

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

**St John's Ladywood Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,**  
St Vincent Street West,  
Ladywood,  
Birmingham  
B16 8RN

**Diocese: Birmingham**

LA: Birmingham

Date of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> May 2008

Date of last inspection: October 2003

School's Unique reference number: 103402

Name of Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Lea

Inspector's name & National Society Number: Mr A S Brown No.256

### School context

St John's School is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England school with 169 pupils on roll. St John's and St Peter's Church is situated nearby and enjoys an excellent relationship with the school. St John's has a higher than average number of pupils qualifying for free school meals. A higher than average number of pupils leave or join the school during the school year.

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

St John's Primary School is an outstanding Church of England school. There is an educational vision that recognises the important place of Christian education in a church school which serves a socially, culturally and religiously diverse community. The school has a very strong commitment to the value of collective worship, which is outstanding, as is the Christian character and the leadership and management. There are excellent links with the local church.

### Established strengths

- The commitment of the staff to the spiritual and personal development of the pupils:
- The school's commitment to the importance and value of Collective Worship:
- The Christian vision and values for the school which allows it to find a safe and secure place within the religious and cultural communities it serves.

### Focus for development

- To ensure that a statement, already in preparation, regarding the Christian educational vision for the school in a diverse religious, cultural and social context is incorporated into the school's Mission Statement;
- To explore the use of Anglican responses in worship.

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

The character of St John's is clearly Christian. The Christian character and the values for which it stands are identified in every aspect of school life. It is a very welcoming school with pupils who feel valued and who are polite, well behaved and able to relate to the needs of others in school and through charitable activities. The

prominent displays on religious topics in classrooms and in many of the common areas are indicators of the opportunities offered to meet the spiritual, personal and emotional needs of all pupils. This continuing provision, with the clear intent to improve further, is one of the features of the school. The concern of the headteacher and all the staff for the general welfare of the pupils finds expression in the day-to-day running of the school, providing a distinctive, practical application of the Christian faith. All the pupils interviewed, and those spoken to informally, felt their views were listened to and they expressed great pride in their school. The ethos of the school, as written in the school brochure, that it 'promotes Christian values of caring, helping and supporting all children' is an accurate description of St John's.

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

Worship in St John's has a place of vital importance. It has: excellent record keeping, including opportunities for pupils to record their own prayers and evaluations; quality of planning; careful evaluation; a variety of opportunities for worship; and thoughtful and sensitive acts of daily collective worship. There is an expectation from the pupils that they will value and enjoy worship. The singing is good and the pupils are attentive and are playing a greater role in contributing to worship. Worship *'makes me feel more thoughtful about the bad people surrounding us and you should pray for them'*. Collective worship is broadly rooted in Christian teaching while recognising that pupils' spiritual and moral development will be enhanced by other appropriate material. It recognises the different backgrounds, experience and ability of the learners. Some thought should be given to how best to use Anglican responses in worship.

The school visits the Church regularly for services reflecting the Christian year and on other occasions as part of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy visiting the church and taking part in services and other activities.

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

The new headteacher and the governing body have a clear vision of what a church school should be in a religiously and culturally diverse community. The leadership is lively, thoughtful and is building upon the strong foundation laid under the previous leadership of what a church school can achieve. There is a clear and strategic view about church school improvement drawn from its excellent self-evaluation document. The senior leadership team work in a close purposeful partnership communicating effectively the vision of the school to the staff and increasingly to parents. They share a clear vision of what it means to be a church school fully committed to the academic education of the pupils and to the belief that the welfare, spiritual and personal development of each pupil is important. It is a church school with effective and productive links with the local church community while being deeply aware of the importance of its place in the local community. St John's is committed to its pupils and the wider communities it serves so effectively and should, as a matter of course, identify its links with the Ladywood Interfaith Education Project in its Mission Statement. St John's makes a significant contribution to social cohesiveness and the vision of a more equable and tolerant society.