St Paul's Church Of England Primary School Moorside Road,
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