

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

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

Fernhead Road,  
Kilburn,  
London,  
W9 3EJ

#### **Diocese of London**

Local authority: City of Westminster  
Date of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007  
Date of last inspection: April 2002  
Type of School: Voluntary Aided Primary  
School's unique reference number: 101134  
Headteacher: Mrs Barbara Dunn  
SIAS Inspector: Gladys Vendy (N.S. 299)

### **Context**

St Luke's is a small one form entry school, situated in North Westminster on the borders with Brent and sharing a site with the church of St. Luke's. The school is in the top 2% nationally of the school deprivation index with high numbers of pupils receiving free school meals and speaking English as an additional language. There is an above average number of statemented and special educational needs pupils. There is a high mobility rate with some children living in temporary housing. Over 90% of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds mainly represented by those of Arabic speaking and Afro Caribbean heritage. Two thirds of the children are from Christian backgrounds, the others being predominantly Moslem. Since the last denominational inspection there have been several changes of leadership which together with high staff turnover has led to instability and falling standards. The current Head Teacher was appointed in 2006.

### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Luke's as a Church of England School are good.**

The school has undergone a period of turbulence from which it is now emerging through the strong leadership of the Head Teacher who has a clear Christian vision. The school has strong links with the team at St Luke's Church from which it receives very good support.

### **Established strengths**

- Involvement with the team at St Luke's Church who work closely with the school supporting the distinctiveness of the school as a church school through their contribution to high impact Christian displays, leading good acts of worship and supporting vulnerable pupils as well as extra curricular activities.
- Strong partnership of the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher which impacts upon the spiritual and moral development of the pupils
- Well used and effective prayer areas in all classrooms

### **Focus for development**

- Establish ways to record non-written and creative work for each child in RE
- Raise the standards in the teaching of RE through a more varied approach
- A rigorous assessment of pupils' RE should be developed to allow accurate comparisons to be made with achievement in core subjects and to support the development of a balance between the two attainment targets

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

The school makes good and constantly improving provision to meet the needs of all its learners based on Christian values. The entrance foyer has been brightened by murals created with the Church team depicting St Luke and a collage of Old and New Testament stories. A mosaic cross made by the Chair of Governors, together with a copy of the Lord's Prayer, are also displayed. Displays about prayer and forgiveness as well as a board illustrating the Every Child Matters agenda are in the school hall. SEN and EAL pupils are given very good support both in the classroom and outside. Gifted and Talented pupils are encouraged to extend their abilities in out of school activities. Behaviour in the school when the current Head Teacher took over was poor and was impeding learning. Hard work has led to a marked improvement and the children encountered were polite and well behaved. Golden rules are displayed in all classrooms and around the school. Behaviour is supported through the weekly achievement assembly and there is a clearly defined set of rewards and sanctions. Parents feel that the school is now a safe and secure place for their children and 'issues are being tackled'. The school prospectus is translated into several languages including Chinese, Russian and Swahili. The school strives to be fully inclusive and a successful breakfast club is run by a long standing member of the support staff. Attendance at extra curricular activities is carefully monitored and pupils not involved are encouraged to take part each term. The diversity of pupils' heritage is celebrated through the curriculum. The School Council is proud of its role and has had an impact on improving school life especially in the playground with new rules, equipment and games. They said that behaviour has improved and pupils now 'play together and are aware of each other's feelings'. It also contributes to the school newsletters. The home school support worker holds regular coffee mornings for parents. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children recognise the need to work together to help others and support charities both at home and overseas.

