

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St Clements Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Butlin Street
Nechells
Birmingham
B7 5NS

Diocese: Birmingham

Local authority: Birmingham
Date of inspection: July 17th 2009
Date of last inspection: Not available
School's unique reference number: 103400
Headteacher: Mrs Joy Howell
Inspector's name and number: Mrs Julie Moore 579

School context

St Clements Church of England Primary School has 205 pupils. Most pupils live close to the school which is situated in an industrial area alongside low rise housing. Pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and there are a small percentage of pupils who are White British. Many pupils are from Christian families. The headteacher has been in post for a few months and there have been a significant number of staffing changes during recent times. St Clements does not have its own church.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Clements Primary as a Church of England school are good

Without doubt this school has a strong and clearly identified Christian ethos which securely underpins every aspect of its day-to-day life. Every member of the school family is included in this vision, and although many pupils at St Clements have a faith other than Christianity they are all fully embraced within its Christian context. The main strength of this school is the way that members of the school family, the church family and the wider community work, live and play together harmoniously within a caring, Christian environment.

Established strengths

- The headteacher, senior managers, governors and clergy work together effectively in their determination to improve the quality of pupils' education within a truly Christian environment.
- Collective worship and prayer have a high profile and together they strengthen the message in the school's Vision Statement very successfully.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through the wider curriculum resulting in pupils who behave well, support each other and understand right from wrong.

Focus for development

- Involve the school's foundation governors and local clergy in planning, monitoring and evaluating the worship experiences.
- Expand the school's links with other schools and churches so that opportunities for shared worship and activities are enhanced.

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

Pupils are at the heart of this school's work and, without exception they and their families are valued, cared for and respected by everyone in the school and church families. That said, the strong Christian ethos of the school shines through all its day-to-day activities. It is the strength and the commitment of senior managers, staff and clergy that drives the school

forward successfully. Christian values are very strong and they underpin everything that happens in school. Pupils of all faiths, or those with no faith, feel safe and happy, secure in the knowledge that their beliefs, cultures and traditions are respected and valued. Parents are well pleased about this which is why many of them chose St Clements as the best school for their children. One Dad, who is a Muslim said *'This school is just right for my kids because it is so caring and supports us really well'*. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is carefully and successfully planned and delivered through the wider curriculum but especially through collective worship, personal, social and health education and citizenship. For example, the spiritual elements that are evident in Indian dance were identified, discussed and evaluated successfully by older pupils. By working in this way senior managers ensure that there are no gaps in this important aspect of its work. Once inside the school no-one is in any doubt of the school's Christian focus. Prayer areas in every room, alongside displays representing many cultures and beliefs, ensure that pupils' spiritual growth is well catered for. Relationships are very good and everyone is truly committed to the Christian values that are so important to pupils, families, staff and clergy in this urban, inner city school.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Worship has an important role in school life. It is well planned and delivered in a lively and interesting way making sure that pupils' attention is fully concentrated on the total worship experience. The quiet and reverent atmosphere, created by the music, candles, cross and the pupils themselves, has a strong and immediate impact making all pupils well aware that this a special time for everyone in the school family. They respond well, enjoying the chosen songs, hymns and prayers and listening attentively to Bible readings and stories. Pupils' own prayers are very carefully thought out, spiritual, and spoken with feeling, inspiring everyone to listen carefully and reflect on the messages that are incorporated in the prayers. Pupils are positive about the worship in their school, as one said *'We learn something new about God all the time'*. Effective planning and clear delivery, alongside sound systems for monitoring and evaluation, enable senior managers and clergy to have detailed information which guides them effectively as they plan the next stages in worship for the whole school. Foundation governors are keen to be involved in all aspects of the worship experience and this will expand the team of worship leaders successfully, as well as promoting the school's Christian vision.

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

The new headteacher has had a positive impact on the life and work of the school and her strong Christian vision actively supports her constant drive for improvement. For example, work is in hand to tackle the issues linked to the lack of a local church, as well as limited links with other schools. Teamwork is assured as foundation governors, senior staff and clergy capably support the headteacher. All of them share the same vision that is so clearly identified in the school's vision statement, which is that *'St Clements school provides a caring and Christian environment where valued and respected individuals are enabled to fulfil their potential and working and learning is fun.'* Governors are now aware of the need to question decisions and to monitor what is happening on a regular basis and they all agree that they need to be involved in planning and evaluating the school's worship experiences. New systems have been recently introduced so that gaps are being tackled speedily and effectively. For example, decisions are now taken by sub-committees, each of which has its own terms of reference in place, a chairman and a full complement of governors. Good links with schools in other parts of the world mean that pupils are expanding their knowledge of other cultures than their own and their link with Zambia is a good example. The strong partnership with the diocese, as well as the local clergy, enables the school to make the best use of the available support as it plans the next stages in its development.