

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Singleton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church Road  
Singleton  
Poulton-le-Fylde  
Lancashire  
FY6 8LN

**Diocese: Blackburn**

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007

Date of last inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2003

School's unique reference number:

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Foulkes

Inspector's name and number: Mr. M. Graham

#### School context

Singleton Primary is an aided Church of England School situated in the village of Singleton, near the town of Poulton-le-Fylde. The school serves a wide area of mainly private housing. About 33% of the children are from the village, the remainder being admitted from neighbouring communities. Of the 97 children on roll, 13 have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, of whom 4 have Statements of special educational needs.

#### The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Singleton Church of England School are outstanding

Singleton CE Primary is an outstanding Church of England School with a very distinctive Christian ethos. Its effectiveness stems from the headteacher's Christian commitment and inspiring leadership allied to the excellent support from the local clergy, the governing body and all members of staff. The Christian witness of the school and church are vital aspects of the community.

#### Established strengths

- The excellent relationships within the family of the school, which promotes a caring and welcoming ethos
- The excellent worship which makes a very significant contribution to the spiritual development of the children
- The clear Christian vision and strong leadership of the Headteacher, very well supported by staff, clergy, governors and church members

#### Focus for development

- In religious education ensure that the excellent teaching leads to a consistently high standard of completed written work

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

The children are happy, polite and very friendly and know that they are valued and special. There are well established systems for behaviour management in place to help facilitate this and the children themselves recognise their effectiveness – in particular the incentive provided by the Friday afternoon 'Golden Time'. The school's Christian ethos impacts very strongly on the children. The atmosphere around school is calm and secure with many opportunities for individuals and groups of children to take on responsibilities. The older children care for the younger ones both informally and formally. For example, a Y6 boy was very sensitive when addressing a problem between some Foundation Stage children just because, in his words, "I look out for them". Some infant children explained to me at lunch

that they all had older children as 'Reading Buddies'. Every child is enabled to develop through excellent child-centred teaching and the provision of a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The Christian ethos of the school supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all the children very well, regardless of their faith commitment. Openness, honesty and care for one another are outstanding. Relationships between staff and learners, amongst children and between staff clearly demonstrate Christian values. Displays in school are bright and often interactive and there are effective areas of focus for worship in the hall. They include a candle, crosses and carefully chosen pictures that encourage the children's spiritual development. The montage of hands representing the whole school family is a striking and powerful image on entry to the hall with the simple inscription, "Everyone matters at Singleton School". The grounds have wonderful areas for reflection, including a woodland walkway, a vegetable/fruit garden and a 'quiet area'. The children speak enthusiastically about the beauty and peace that can be found in these special places and they are having a significant impact.

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

Worship is central to the life of the school. This is demonstrated by vibrant, well-planned worship and times for prayer at lunchtimes and at the end of each day. It is evaluated on a regular basis, both formally in the worship file, and informally with the children. The children enjoy worship and value it highly and everyone takes part with enthusiasm. Comments made included references to laughter, actions, singing, being involved, praying and the leadership of worship always being interesting. It was notable also that Y5 and Y6 children lead worship on a voluntary basis regularly, and that twice every week the worship takes place in church. In the worship on inspection day all the children were fully involved in uninhibited singing, praying and eager responses to the theme of achievement and gratitude to God. Even the Y6 monitors, whose role was to operate the projector and CD player, took part fully. The interaction between the children and the teacher was impressive; relaxed and yet reverent. The singing of the School Prayer was moving and powerful. There is a clear impact on the children's spiritual development. They are eloquent and positive when talking about their beliefs. Children and staff of all faiths gain inspiration, spiritual growth and affirmation from worship because of the sincerity, vitality and variety involved. The vicar and the headteacher work very closely together and links with the church in worship are very strong. The major Festivals and Mothering Sunday are celebrated in church and parents and governors are very supportive. Understanding of Anglican faith and practice is developed effectively. Good examples of this are the recent Y5/Y6 RE lesson led by the vicar on the Eucharist and the clergy-led worship in church every Thursday.

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

Standards in RE are good. There is a welcome emphasis on 'Attainment Target 2', the impact of faith on the believer, as well as good teaching of Attainment Target 1, the facts about religions. The children are encouraged and challenged to think, discuss and interact so that they reach a better understanding. A Y5 boy commented, "There are very few lessons when we don't have to think". The children are very positive about RE, speaking about the subject with enthusiasm. The children have an understanding of the importance of studying faiths other than Christianity. In a Y3/Y4 lesson, a Muslim boy revelled in his role as 'assistant teacher' as he shared from personal experience the similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity. The class were clearly fascinated, and their written work demonstrated a good understanding of the issues discussed. The RE in this school supports the children's spiritual and moral development very well. This is largely because of the excellent work in helping the children in their understanding of the effects of a living faith on a believer. The excellent teaching of the subject throughout the school by the headteacher is a strength but because of her many commitments some of the children's work is unfinished and the effectiveness of the teaching is reduced.

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

The headteacher and governors promote a distinctive Christian vision for the school with enthusiasm and vigour. The vicar is fully involved and the governors and church council give strong support. This has led to excellent progress in recent years. The Headteacher and governors are very active in encouraging, monitoring and challenging the school community to realise this vision. Self-evaluation using the Diocesan booklet 'What makes your Church School Distinctive?' has been completed thoroughly, with all members of staff and governors involved. The RE co-ordinator plans and evaluates very well and makes good use of Diocesan advisers and in-service training. Staff feel valued and involved in putting the vision into practice, and a recent curriculum meeting on the impact of worship is a good example of this. All the team helped to complete the school's Self Evaluation Form. The School Council is excellent and is clearly functioning very well. The children know that their contributions are taken seriously and that their suggestions become part of school policy when appropriate. Examples given by them included the improvement scheme for lunchtime playground activities/equipment and the vegetable garden. One Council member commented that, "All the children get a say". The parents are delighted with the school, often giving practical help; the wooden steps and bridge in the Woodland being an example of this. All parents are given regular and varied opportunities for feedback, a recent innovation being the Friends of Singleton School web 'blog'. This support combined with the excellent leadership of the Headteacher has led to a transformation of the school building and play areas over the last five years.

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