

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Lea Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Lea Road,  
Preston,  
PR4 0RA

**Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2007

Date of last inspection: 2003

School's unique reference number: 119567

Headteacher: Mrs Kathryn Middlemiss

Inspector's name and number: Penny Hollander 526

#### **School context**

The school is situated within the city of Preston, but is in a rural location. Pupils come from a mixed socio economic background and are mainly of white ethnicity. A significant proportion of children come from homes outside of the school's immediate catchment area and pupil mobility has resulted in a high proportion of children joining the school later than at the foundation stage. The new headteacher has been in post since September 2006.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Lea Endowed as a Church of England school are satisfactory**

The Christian ethos and values underpin the life of the school. All members of the school community are working together to ensure the Christian foundation of the school is both recognised and celebrated although this is not yet fully embedded into daily practice.

#### **Established strengths**

- The personal development and wellbeing of all pupils
- The strong links between church and school
- The collaborative and supportive staff team

#### **Focus for development**

- Carry out an evaluation of the school's distinctiveness and effectiveness as a church school, including all stakeholders in the process
- Develop systematic plans and evaluations for whole school collective worship
- Develop the portfolios of children's work in religious education as a means of assessing the standards which are being achieved

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

Although the overall judgement for this section of the report is satisfactory there are also some very good features, principally the personal development and well being of pupils. Learners say they feel valued and special and the school has a caring, supportive, family atmosphere. There is now a clear behaviour policy and pupils know that any incidents are dealt with fairly in a spirit of compassion and forgiveness. Relationships between all staff and learners are built on a foundation of mutual respect and understanding. Pupils care for one another and the oldest pupils are linked with the youngest ones. New initiatives such as children in years four and five organising games for the very young ones and a buddy system to help children integrate within the school community are currently being developed but it is too early to assess their impact. Christian values of care, concern and respect for others are encouraged through activities like pupils singing at Christmas in a local nursing home, fundraising for Christian Aid, the Bishop's appeal for the Harvest Fund and supporting a child in an orphanage in Romania. The school environment supports the Christian foundation of the school by the use of relevant symbols and displays both in public areas and classrooms.

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

Collective worship has an important role in the life of the school. Children are encouraged to be reflective and respond appropriately at these times. Examples of this are the use of a prayer tree for prayer requests and specific times of praying for others. Recently, older pupils have been praying for the release of the BBC journalist, Alan Johnson, and feel that his release is an indication that God has answered their prayers. Lunchtime and end of day prayer further demonstrate the importance of prayer in the general life of the school. Long term planning for collective worship is not yet fully developed. The strong links between school and church are evident both in the vicar's weekly contribution to whole school collective worship and in the school services held in the church at important occasions in the church year, such as Christmas and Harvest. Such links also ensure that the Anglican tradition of the school is upheld. The church's commitment to the school is also seen in its invitation to pupils and staff for special services such as for school leavers. As yet there is little evidence of the use of wider Anglican traditions.

### **The effectiveness of religious education is satisfactory**

Religious Education has only recently been given a place of priority within the curriculum. The provision is now developing in line with both national and local diocesan requirements. Evidence from children's work suggests there is an awareness of both learning about religion and learning from religion, although as yet this is mainly from Christianity with limited reference to other faiths. Pupils demonstrate both an interest in and knowledge about the subject and good opportunities are created for cross-curricular links. For example, years five and six pupils looking at the concept of heaven from both their own and Biblical perspectives, created a collage in art work to express their ideas. Portfolios of pupils' work in RE are at the early stages of development and as more examples are added they should provide opportunities for both teachers and learners to assess learning and plan for progression. The church building is used as a resource during the teaching of religious education. The vicar's contribution to RE lessons also increases the children's understanding of Christianity. A recent example is their learning about the life of St Barnabas; one of the saints associated with the school. RE is an important vehicle for the spiritual and moral development of learners where through the study of the Bible the children discuss Christian concepts of care, compassion, right and wrong. Pupils' awareness of the impact of religion on the lives of believers is not fully developed.

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

The school has a strong Christian vision for the school which is clearly stated in its mission statement. The new headteacher is very effective in ensuring that this is put into practice in the daily life of the school. In this she is fully supported by the governing body which is currently developing its role in promoting and monitoring this vision for the school. The staff in school work well as a team. They actively support one another and all feel valued, knowing that their views are taken into account. The staff are keen to help move the school forward as a church school and they provide valuable role models for the children. Subject leaders are now beginning to monitor the quality teaching and its impact on pupil progress." Parental questionnaires reveal very positive attitudes towards the school and a confidence in approaching the school with any problems or questions. Parents appreciate the headteacher's presence outside school each morning and her availability to speak with them. The formation of a school council in recent months now gives pupils the chance to take more responsibility and put forward their views about the school and any changes they would like to see made. Their suggestion of allowing friends to sit together at lunchtime has been put into practice and has proved to be very effective. Links with the local community are strengthening too, both in terms of visitors coming into school to share their skills and expertise and invitations to school events.