

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **Scotforth St Paul's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Scotforth Road  
Lancaster  
LA11 4SE

#### **Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2007

Date of last inspection: 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> March 2003

School's unique reference number: 119533

Headteacher: Alison Aylott

Inspector's name and number: Ruth Wall 548

#### **School context**

St Paul's is a Voluntary Aided Primary school. There are 239 pupils on roll. Almost all children come from the Scotforth or Greaves/Hala area or immediate rural village communities. The intake is mainly white British, with twelve children from non white British backgrounds.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Paul's as a Church of England school are outstanding**

St Paul's is an outstanding Church of England school. The caring and inspiring Christian ethos is reflected in all aspects of school life. There is excellent leadership and management which serve to promote strong Christian attitudes and spiritual awareness.

#### **Established strengths**

- The clear vision and strong commitment of the Head teacher, governors and staff to the continued development of the Christian ethos of the school
- The caring relationships within school and the support which all members of the school community provide for each other, reflecting the Christian values which permeate all of school life
- The commitment of the Head teacher, coordinators and governors which has resulted in standards being raised in Religious Education

#### **Focus for development**

- Develop ways in which information technology can be employed to support the work in religious education

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

The school makes excellent provision to meet the needs of all its learners. The way in which members of the school community have cared for each other during recent difficult times is inspiring. There is a whole school commitment to drive the 'Olivia Fund' to enrich the lives of children in their partner school, Byewale, in Uganda. Several staff have supported this by using their holiday time to visit and teach in the school there. Christian values are evident in every part of the school and are related to children's experiences. Two children decided that they would forgive each other like God forgives them. Staff provide very good role models and are friendly and approachable for both children and adults. Children are polite, friendly and very well behaved. They feel safe and secure. Children are actively involved in their learning and demonstrate their ability to ask and answer profound questions. There are opportunities for formal prayers each day but children have learnt the value of personal prayer and are happy writing and sharing their own prayers. They are self confident because they benefit from the many opportunities provided for them to take responsibility, such as: Monitors, House Captains, the 'Buddy' system, School Council and the Worship committee.

Parents are appreciative of the Christian nature of the school. One parent said that her child always tells her what she has been learning about in assemblies. Support for the school is given by parents and staff who meet regularly for prayer meetings.

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

Worship is central to the life of the school. Themes are well planned and relevant, using a range of very good quality resources. The worship observed provided excellent opportunities for spiritual reflection and for celebrating children's achievements. Children have responded to opportunities to play an active part in the worship by preparing the hall for worship, enthusiastic singing, contributing their own prayers and in clearly articulating their answers to reflective questions. Of particular note is the children's worship committee, which was formed as a result of their response to evaluations of worship. Representatives from each year group meet regularly to make decisions about the content of worship and they are responding well to the challenge of planning and presenting their own acts of worship. This has had a significant impact on their spiritual development. The vicar's weekly contributions are very much appreciated by staff and children who say they are 'fun'. Other Christian groups take an active role in this worshipping community and their contributions are valued by all. Worship is open to parents and friends on a regular basis and there is a good response to this welcome.

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

The subject has a high profile in the school development plan and the coordinators and foundation governors have worked together to successfully address issues from the last inspection. Schemes of work are of high quality and fully comply with the Diocesan syllabus, reflecting the school's Christian foundation at the same time as giving due weight to other faiths. Staff have benefited from training and support provided by a Diocesan advisor. Planning, monitoring and assessment of the subject are rigorous. Portfolios of children's work have been compiled and clearly show evidence of above average attainment across the age range. Tasks in RE are carefully matched to children's abilities so that each child is motivated and challenged by the work they are given. Children talk with interest about their learning and personal beliefs using religious vocabulary with confidence. The display work of David and Goliath is evidence of children learning spiritual lessons from the Bible story. Year 5/6 children were able to compare Matthew and Luke's accounts of Christmas with confidence. Children enjoy RE. One child said that even though she wasn't good at writing she could draw and do acting to help her understand. RE is seen by all in the school as an important curriculum area, having the status of a core subject.

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

The Headteacher and governors provide outstanding leadership of the school as a Church school. The school community was carefully and sensitively led through difficult times of bereavement. Effective support has been put in place on many levels, including in-service training from the STEPS Bereavement Trust, to equip the staff with counselling skills. The close links with the church, St Paul's, and other groups, including the Connect Club and the Northern Inter-Schools' Christian Union, further enhance the Christian dimension of the school. The head teacher and foundation governors are able to articulate how their school is distinctive as a church school with their values firmly based on the teachings of Christ. Effective systems for monitoring, evaluating and developing religious education and collective worship are in place. Subject coordinators and foundation governors work well together to continue to raise standards in teaching and learning in RE. The school's leadership values the opinions of children and parents, providing opportunities for evaluation in the form of questionnaires, formal and informal meetings. Children and parents speak appreciatively of the school's Christian ethos, the commitment of the staff to all individuals and the quality of education provided.