

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Standish Lower Ground St Anne's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Wigan Lower Road,

Wigan

WN6 8JP

Diocese: Blackburn

Local authority: Wigan

Dates of inspection: 26th September 2007

Date of last inspection: March 2003

School's unique reference number: 106468

Headteacher: Mrs L Parkinson

Inspector's name and number: Mr G Yates 430

School context

The school is situated in the outskirts of Wigan in a modern building that is used on a Sunday for Anglican worship. The number of pupils on role is less than that found in most schools.

The school serves a mixed area that includes both private and rented property. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Since the previous inspection there has been a change of headship and of the incumbent.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Anne's Church School as a church school are satisfactory

Pupils are happy and caring of each other. There are clear signs that both the school and the foundation governors are working closely together to improve further the effectiveness of the school as Church school.

Established strengths

- The extent to which each individual pupil feels valued and supported
- The willingness of both the church and school to work together to improve the distinctiveness of the school as a church school
- The good environment for learning both inside school and in the school's outside play areas

Focus for development

- Evaluate all aspects of the school as a Church school, involving staff, parents, pupils and foundation governors and use the findings to improve the school's effectiveness as a church school.
- Ensure sufficient time is provided for religious education to be taught
- Ensure the school's aims reflect the importance of its Christian Foundation

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

This is a happy school where there is a strong sense of family which is a key factor in the good relationships found. Parents think highly of the way in which the school cares for their children. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about their school and this gives a clear indication of the way in which they feel valued and special. One child commented, 'Everyone gets a chance to do well here.' Behaviour is good and pupils understand their responsibilities. Older pupils are proud to act as play leaders, playground friends or buddies. Pupils are aware of environmental concerns and fund-raise for charities each year. They are given the chance to express their views effectively through the School's Council and feel that their opinions are valued. One school council member rightly commented, 'Through our efforts we have a fantastic school garden where we can grow our own vegetables.' Pupils have a good awareness of cultural diversity. A curriculum week that focused on multicultural education provided all pupils with valuable opportunities to extend their understanding of life outside their immediate environment. Throughout the school there are many very good examples

demonstrating that 'Every Child Matters' is high on the school agenda. For example, the school has achieved awards for sporting activities and is working towards Healthy Schools Status.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

Collective worship has a Christian focus. The worship which was led by the headteacher on the day of the inspection had a distinct Christian message and allowed pupils to take part effectively. Children sang with tremendous enthusiasm and behaved well. However, there is little to suggest that throughout the year worship is planned in any meaningful way so that teachers know what the themes might be. There is no evidence of evaluation taking place. Children are aware of the importance of worship and say they enjoy singing the hymns and listening to the stories "with a message." The school hall, with its Christian symbols, including a prayer table, engraved window and Church banner provides a good environment for worship to take place. The improving links with the church ensures pupils are beginning to experience different forms of worship that provide them with an insight into Anglican traditions. The vicar's recent innovation of a half termly service of collective worship to which both parents and members of the parish are invited is a clear indication of decisive action to improve the Christian ethos of the school. School worship sometimes takes place in Church and classes also visit the church but the distance between buildings is a major barrier to more regular links. Christian worship takes place in the school on a Sunday in recognition of the fact that the parish is spread over a wide area.

The effectiveness of the religious education is satisfactory

Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and of other world faiths. Older pupils can explain what is meant by a miracle and how Jesus used parables to convey meanings. In a good lesson seen during the inspection pupils were enthralled by the illuminated writing found in some older versions of the Bible and by how the dead sea scrolls were discovered. In some classes insufficient time is devoted to the teaching of religious education. As a result teachers are restricted with regards to what teaching methods can be employed. The time restrictions impact adversely on the quality of pupils' writing with some tasks consisting of pupils not being challenged to use their writing skills in any meaningful way. No formal assessment arrangements are in place. There are the beginnings of a school portfolio of work but the work has not been assessed to see if it matches the expectations of the agreed syllabus.

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

The headteacher, vicar and foundation governors have the determination and drive to improve the effectiveness of the school as a church school. The headteacher is relatively new in post and has had to deal with pressing issues surrounding the budget and other matters. As such she recognizes that much still needs to be done to improve the distinctiveness of the school as a church school. She is successful in ensuring that pupils' achievements are satisfactory and that children receive a high level of support. As a result, pupils' personal development is of a good quality. There is a real sense of togetherness in the school and members of staff support the headteacher well. The governors are highly supportive of the school and steps are being taken to improve the school as a Christian school. For example, prayers have been introduced back into class, a prayer corner has been established in the hall and the vicar leads a weekly after school club. The happy working atmosphere reflects Christian values. One parent commented on how well the school had "brought on her child." The school has addressed most of the issues raised in the previous inspection report but assessment procedures are not yet in place. The school prospectus contains all the required information but the school's aims as stated in the prospectus are not implicit or explicit enough with regards to the impact of the school's Christian status.