

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Freckleton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Lane,
Freckleton,
Preston,
PR4 1PJ

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 21st November, 2006

Date of last inspection: July, 2002

School's unique reference number:

Headteacher: Mr. Leslie Turner

Inspector's name and number: Mr. Neville Norcross

School context

The school is situated near to the centre of the large village of Freckleton. It is located within semi-rural surroundings. The majority of pupils (98%) are white British and most live within the immediate area of the school. The retirement of the previous headteacher in December 2005 led to a rather unsettled period for the school but the appointment of a substantive headteacher and deputy headteacher in September, 2006 has brought about stability and a new sense of purpose and direction.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Freckleton, Church of England Primary School as a church school are good.

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

Established strengths

- The strong Christian ethos which has a positive impact upon the personal development and well-being of all pupils
- The Christian commitment of the headteacher which has created a strong emphasis on the school's distinctiveness as a church school
- The quality of the relationships between all members of the school community

Focus for development

- Develop the role of the co-ordinator for worship and religious education in monitoring and evaluating the standards achieved
- Involve all members of the school community in evaluating the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school
- Explore additional ways in which the partnership between school, church and community can be developed

The way in which the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meets the needs of all learners, is good.

The school's success in developing a distinctive Christian ethos is well illustrated by the parent who came into school of her own accord, in order to emphasise her gratitude for the impact which the school was now having on her own children and, indeed, all children. She spoke of the school's willingness to listen and respond and of a culture in which all are valued. Her comments are very much in line with those made by the parents on the recent parental questionnaire. The children spoke confidently about the school as a safe place and a happy place where they feel valued and special. This has an impact upon their self-esteem which in turn has a positive effect on their behaviour and on their academic achievements. The school's effectiveness in promoting the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development is good overall. The positive behaviour policy enables them to have a strong awareness of right and wrong. The school has a good sense of community and the children take part in a number of fund-raising events at local, national and international level. Their spiritual development is enhanced by opportunities for times of quiet in the daily worship. The prayer tree in the Year 2 classroom is used effectively to provide times of reflection but other opportunities for spiritual development across the school are limited. The teaching of non-Christian faiths is used to provide the children with experiences of cultures which are different from their own. The school is characterised by the quality of the relationships between all members of the school community. The pattern for this is set clearly by the headteacher who has a determination to improve the school whilst also showing a sensitivity towards the feelings of those who may feel threatened by change. The cross in the entrance hall and the displays in some classrooms are clear signs of the school's Christian distinctiveness although not all areas of the school are effective in this regard. The school has rightly identified the outdoor environment as an area where the Christian ethos can be further developed.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory although there are some good features.

The daily act of worship is recognised as being fundamental to the development of the school's Christian character. The newly appointed coordinator, the headteacher and church leaders all agree with this view and have given their support to recent developments. The children have a positive view of the daily worship but say that they would welcome more occasions when they can take an active part. The daily worship is now beginning to have an impact on the children's spiritual development. One member of the clergy said that the children's much-improved behaviour during worship now provides far more opportunities for interactive questioning and times of reflection. The coordinator has made a good start at planning a rolling programme of themes. Sensibly, these are being built up on a termly basis. On the evidence so far, a broad and balanced programme which takes account of the church's year, will emerge. There have been few opportunities for the new coordinator or the other teachers to receive training in the planning and delivery of school worship. There is now far more co-operation between the school and the church. The vicar and assistant curate have a much higher profile in school and the children worship in church on a more regular basis. There is a genuine sense of commitment to this aspect of school and church life in order to fill some of the gaps which have existed in the past. The personal involvement of the headteacher and deputy headteacher in the worshipping life of the church is an important factor in the increasingly positive relationships between school and church. This has a positive impact upon the children's view of the local church.

The effectiveness of religious education is satisfactory although there are some good features.

The standards achieved by the children are satisfactory overall. The teaching of Attainment Target 1 – learning about religion – is stronger than Attainment Target 2 – learning from religion. This being the case, the majority of the work in the children's books is about religious knowledge whilst the more challenging aspects of the subject are not seen as much. The quality of teaching overall is at least satisfactory and some very good teaching was seen. Where the teaching was good there were opportunities for the children to respond to open-ended questions and challenging tasks. This made an important contribution to the children's spiritual development. The work on non-Christian faiths has made good progress in recent months and is enhanced by the visits to places of worship. The coordinator for religious education attaches great significance to the subject and approaches her work with enthusiasm. She has made very good use of the new expertise she has gained as a result of attending recent courses. She has a clear plan for the way in which the subject needs to develop. At the moment the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the standard of work are not fully developed.

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

The Christian commitment and vision of the headteacher is outstanding. The leadership team, together with the school governors have established a clear Christian vision for the school. They have been very effective in ensuring that this vision is known and understood by all members of the school community. Parents in particular have remarked upon the change in school ethos and the positive effect this has had on the pupils social and emotional development. The headteacher pursues, with great vigour, his goal of seeing the Christian vision lived out in every aspect of school life. Formal procedures for achieving this are not yet in place although much has been achieved at the informal level. Recent developments have been based very much on working together as a team. The children have been put at the heart of the team and their views, thoughts and concerns have driven some of the recent changes. The headteacher has shared his school email address with the children so that they can contact him freely with their ideas and concerns. The role of the subject coordinator for worship and religious education is not fully developed although much has been done to strengthen this position. There is currently no governor with specific responsibility for religious education and worship although plans to address this are well underway. The governors now have a greater involvement in school life and are better equipped to take on their role as critical friend.

SIAS report November 2006 Freckleton, Church of England Primary School, School Lane, Freckleton, Preston, PR4 1PJ