

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Newton Bluecoat Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

School Lane,
Newton with Scales,
Preston,
Lancashire,
PR4 3RT

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 13/10/06

Date of last inspection: 23/7/02

School's unique reference number: 119805

Headteacher: Mr J Bird

Inspector's name and number: Mr G Yates 430

School context

The school is an average size Church of England primary school. It is situated in the rural village of Newton with Scales. A very low proportion of children are eligible for free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There are no children at an early stage of learning to speak English. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are relatively new to the school. The school was first established in 1707 and as such has a long tradition of providing children with an education firmly rooted in Christian values.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Newton Bluecoat as a Church of England school are good

Newton Bluecoat Church of England Primary School is a good church school with some areas of outstanding provision. Since the previous inspection the leadership of the school has worked hard in ensuring that all members of staff feel valued and get on well with each other. As a result the school is a happy school which meets pupils' personal, social, emotional and spiritual needs outstandingly well. Christian values are at the core of all aspects of school life.

Established strengths

- The acts of worship promote the Christian message outstandingly well.
- The warm relationships within the school that are firmly based on Christian principles.
- The staff know their children well and links with parents are good.
- The headteacher and Foundation governors provide good leadership and do so through Christian example.
- Children behave very well and appreciate everything the school does for them.

Focus for development

- The school should complete the portfolio of children's religious education work and ensure that it is matched accurately to the expectations of the Diocesan syllabus.
- The school should ensure that sufficient opportunities are provided for more able pupils to use their good writing skills in religious education.

Newton Bluecoat C of E Primary School is outstanding in meeting the needs of all learners through its distinctive Christian character.

The school is very caring and provides exceptionally well for all its pupils. Provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and spiritual development is outstanding. Children are very polite and behave very well. It is a pleasure for visitors to talk to them. All pupils are made to feel special by the staff. As a result, they respond well to everything the school has to offer. For example, they look forward to seeing who is about to receive the week's special awards

at the end of one of the school's assemblies. Children break into spontaneous applause when their classmates' names are announced, despite perhaps their own disappointment at not being chosen. Spiritual development is fostered very well through acts of worship. The school's multi cultural week allows pupils to find out more about the fact that in God's world children come from different ethnic backgrounds and have different faiths. As a result children's cultural awareness has been raised but more still needs to be done with regards to this aspect. Children go out of school on many visits including residential visits. They say these visits 'are exciting'. The School Council ensures that children have a say in 'their' school. They are proud of the fact that the playground is now a better place. Children have their own notice board where accounts of recent sporting success can be displayed along with other news. There is a distinct Christian ethos that is evident in the way everyone is treated. Rules are understood by all and are consistently but fairly applied by the staff. The school regularly takes part in charity fund raising and has recently raised money for Vincent House and other charities. Displays of work include important Christian messages such as prayers thanking God for the harvest. The links with the local church include regular use made of the building by Church organisations. A major link is Father Giles who celebrates the Eucharist in school every week. Parents and the church community value the school highly. Throughout the school are many very good examples demonstrating that 'Every Child Matters' is high on the school agenda.

Collective worship has an outstanding effect on the school community.

The head teacher, 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 Old Testament story of Joseph was acted out by pupils and the key messages behind the story brought out very well by the headteacher. Excellent use was made of appropriate music. Children talk about how they enjoy and benefit from being involved in taking part in worship and look forward to it. They respect the differences between faiths and know the importance of thinking of others less fortunate than themselves in their prayers. Worship is planned well with themes that link to the Christian year. There is a varied pattern in the leading of school worship with the deputy headteacher, local vicar and outside speakers involved fully. The weekly Eucharist celebration held in school allows pupils to experience at first hand Anglican faith and practice. As a result children of all ages develop a very good awareness of this highly important aspect of the Anglican tradition. Children read the lessons and parents are invited to attend. Major Christian festivals are celebrated by the school. Children take part in prayers in class and do so reverently.

The effectiveness of the Religious education is satisfactory.

Good use is made of the Diocesan syllabus and of the links between religious education and PSHE. Pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity but less so of other world faiths. They are keen to offer their opinions and other pupils are keen to listen. Whilst the subject is taught in all classes its position on the timetable, very often last thing in the afternoon needs to be reviewed. The subject coordinator is developing her role and is very aware that the portfolio of work, whilst underway, needs to be completed. The quality of written work that pupils produce does not reflect the good quality of writing seen in other subjects, especially that of the more able pupils. The school has concentrated on ensuring that standards in the core subjects needed to improve and has done so successfully. It is now well placed to address the issues mentioned above.

Leadership and management of the school as a church school are good.

Christian leadership by the headteacher and foundation governors is good. The happy working atmosphere reflects the head teacher's energetic and 'people friendly' approach. The school prospectus clearly points out that the school seeks to provide the best possible Christian based education and this it succeeds in doing. The headteacher receives very good

support from the deputy headteacher. Both are very aware of the importance of Christian education. There is a real sense of togetherness in the school. The school provides effective pastoral support that is sensitive to children's needs. Father Giles [the vicar] is very supportive of the school and leads school worship weekly. He and the other foundation governors carry out their duties well with regard to the school's Christian foundation. The school's newspaper, 'The Bluecoat Bugle' is a very good recent innovation and ensures that parents and the local community are kept informed as to what the school is doing. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised in the previous inspection report.

SIAS report October 2006 Newton Bluecoat Church of England primary school School Lane, Newton with Scales, Preston, Lancashire, PR4 3RT