

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Leigh St. Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Leigh Street,  
Leigh,  
Lancashire  
WN7 4TP

**Diocese: Manchester**

Local authority: Wigan

Date of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> January 2007

Date of last inspection: June/July 2002

School's unique reference number: 106479

Headteacher: Mrs P Jolley

Inspector's name and number: Graham H Nuttall 456

#### School Context

St. Peter's CE Junior School admits approximately 60 pupils at the beginning of each academic year with most children transferring from the nearby parish Infant school. Children live principally on an estate of predominantly rented homes and the vast majority of pupils are of white British heritage. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is very high and when compared with national norms an extremely high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or statements of educational need. Leigh Central Ward is identified as an area of high economic and social deprivation with levels of unemployment and social migration well above average. Consequently a considerable number of pupils join or leave the school during the course of each academic year.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Peter's as a Church of England school are good

St. Peter's CE Junior School is a good Church School with strengths in all areas. Great care is taken by staff to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural values and parents and pupils are generally proud of their school. Governors and staff are keen to work as a team and are constantly developing systems that will help raise the levels of self-esteem and achievement of children. Leadership is firmly based on Christian values.

#### Established strengths

- The well planned and delivered acts of worship and religious education lessons occupying a place of central importance in the life of the school.
- The hard work of the Headteacher, foundation governors and staff in facing the challenging issues within the school and their commitment to school improvement.
- Warm relations and pupils' good behaviour are highly evident and firmly based on Christian principles.

#### Focus for development

- Strengthen links with St. Peter's Infant School in order to develop continuity and progression within Religious Education.
- Evaluate and adopt the recently proposed Diocesan scheme of work for RE in accordance with school requirements and needs.

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

Pupils at St. Peter's experience high quality care in a welcoming and supportive atmosphere. Classrooms are very bright stimulating places where Christian symbolism is overtly displayed alongside work based on RE. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities to the maximum extent possible and the level of support they receive in classrooms is very good. The ethos of the school is distinctly Christian and this is evident in the way everyone is treated. Rules are applied consistently by staff and pupils understand and accept the clear parameters set for them. As a result there is a calm working atmosphere.

The School Council have their say in “their” school and they are proud of the achievements they have made. They are keen to point towards their initiatives in the recently created Nature Garden, Tyre Park and brightly decorated and exciting new Library area. The school regularly contributes to charity events and the School Council shows initiative in how funds should be raised and distributed. Pupils’ confidence and self-esteem benefit from opportunities such as the “buddy system” or “guardian angel network”. Displays of work include important Christian messages with pupils thoughtfully writing their own prayers, thinking of those less fortunate than themselves and becoming friends of Jesus. A major link with the church is through Fr. Stephen, who not only leads a weekly act of collective worship and regular school Eucharist services, but also prepares pupils for confirmation. As such, pupils ask good questions of him about aspects of Anglican traditions and improve their understanding of the Christian faith.

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

The Headteacher, Incumbent and foundation governors talk with tremendous enthusiasm and sincerity about the importance of Christian worship in the life of the school. Assemblies are conducted in a way that creates in children an excitement in worship and have a distinct Christian focus. For example, during the inspection the importance of trust was admirably demonstrated through party type games. Fr. Stephen’s weekly visits to conduct worship are eagerly awaited by the children, “he makes the learning about Christianity fun”. Pupils talk about how they enjoy and benefit from being involved and taking part and particularly so when parents are invited to share worship when this is held within church at major festivals such as Christmas Eve or Easter. Well planned thematic worship links with the Christian year but allows for flexibility and spontaneity. Reflection and class prayers effectively support collective worship and further impact well on pupils’ attitudes and spiritual growth. Achievements are celebrated within school assemblies and positive role models from all adults ensure a high standard of discipline and behaviour from pupils. The school has evolved a good and very effective strategy for the evaluation of school worship and this includes a significant input from pupils which is highly commended.

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

Good use is made of the Diocesan syllabus and there are good links between RE and PSHE. Pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity but less so of other world faiths although effective visits have been made to a Jewish synagogue and local mosque. The Headteacher, who acts as subject co-ordinator, leads the subject well and an evaluative report on RE is presented to governors upon two occasions each year. Teachers demand independent thinking through effective questioning and well-planned lessons encouraging good spiritual and cultural development of children. They are keen to offer their opinions yet also listen to others and as a result pupils work both co-operatively and collaboratively together. Most pupils transfer to the school at the beginning of KS2 having previously attended the nearby CE Infants school. Whilst there are some established links between the two parish schools nevertheless these should be strengthened in order to develop continuity and progression within the subject. The Manchester Diocese is in the process of publishing a revised Scheme of work for RE and the co-ordinator has indicated that she is keen to evaluate and adopt this scheme in accordance with school requirements.

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

Through good leadership and management the school provides pupils with opportunities to grow and develop within a very effective, caring and Christian ethos. The Headteacher, Senior Management Team and governors contribute significantly to the success of the school as a church school and their work is enhanced by the input of the parish priest. They have developed a shared vision over several years through good consultations and successful co-operation. The Headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the many challenging issues facing the school and they work extremely hard to sustain school improvement, support pupils and families and to raise levels of self-esteem amongst children. The school provides very effective pastoral support that is sensitive to children’s needs and pupils recognise that they are well cared for. The Governors have made good use of the National Society’s self-audit materials to ensure that the school continues to be distinctly

Christian. St. Peter's is well resourced and offers a stimulating environment within which to work and play. Parents recognise that the school has a distinctive Christian quality and they are happy to support this ethos because of the positive effect it has on their children's personal development and sense of identity.

SIAS Report January 2007. St. Peter's C E (VA) Junior School, Leigh, Lancs. WN7 4TP