**The impact of collective worship on the school community is good**

The impact of worship on the school community is good. The worship policy affirms the Christian foundation of the school and clearly sets out the aims of worship. Worship is carefully planned across the year and close links with the church enable hymns and readings to be agreed upon. These themes and a list of church speakers are displayed in the staff room and records of acts of worship are kept. There is a weekly pattern of worship which includes worship in the hall, the classroom and in church. Worship in the classroom is carefully planned, follows the weekly theme and is monitored through the weekly plans. The Church Leaders help to deliver this in two different classrooms each week. This supports the staff and brings a consistency to worship across the school making a very good contribution to spiritual and moral development. In the classroom worship observed children were developing an understanding of 'and lead us not into temptation'. Children were responsive, enjoyed acting a scenario about temptation and all were able to join in with the response 'Shall I? No, don't do it'. The atmosphere was reverent and children understood that the lighting of the candle was time for quiet and reflection. On the other observed occasion worship took place in church and all classes entered quietly to music and burning candles. The children were well behaved, responded enthusiastically and sang tunefully. A simple Advent calendar had been made by those who attend the Wednesday Warriors club. On both occasions references were made to Biblical quotations. A significant number of pupils are withdrawn from worship in church but are led in worship in the school hall by one of the Senior Staff. Parents attend class led assemblies. Each class has its own prayer area with a calendar of people to pray for. An infant child volunteered that 'today is for praying for drivers'. The school also attends church for the main Christian festivals. There are many whole school events where the church and community come together. The seriousness with which worship is regarded is shown through the questionnaire which was sent to parents, children, staff, governors and the church team. Other faith practices and faith festivals are respected.

### **The effectiveness of Religious Education is satisfactory**

After the last denominational inspection Religious Education became a low priority subject and there was a lack of cohesion and monitoring. This situation has been redressed in the last year and the status of Religious Education is being raised. The RE co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that teachers are more secure in their subject knowledge and their expectations of pupils' achievements, using the Solihull scheme of work. St Luke's life is studied as an extra unit in Year 6. There is very good long, medium and short term planning. The quality of learning and teaching observed was always satisfactory and in one case outstanding with the pupils overall showing good prior knowledge. In the Foundation Stage children were learning the story of the Nativity and were able to identify the characters and to understand the difference between modern and traditional Christmas card scenes. They empathised well with the feelings of Mary and Joseph. Children in Key Stage 1 were focussing on The Annunciation and were able to distinguish between the Biblical account and the characters in their school play. In the lower Key Stage Two children were able to sequence the Nativity story successfully. The lesson observed in the older juniors was of a very good pace and made excellent links with writing and art. Pupils worked well together in groups to create a series of 'frozen' pictures from a range of traditional paintings of the Christmas story adding their own spoken captions. Their journalistic writing at the end of the lesson effectively demonstrated their empathy with the situations and characters of the Nativity, including King Herod. Follow up work sometimes takes a practical form and ways to record non written and creative work need to be established. The standard of writing across the school is not high and the work scrutiny sometimes revealed inconsistencies when compared with other subjects as well as a lack of variety in approach. Although there was good evidence of pupils' self evaluation a more rigorous assessment of pupils' Religious Education should be developed to allow accurate comparisons to be made with achievement in core subjects. This would also support the development of a balance between learning about and learning from religion. Books, planning and lessons have been monitored by the RE co-ordinator with constructive written feedback to the teachers and to the Senior Leadership Team. The school is building up a programme of visits and visitors. There are no withdrawals of pupils from worship in school or Religious Education. The approach to the subject, together with very good support from the Diocesan Board, shows that there is very good capacity for improvement in this subject.

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

The Head Teacher, who has completed four terms in this school following a period of instability and lack of direction, is making a marked impact upon the quality of learning and teaching in the school and is improving the behaviour of the pupils. She is giving clear guidance to promoting the Christian ethos of the school and works in close partnership with the Deputy Head Teacher and the Church Team to further the pupils' spiritual and moral development. The Head Teacher has worked hard with staff and governors to promote a revised mission statement and new policies for RE and Worship which amplify this. The mission statement 'learning and growing through the love of Christ' is proclaimed in all key documents as well as signage outside the school. The newly reconstituted and expanded governing body has a close involvement in the life of the school as a church school. A newly appointed governor has taken on the role of monitoring RE. The Chair of Governors, who is a parent, has on occasions led the school in its act of worship. The Governors hold a regular 'surgery' for parents. In spite of the changes of staff which have left the school with a small middle management team, staff morale is good because of the efforts of the Senior Leadership Team. A staff induction booklet has a section on RE. The school is very well supported by the diocese. The key issues from the last denominational inspection have been or are being addressed. With the developing strength of the leadership and management of the school and the positive support of the governors, including the clergy, there is very good capacity for improvement.