

Huyton with Roby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Rupert Road
Huyton
Liverpool
L36 9TF

Diocese: Liverpool

Local authority: Knowsley
Date of inspection: 3 July 2007
School's unique reference number: 104451
Headteacher: Mr M Cooper
Inspector's name : Mrs J O'Rourke, inspector number 213

School context

Huyton with Roby CE primary is a larger than average Voluntary Aided church school which serves a socially mixed area with significant socio-economic disadvantage. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The school is a member of the Excellence in Cities Partnership of schools and gained the Sports Activemark in 2006. Educational programmes for adults and children are provided through the extended schools programme.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Huyton with Roby as a Church of England school are good.

Christian values underpin the ethos of the school, as reflected in the commitment to each individual's self-worth in a climate of openness and understanding. Every child is viewed as being special and encouraged to grow in self-respect, responsibility and caring for others. These objectives thrive within the context of excellent personal relationships at all levels and supportive links with three local church communities.

Established strengths

- A strong, highly inclusive Christian ethos which puts the gifts, talents and well being of individuals at its core.
- The clear vision of the headteacher and governors for the promotion of the school's Christian character
- Very strong Church/School links

Focus for development

- To develop clear monitoring and evaluation procedures as part of the co-ordinators' roles for RE and Collective Worship
- To establish a whole school approach to the assessment of Religious Education

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

Children flourish in the highly supportive and inclusive climate of the school. This provides an outstanding level of care for all learners, within a Christian context. It is evident in the school's commitment to providing a highly effective network of adult support: a learning mentor, youth workers and family workers all support the needs of individuals. The children also particularly value the 'mini mentors' with whom they can share any problems and difficulties. Forgiveness and reconciliation are key Christian values that underpin the moral development of the children and high levels of responsible behaviour are evident across the whole school. The nurturing of individual self-esteem lies at the heart of the school's mission. This is reflected in the harmonious relationships that exist within the school community.

Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their future aspirations and contribute happily to the 'Hopes and Dreams Tree' displayed in the hall.

The school environment makes an excellent contribution to the children's spiritual development. A range of attractive displays, inspirational and motivational posters around the school and various Christian symbols offer invitations for reflection. Pupils have a very good range of opportunities for personal and social development, be it through their significant work in supporting the NSPCC, decision making via the school council or participation in the leavers' service at the Anglican cathedral - here they are also able to offer support for Christian Aid projects. The promoting of links with a Diocese in Uganda, and the sending of computers and PE equipment to Namuganga school illustrates the excellent opportunities children have to develop a wider social and cultural understanding of the world and their part in getting to know and care for others.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective Worship lies at the heart of the school day when all can come together to share and reflect, and, as learners describe, 'to talk to God and say thank you'. The children's understanding of the Christian festivals of the year and aspects of the Anglican tradition, have been greatly enhanced by the outstanding contribution made by the clergy, team workers and members of the parishes of Huyton St Michael's, St Bartholomew's and Trinity Church who regularly support the Collective Worship programme. The children have been encouraged to be actively involved in the church services resulting in an experience that is valued by all learners. The spiritual development of each individual thrives in this Christian environment where times of prayer and quiet reflection are built into the school day. The children are familiar with a variety of prayers and understand the use of different styles of prayer for different occasions. A prayer group meets each week in the school enabling staff to gain spiritual support from praying together. The school has sought to collect the views of the children regarding worship through a questionnaire but formal systems for the monitoring and evaluation of collective worship are not yet in place.

The effectiveness of the religious education is good

Children make good progress in RE and lessons are relevant and rooted in their own experience. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, have high expectations of the children and employ a range of skilful questioning techniques. This has resulted in good levels of involvement and participation in lessons. Standards are in line, and sometimes above, laid down in the Diocesan syllabus.

Teachers are successful in creating a classroom ethos where the children are not afraid to share their ideas and beliefs and where their responses are truly valued. Learners have a good understanding of Christianity and can talk about the different genres of writing and the key messages behind Bible stories and their significance to Christians. The use of interactive teaching techniques, ICT, role play and good resources help the children to relate to what they are learning and to be engaged and motivated. In one lesson children discussed the qualities of contemporary female role models and linked concepts of loyalty and trust to female Biblical characters. In another instance, the children spoke about their special books and many included the Bible they had received in the reception class. A good marking policy has been implemented which recognises clearly the distinction between the two attainment targets. An assessment process has been started, but is not yet developed sufficiently to lead to levelling of work. Likewise, pupils have not been introduced to the idea of self assessment to help them identify what they have achieved and what they need to do to develop further in RE

The RE curriculum is enriched by the use of visitors from other faith communities, as when studying Hinduism. This impacts positively on the children's understanding of respect and gives recognition to the value of diversity: as one child said, 'It is important to have your own faith but still respect the beliefs of others'.

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

The headteacher and governors share a clear vision of the school that promotes its strong Christian distinctiveness. This is clearly evident in the mission statement, school documentation and written policies. Serving the needs of 'a real cross section of the community' lies at the heart of the school's mission. The headteacher has an excellent capacity to use self – evaluation to monitor and identify areas for future development pertaining to the school's Christian ethos, but plans to extend the monitoring and evaluation role of the Religious Education and Collective Worship co-ordinators have not yet been implemented. The Chair of Governors is a regular visitor to the school and along with the governing body provides a high level of support.

The use of a forum on the school's website, questionnaires and informal meetings have proved very useful ways of seeking the views of all stakeholders. Parents value and support the Christian ethos of the school and how the school 'takes into account the feelings of the whole family'.

The staff value the opportunity to work closely together in a Christian environment that is based on mutual respect and support.

SIAS report : July 2007 Huyton with Roby CE Primary School, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9TF