

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Leigh Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Plants Hill Crescent  
Coventry  
CV4 9RQ

**Diocese: Coventry**

Local authority: Coventry

Dates of inspection: 17 March 2008

Date of last inspection: 17 November 2003

School's unique reference number: 103705

Headteacher: Rod Steward (Acting)

Inspector's name and number: Isobel Vale NS 327

#### School context

This Church of England Aided primary school is situated on the outskirts of Coventry and caters for 140 pupils aged 4-11. Pupils are drawn from the local area and there is a wide social mix. The school has had three acting Headteachers during the last two years. The current acting headteacher who started in September 2007 is temporarily leading the school until August 2009.

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

The school is successfully re-establishing itself as a good church school serving its community. Christian values are demonstrated in the way that the school meets the needs of the children.

#### Established strengths

- The very strong leadership and vision of the Acting Headteacher in developing the school's Christian foundation alongside general school improvement.
- The increasing range of opportunities and experiences offered to pupils to enhance their personal development.
- The high quality of care shown to pupils.

#### Focus for development

- Secure the future of Religious Education by setting in place permanent arrangements.
- Set up more formal systems for governors to monitor and evaluate RE and collective worship.

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

The school has reached a good standard in meeting learners' needs through its Christian ethos. The high quality of care within a nurturing environment provided by the school results in positive attitudes. Pupils are happy at school and comments such as "*we do fun things in lessons, we help each other, any problems get sorted, if someone is lonely we help them*" reflect this. Pupils are challenged to develop their sense of responsibility both within the school and in the wider community. A 'Friendship Squad' operates in school and Years 5 and 6 have been involved in 'Peace Partners' linking with the cathedral. The Power/Hate/Life Project was mentioned by pupils as a valuable experience. The work of the School Council is developing and links with a school in Uganda are all helping pupils to grow as individuals. Pupils recognise that they belong to a church school, mentioning the importance of prayer, worship, religious education, displays and links with the church. The Bible memory verse challenge is being very well received with high motivation to achieve. Throughout the school there are numerous attractive and reflective displays which are having a positive impact on pupils' spiritual development. Overall the school is providing well for pupils' spiritual, moral,

social and cultural development. In response, children of varying ages are becoming more aware of the values held by the school and their responsibilities as individuals.

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

Collective worship makes a good impact on the school community. This is for several reasons: the whole school meets together each day and places importance on the occasion, pupils attend church at key festival times and RE lessons often provide opportunities for personal reflection. Pupils are very positive about their experiences of worship. This is because the school plans for a wide range of themes and different staff and visitors are part of the programme. Themes clearly promote pupils' personal development as well as affirming the school's Christian character. The local vicar leads worship regularly but also contributes to RE lessons, which often link to worship themes. On the inspection day pupils listened attentively as they watched a DVD presentation telling the story of the anointing of Jesus. Pupils sang with much enthusiasm and showed respect as they prayed and reflected. Collective worship is providing a meaningful opportunity for both staff and pupils to develop a spiritual dimension to their lives. Some pupils are able to make the link between worship and everyday life, for example, '*prayer helps if we have problems.*' Although there is no formal mechanism in place for evaluating collective worship it is clear that pupils appreciate the experiences offered to them. They particularly enjoy hearing about what different classes are doing through the Friday celebration assembly. Pupils are developing in their understanding of the Anglican tradition through school worship and also the good links with the Church. There are some very attractive and thoughtful displays in the hall which all enhance the worship environment such as the prayer board, the small altar with open Bible, candles and praying hands, posters with such Biblical texts as Jesus said "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" and "I asked Jesus how much do you love me?"

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

Religious Education is satisfactory overall but the arrangements recently put in place are helping to further improve the subject. The specialist RE teacher is making an impact through providing high quality lessons and a stimulating learning environment. In one class pupils were asked "Why is Easter an important time for Christians?" Through the effective use of Godly Play, pupils were able to recall the key events of Holy Week and understand the deeper meaning of some of the Easter symbols. This visual approach to learning not only aids speaking and listening skills but also supports written work. In another class pupils were enjoying a quiz on the computer about the temptations of Jesus. This, followed by a short assessment activity helped to check out their knowledge and understanding. A time of reflection concluded the lesson when pupils thought about their own lives. This approach very much supports their spiritual and moral development. Pupils have a more secure knowledge of Christianity than they do of other religions but overall they are making satisfactory progress. Standards are at least satisfactory. Although RE is taught as a discrete subject, it is helpfully supporting other curriculum areas. For example, the whole school involvement in creating the Banner for display in the Cathedral is promoting every effective cross curricular work. The RE Co-ordinator has reviewed resources and successfully collates documentation. There is liaison with the specialist RE teacher but currently no allocated time is set aside for these teachers to meet formally. In the context of developing RE further, a more permanent and long-term arrangement needs to be put in place.

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

Although the last few years have seen major changes in leadership and management with all the associated challenges, the effectiveness is now good. This is because the current acting headteacher, well supported by foundation governors, has a very clear vision for how to drive the school forward. Developing the various aspects of being a church school are at the heart of his personal vision for improving the school. Much has been achieved in a short space of time and already some impact is evident around the school. Staff and governors have revisited the vision for the school, firmly proclaiming its Christian character. There are good links with the local church who are keen to further enhance the partnership so that all are involved in evaluating the school's progress. The Advent and Lent clubs, the ongoing

opportunities for worship and prayer, the prominent Christian displays, the appointment of the specialist RE teacher, all indicate the strong commitment of leadership and management. There are good links with the diocese and cathedral and also with other schools. Foundation governors recognise what they need to do next, not least to more formally monitor and evaluate RE and collective worship. This will ensure that these key areas of school life are given the highest priority.

SIAS report March 2008 Leigh C of E V A Primary, Plants Hill Crescent, Coventry CV4 9RQ