

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Chorley, The Parish of St Laurence Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Highfield Road South,  
Chorley,  
Lancashire,  
PR7 1RB

#### **Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Date of last inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2002

School's unique reference number: 119465

Headteacher: Mrs. Y.B. Taylor

Inspector's name and number: Mr. W.J. Holliday NS48

#### **School context**

Chorley, The Parish of St Laurence C.E. School is a one form entry Church of England aided primary school on the outskirts of the town centre of Chorley in Lancashire. There are 213 pupils on roll organised into seven classes. The intake is predominantly White British with the majority having benefited from nursery or pre-school education.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Chorley, the Parish of St Laurence C.E. school as a Church of England school are good.**

It is a very happy and caring school where all are made to feel special and where Christian values permeate all of school life.

#### **Established strengths**

- The very clear Christian vision, which is understood and supported by the whole school community.
- The excellent behaviour of the pupils and the way they interact and support each other in lessons and at play.
- The high level of care and support provided by the very conscientious and caring staff team.

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop secure assessment procedures for Religious Education which include a portfolio of work reflecting the units studied and matched to the National Standards for RE.
- Develop an effective system for monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to be more regularly involved in planning and delivering significant parts of Collective Worship.

#### **The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners.**

There are excellent relationships evident throughout the school and a very happy and friendly atmosphere is created by the staff team, enabling each pupil to feel valued and special. Christian values permeate all of school life and there is a very high level of care provided for the pupils by staff. Pupil behaviour is excellent and the children care for and support one another extremely well, in class and at play times. They enjoy learning and appreciate the way staff make lessons interesting and the way they are supported in their learning. The pupils are very appreciative of the achievements and contributions of others and they enjoy celebrating their achievements in Friday worship. The school is very successful in making the

link between its values and the life and teaching of Jesus. The Christian character of the school makes a very positive impact upon the spiritual moral social and cultural development of pupils. A group of children talked very confidently about their understanding of the Christian character of the school and of the importance of treating others well. The pupils take up responsibilities in school extremely well, such as setting up Collective Worship each day and acting as play leaders in the 'PALS' scheme. They are confident in expressing their ideas, reflecting upon the ideas of others or upon material presented to them as part of the curriculum. This was evident in discussions during work observed in RE and also in some of the reflective writing in pupil's books. A good range of trips and extra curricular clubs enhances the curriculum and enriches the experience of the pupils. The children's understanding of cultures other than their own is broadened through good use of visiting artists and materials and examples from the World church used in Collective Worship. There are very strong and mutually beneficial links with the parish church. The clergy lead weekly collective worship and there are regular visits from the church pastoral assistant. The church use school for a wide range of activities during the week and the pupils visit church for some main celebrations or contribute to services throughout the year. The Christian foundation is very well represented throughout the school: in lively displays of work, including RE, and in displays drawing attention to aspects of the school ethos. An excellent mural around the school hall provides a very good focus for the school community while drawing attention to important parts of the Christian story. A good range of charities are supported including a local hospice for children. The children enjoy organising activities for charity events such as children in need.

**The impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good.**

Collective Worship is given high priority in the life of the school each day. There is a good balanced programme of themes and a wide range of opportunities for worship. These include whole school, Key stage, class worship and worship in the parish church for some main festivals. Friday worship includes celebration of good work and achievements both in and out of school. Pupils enjoy singing in worship as was observed in some very enthusiastic singing and actions during preparation for Easter celebrations. The pupils speak very positively about Collective Worship and particularly enjoy some of the clergy input. A good atmosphere is created for worship through use of music as the children enter the hall and they settle extremely well. Good opportunity is provided for reflection and the children take part in this well. Pupils enjoy supporting the person leading worship in role play, reading or in answering questions but there are insufficient opportunities available for planning and delivering significant parts of worship on a regular basis. Good use is made of aspects of Anglican liturgy including the Grace and the Lord's Prayer. A helpful space has been provided in school for pupils to sit for prayer or reflection and pupils place their own thoughtful prayers in the prayer box provided, also contributing prayers to a prayer tree in another part of school. There is no system in place for evaluating or monitoring Collective Worship by the coordinator or by a link governor. A good variety of people lead worship throughout the year: teachers take turns to lead, Clergy lead worship each week and a range of other visiting speakers take part throughout the year. The pupils are able to talk confidently about the churches year and demonstrate a good understanding of major Christian festivals such as Easter, linking well with units of work in the RE curriculum. The school has good links with the parish church for worship. Pupils and staff contribute to some services in church throughout the year and also take part in special events at Blackburn Cathedral.

**The effectiveness of the Religious Education is good.**

The pupils are enthusiastic about RE. They enjoy their lessons and the wide range of approaches and activities provided enable them to develop their understanding. The school makes good use of the Diocesan Syllabus, providing an appropriate balance between Christianity and other World Faiths. Lessons are very well planned and there is a very good combination of 'learning about' and 'learning from' RE. Teaching is good, and on occasions outstanding. Teachers demonstrate a high level of subject expertise and make very good use of questioning. The pupils are provided with very good opportunities to reflect upon the feelings of characters in stories and accounts from the Bible. This leads to extremely

thoughtful responses and writing which demonstrates a high level of understanding. Good links are made with other areas of learning, as was observed in the foundation stage where work on promises and the story of Noah were linked to a range of activities across the curriculum. Pupils are confident in using Bibles and demonstrate very good skills in drawing out information, as was observed in a lesson analysing and comparing the different accounts of the Easter story. There is a very good range of work in RE books much of which is of a high standard. There are, however, no established assessment procedures for RE in school and no portfolio kept to match work from the units studied to the National standards. Some scrutiny of work and planning does take place by the Coordinator but there has been no structured observation of teaching or monitoring by a link governor. RE makes a positive impact upon the spiritual development of pupils, through time given for reflection in lessons. Some very good use of white boards was made at the end of a lesson observed for pupils to write their own thoughts.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a Church school is good.**

A very clear Christian vision has been established for the school which is shared affirmed and promoted by the whole school community and is evident throughout all of school life. The vision statement and school aims are clearly evident in documentation and communications. The Headteacher and governors work extremely well together and there are effective pastoral and spiritual links with the parish. The governors have made good use of materials provided by the Diocesan Board for Education for self evaluation but there is no secure system for monitoring RE, Collective Worship and aspects of the school ethos through link governors. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and are appreciative of the very positive effect it has upon their children. The school is effective at seeking the views of parents and pupils through regular questionnaires, which include aspects of the Christian ethos. Ideas put forward have been acted upon, such as bulb planting in the grounds, introduction of water bottles and parents being invited to join worship once per week. Pupils put forward their ideas in class discussions or through an ideas box. A school council has not been established in school and this restricts opportunities for pupils to make significant contributions to school leadership.

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