

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Christ Church Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

North Road,  
Carnforth  
LA5 9LJ

#### **Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007

Date of last inspection: 11 – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2002

School's unique reference number: 119522

Headteacher: Mrs M Frankland

Inspector's name and number: Mr R H Hardwick 121

#### **School context**

Christ Church C of E primary school serves a largely urban area in Carnforth. It is in close proximity to the Parish Church. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of ability. A high proportion have some form of special educational need. Few take a free school meal. The school population in the area is declining.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Christ Church as a Church of England school are good**

Christ Church C of E Primary School is a good and improving church school where pupils make good progress, enjoy their education and are known and valued as individuals. Christian values are at the heart of school life. Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, social moral and cultural development.

There are strong and beneficial links with the clergy and parochial church council.

School Context

#### **Established strengths**

- The Christian vision and effective leadership of a hardworking headteacher
- The strong links with the parish community and clergy
- Very good relationships between teachers and pupils and among pupils themselves
- The range of extra-curricular activities including charitable activities

#### **Focus for development**

- To introduce more formal self-evaluation of the Christian distinctiveness of the school in co-operation with the foundation governors
- To make the Christian foundation of the school more explicit in all classrooms
- Introduce a formal system of assessment in religious education to ensure that standards are in line with national expectations
- To use the cultural diversity of the worldwide Christian church to enhance existing provision in multicultural education

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

Pupils on the School Council say they feel safe, like their teachers and enjoy their work. As a result pupils of all abilities make good progress. The school has a good range of rewards not only for good academic work but also for example, for honesty and integrity and for pupils showing care and compassion for their classmates. The headteacher places great emphasis on reconciliation and forgiveness in instances where conflict arises. Spiritual, Social, Moral and Cultural development are good. Pupils behave well in class, and in the playground. The pupils that met the inspector were polite, articulate and impressive in their relative maturity.

Their answers to questions about the impact of religious education and worship demonstrated their spiritual growth. They respond well to the expectation in the code of conduct that they will respect others, show love towards them, be honest and behave in a safe manner. Parents say their children are happy in school. Worship makes a strong contribution to their moral development with frequent emphasis on Christian values. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils behave sensibly as they move around the school and play well together outside at break and lunchtime. The adventure week at Tower Wood for Y5 and 6 includes all the pupils, even the most challenging. It contributes to their spiritual development by raising their awareness of the richness and wonder of God's creation. The school is welcoming, clean and stimulating with some original Christian signs and symbols, but classroom displays miss the opportunity to emphasise the Christian distinctiveness of the school. Pupils respond with generosity to the appeals made for support for victims of natural disasters such as the Tsunami, or the appeal for Seeds for Africa or the Phar Trust for schools in Nepal. A very good range of extra-curricular opportunities especially those of a sporting and musical nature make a good contribution to pupils' cultural and personal development.

### **The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

The importance of collective worship is demonstrated by the detailed planning undertaken by the headteacher. This ensures very good coverage of the church's year. Other aspects of Christian life and values are covered including for example, personal worth, love, forgiveness, truth and taking responsibility. Worship therefore makes a strong contribution to spiritual and moral development. Worship time is made special by the use of appropriate music and a prayer table with a candle, which is lit to signify the beginning of worship and put out at the end. A prayer board with a prominent cross is decorated according to the theme or season and acts as a strong focal point. In an act of worship pupils responded very well to the questions asked of them and sang a modern hymn clearly. They knew the appropriate responses to traditional Anglican sentences. The clergy are regularly involved in worship and welcome pupils into church on special occasions, to which parents are welcomed. Pupils composed and read their own poems and prayers in the Harvest Service. Visitors to worship offer pupils insight into the diversity of Christian faith and practice. Resources for worship are good and include Diocesan materials. Prayer is an integral part of the day, with grace at lunchtime and a school prayer before pupils go home. Pupils therefore become used to prayer as a normal and important part of Christian life. Pupils could recall acts of worship, which had interested them and caused them to think about their own beliefs.

### **The effect of Religious Education is Good**

Religious Education is taught by well-qualified, able and enthusiastic teachers. Time allocated to the subject is appropriate and there are good resources available including artefacts, which are well used to stimulate pupils' interest. A good balance is struck between learning about religion and learning from it. Pupils are challenged, in oral work especially, to make personal responses to religious ideas and practices and as a result make good progress in their spiritual development. Lessons are very carefully planned to take account of the mixed age classes so that pupils of different ages and abilities all have appropriate challenges in their work. The interactive whiteboard is used to stimulate pupils' personal thoughts and reactions to events such as the Christmas story. The topic on how God changes lives involves a question and answer session with the clergy, helping pupils to understand the significance of the Christian faith in people's lives. Pupils produced a giant advent calendar with appropriate Bible verses hidden behind the doors, deepening their awareness of the meaning of the Advent season. A rap version of the Good Samaritan and a board game in response to a topic on how the Bible had to be smuggled into some countries proved to be imaginative ways of capturing pupils' interest. Drama is a regular feature of lessons. Pupils say they enjoy the active learning through the regular drama they experience. For example, in a lesson on Jesus stilling the storm a dramatic introduction involving the younger children acting out the parts stimulated lively interest. The parish church is used as a resource to promote understanding of Christian symbolism and worship. Connections are

made between religious education and worship, for example in the work on liturgical colours through the year. Pupils receive oral feedback on their work in class. As yet the school has not introduced the national levels into assessment in religious education

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

The school prospectus makes the Christian nature of the school very clear and celebrates the close links with parish community and clergy. The foundation governors are now more closely involved with the school. They are reviewing the Mission Statement. Parents are sent a regular newsletter, which is very informative and the PCC receives comprehensive reports from the headteacher. Parents hold the headteacher in high regard for her outstanding leadership and hard work in improving the school and raising standards. Appropriate policies are in place for RE and Collective worship giving clear guidance to the teachers about what is distinctive about these responsibilities of a church school. The headteacher has successfully implemented her vision of an inclusive community, where everyone is clear about the key Christian values fundamental to the life of the school. There have been no exclusions for five years. She has generated support for her development of the Christian ethos of the school amongst the staff who work hard to support her. Religious education is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. The close links with the clergy benefit the school in spiritual support, contributions to worship, pastoral care and the use of the church building as a valued resource. Issues from the last report have been met with the exception of the issue of effective use of classroom display space to make the distinctive nature of the school more explicit. Some informal self-evaluation of the distinctive Christian nature of the school is undertaken. More systematic analysis using the checklists published by the National Society and the Diocese is not currently in use.

SIAS report January 2007 Christ Church CE Primary School North Road, Carnforth LA5 9LJ