

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

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

Ashworth Road

Edgeside

Rossendale

BB4 9JE

#### **Diocese of Manchester**

Local authority: Lancashire

Dates of inspection: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Date of last inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2004

School's unique reference number: 119454

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Crook

Inspector's name and number: Mrs Patricia Atherton, Registration number: 540

#### **School context**

St Anne's C E is a small primary school, situated in an area of mainly council housing and taking children from an area of social and economic deprivation. The school has a higher than average number of children in receipt of free school meals and on the special educational needs register. The vast majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. Recently the school and Church working together have had such an impact on the local area that the school is now over subscribed.

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

St Anne's has a very distinct and well-embedded Christian and inclusive ethos which enriches all aspects of school life. Relationships within the school and the wider community are excellent. The impact of the Christian character of the school is so strong that it forms a bedrock for the children's learning. The whole St Anne's community is influenced by the Christian ethos and by its links with the Church and wider community.

#### **Established strengths**

- The school has a very strong Christian ethos, which underpins all aspects of school life, resulting in the ability to get things done and to have a very positive influence on the surrounding community.
- Learners and parents clearly articulate the importance of worship and the key Christian values that the school promotes throughout its work in the community.
- The strong leadership and shared vision have brought about significant improvements in many areas of school and community life.

#### **Focus for development**

- To integrate religious education alongside other areas of learning as part of the thematic approach, when the curriculum plans are reviewed.
- Develop assessment for learning in RE, using a variety of techniques for recording evidence.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the school's Christian character through use of the self-evaluation toolkit.

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

Pupils thrive in this small 'family' school because the adults are aware of the unique needs and gifts of each child and through their Christian caring and their skilful handling of children they have succeeded in creating an environment. Children are therefore keen to learn and they enjoy their lessons, they feel valued and special. Parents comment that they know the school will accept their children as they are, and will encourage them to develop into unique

individuals. Learners make excellent progress in spiritual understanding and by Year 6 many children are able to ask quite deep questions. Children feel safe at St Anne's and are helped in their transition to high school through links, which the schools are developing. Children make outstanding spiritual development because of the way the spiritual element permeates the curriculum and is reinforced in the displays and Christian teachings around school. The school has a very positive influence on the surrounding community because church and school work together very closely and consequently get things done.

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

Children say that collective worship has a very positive impact, as they are able to make clear links between the teaching and its relevance to their lives. Children's spiritual development is very good and is greatly enhanced by prayer and its importance in school. This is evidenced, not only in assemblies but also in school council meetings when children are happy to pray out loud. A weekly prayer time is also held for staff on Monday mornings – to 'get the week off to a good start'. This has the effect of building trust and strengthening the 'team'. As a result of the strong influence of collective worship and the Christian character of the school, children are able to reflect and think deeply, they can express their concerns, fears and hopes and they show appreciation of the achievements, joys and difficulties of others. Children have a good knowledge and understanding of Christian faith and practice because the key festivals of the Christian Year are celebrated, sometimes during the monthly visits of the whole school to the Church located just across the road. This knowledge is further improved by the children learning the important and famous prayers of Christianity and singing Christian hymns and songs.

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

Most children enjoy their RE lessons because teaching is good and in some cases outstanding. A two yearly cycle works well in the mixed age classes and learning is enhanced through good use of ICT. In Key Stage One good use is made of artefacts and multi sensory learning. The older children display a good balance in their knowledge about religion and their learning from religion. Pupils are able to reflect well on religious and spiritual issues. Children's achievements in religious education are similar to their work in other lessons. Pupils' levels of academic achievement are restricted by their modest attainment in literacy, and ways of assessing RE, which are not totally reliant on literacy skills, are being explored. Although schemes of work include the study of Judaism and Islam the children show only limited knowledge in these areas. The high quality of RE displays and the fact that RE is led by the Headteacher shows the importance of RE in the school. RE makes a very good contribution to the spiritual and moral development of all learners, and to the effectiveness of the school's Christian ethos.

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

St Anne's School has a clear, shared Christian vision. This is evident in all documentation and the implementation of policies. The Headteacher, the incumbent, governors and staff work together very well as a harmonious and caring team, whilst constantly looking to evaluate and improve. The partnership between school, church and local community, including parents and carers, is strong and forms a solid foundation on which to make further improvements. The leaders' vision has been successfully passed on to parents who feel confident about the future and their part in it. They described the school as 'faith in action' There are high levels of meaningful involvement in the school by local groups and the school is now part of the local Community Partnership, forming a satellite children's centre. Staff feel valued by the Headteacher, who is committed to continuing professional development for all, supported by the link foundation Governor's enthusiasm for training for governors. The Headteacher and governors have led many improvements to the school building and have ambitious plans for the future. The consultation and evaluation strategies are very effective in involving children, parents and governors in the decision making process. The school has the capacity to develop further and, in particular, to raise standards of achievement.

