

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Farington Moss St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Croston Road  
Farington Moss  
Preston  
PR26 6PR

#### **Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> September 2006

Date of last inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2001

School's unique reference number: 119612

Headteacher: Mr D Garstang

Inspector's name and number: Mr Peter Jump

#### **School context**

Farington Moss St Paul's is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school with 168 children on roll. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average as is the percentage with learning and behavioural difficulties. There is a higher than average percentage of children with statements of educational need. Children come from a mixed background of pre-school education with the majority having attended play school or toddler groups.

**The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Farington Moss St Paul's as a Church of England school are satisfactory with some good features.**

#### **Established strengths**

- The school has a clear Christian ethos evident through its worship and relationships.
- There is evidence of a strong supportive teamwork between staff, pupils, parents and the local community.
- The head teacher and staff are well respected by parents and pupils alike and provide a very caring environment in which children can develop.

#### **Focus for development**

- To raise the standards within Religious Education by:
  - appointing a governor to oversee the development of Religious Education and Collective Worship;
  - developing the role of the co-ordinator to include monitoring, evaluating and assessing the work done throughout the school;
  - keeping pace with developments in Religious Education through staff attendance at relevant Diocesan Religious Education courses;
  - increasing the resources available, including Bibles appropriate for each age group;

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

Whatever their religious faith, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as can be seen through the care and support given to all in the school community and the plans for multi-cultural work. Relationships within the school community are evidence of a strong partnership that exists between pupils, parents, staff, the church and the wider community. This is characterised by the learners' very good behaviour and the Christian care and concern for others that exists within and between members of the school family. In the children's own words, 'we feel safe and can turn to any adult if there is a problem'. They also feel that any problems are quickly and effectively dealt with. Parents describe the school as being a very happy place that provides their children with a good, solid foundation for later life. They feel that their children are very safe and that there is a good social side to school

which encourages children to become confident members of society fully prepared for secondary school life. They describe the headteacher as having wonderful relationships with, and being well respected by, the pupils. They also feel that all staff are very approachable and encouraging.

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

Worship occupies an important place in the life of the school and is a key element in its Christian witness. Acts of worship are well planned and delivered mainly by the head teacher, deputy head and classes on a rota basis. There are good levels of participation by individuals and groups of learners and all are positively received by the children who fully enjoy this uplifting start to each day.

The whole school act of worship seen on the day of the inspection was an enjoyable experience. All the teachers and teaching assistants were present and the children were responsive. A group of children performed their own poetry and choral speaking on the theme of 'dads', linking this to the weekly theme of the Patriarchs.

Worship is recognisably Christian and develops the children's understanding of the Anglican tradition. This can be seen in the planning documents and through the answers given by the Year 6 pupils. The hall contains a small table with cross and candle as a focal point, although these were not to the fore during the Year 5/6 class assembly seen. There are regular acts of worship held in church that are open to parents and which are spoken highly of by the children. Year 6 pupils say that worship gives them confidence and helps to make them better people. At all these services the children are encouraged to take part and this has helped to boost each child's confidence and self-esteem. The Vicar is regularly involved in school worship at church and the links between the church and the school are strong.

**The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory.**

Religious Education is recognised by the Head Teacher and other staff in the same way as other foundation subjects. Achievement in relation to the children's background and prior attainment is satisfactory as are the standards of attainment. There is room to improve the standards by raising the profile of RE within the curriculum. At present there is no governor overseeing RE and the written standards evident in children's books are below those found in their English books. The one lesson seen was a satisfactory yet encouraging one at the start of a topic entitled 'I am Special'. This was the first RE lesson for many of the Reception children and was a sound start to the topic. One four year old commented that he loved God because God loves him. The responses of children in Year 6 showed a mature understanding of the Christian faith reflecting sound learning achievements. They understand who Jesus is, why he came and what Christians are called to do.

Whatever their own faith background children enjoy the subject and acknowledge its relevance to their own lives. Schemes of work fully comply with the Blackburn Diocesan syllabus and reflect the school's Christian foundation at the same time as giving some weight to other faiths. The RE co-ordinator monitors the curriculum, however there is no assessment or evaluation of the subject evident. At present there is insufficient attendance at appropriate Diocesan courses and the profile of the subject is not sufficiently high enough.

**The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is satisfactory.**

Governors are aware of the school's Christian foundation and purpose, which are expressed in the school's mission statement, aims and prospectus and referred to in its policies and plans. Children and their parents speak appreciatively about the commitment of the staff to all individuals and the quality of education provided. The school enjoys a close and productive relationship with the church and this has strengthened its place at the centre of the local community. Whilst there is a good and effective church school ethos and programme of Collective Worship, the overall vision of this as a church school has not been articulated and pursued rigorously enough by the Governors and leadership team in the teaching of Religious Education.