

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

St. Luke's Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Plymouth Road North
Southcrest
Redditch
B97 4NU

Diocese: Worcester

Local authority:	Worcestershire
Dates of inspection:	18 th & 19 th September 2007
Date of last inspection:	2001
School's unique reference number:	116844
Headteacher:	Miss. Sue Shaw
Inspector's name and number:	Mrs. Lynne Phoenix NS 291

School context

St. Luke's is a well-established urban school with 137 four to nine year-old pupils, 15% of whom belong to faith traditions other than Christianity. The number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. The school provides a 'nurture group' for younger pupils with difficulties and also a newly opened Sure Start Children's Centre. Pupils are drawn from a wide area, including some areas of considerable disadvantage. The headteacher has been in post for nineteen years.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Luke's Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School as a Church of England school are good.

St. Luke's is an inclusive, caring Church school with some outstanding features. It is a strong nurturing community which values and respects all that pupils and staff have to offer. There is a commitment of the whole school community to create and sustain a safe, family-like learning environment in which the values of the Christian faith underpin the opportunities for each child to achieve in every aspect of their lives.

Established strengths

- The excellent relationships between all school staff who support the headteacher's and foundation governors' vision of the school as a Christian community and provide pupils with positive role models.
- The imaginative use made of the extensive school grounds to provide areas for reflection and spiritual development
- The high standard of pastoral care for all its pupils

Focus for development

- Develop a regular programme of review, planning, delivery and evaluation of collective worship by all stakeholders
- Enhance the contribution made by pupils to whole school collective worship
- Afford greater opportunity for parents to actively support the school as a Christian worshipping community

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

Children and their families are warmly welcomed into this caring school. Children know that the school is very good at providing a safe secure environment where everyone is individually valued, supported, encouraged and challenged and where every success is celebrated. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well demonstrated in a wealth of colourful, thought-provoking displays, including one respectful display containing artefacts

lent by parents from the Muslim and Hindu faith communities. The provision of extra-curricular activities to enrich the children's school life is outstanding. Places for reflection are created both in every classroom and around the school grounds. These are used to very good effect collectively, for example when Year 1 children spent their RE lesson in the school's wooded area appreciating God's world and when Reception children expressed their feelings through art having reflected on the significance of the large wooden cross in the outdoor classroom. However, independent, spontaneous use by children of 'quiet places' is limited. Parents are very supportive of the school, finding the headteacher and all staff 'very approachable.' They recognise the school's Christian stance, appreciating its links with the parish church and its 'compassionate, forgiving' ethos. Knowledge and understanding of the world-wide Anglican community are enhanced by fundraising and communication links with Christian communities in Peru and Tanzania. The link with San Lucas School in Arequipa is an outstanding example of global friendship.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is satisfactory

The school provides a variety of stimulating settings, leaders and opportunities for collective worship and particularly for reflection. Children say that they 'like praying and thinking about God'. They contribute through music and by welcoming peers to worship. The children suggested that they would enjoy being more active in leading whole school worship. Parents are invited to join worship for major Christian festivals which are usually held at the parish church. The vicar supports the school well. Her regular leadership of collective worship is popular with the children. The headteacher and the vicar have shared their recent evaluation of the impact of collective worship with staff and have drawn up an action plan for development which is partly in place. A good feature is that worship themes are planned in conjunction with Religious Education and PSHE. For example worship about special friends was followed by a Year 2 lesson exploring the parable of the special lost sheep while Reception class children discussed their special items from home. Both lessons added impact to the worship. The central significance of the Eucharist is recognised by older pupils through their involvement in the diocesan activity, 'JC Today' and through follow-up work led by the vicar.

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

The high quality of leadership contributes significantly to the school's positive atmosphere and progression. The headteacher and foundation governors form a powerful, committed team, passionate in their conviction to promote a distinctive, vision for the school, based on Christian principles. The headteacher is well supported by governors, staff, clergy and the diocese in her role as spiritual leader. The headteacher has developed an outstandingly effective partnership between the school and the local community, including parents and carers, outside agencies, churches and neighbouring schools who are aware of the distinctive Christian nature of the school. The vision is shared by adults and children in the school community and so everyone is able to contribute relevant ideas to the development of the ethos of the school. Staff have a great commitment to the school's caring ethos, and are supported by the headteacher and governors, who acknowledge and appreciate their efforts. A significant amount of staff training and meeting time is dedicated to self-evaluation of the distinctiveness and effectiveness of this Church of England school. Pupils' views have been sought through the school council. As a result of the most recent staff training, an action plan has been drawn up for the development of collective worship. The Mission Statement clearly expresses the shared Christian purpose of the school community, which is also reflected in individual school policies. The vicar is a regular visitor in school leading worship and with an effective pastoral role for children, staff and parents. There is mutual support between school and church, including prayers for each other, special school services at church and displays in church provided by school.