

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### Saint Martin's Church of England Controlled Primary School

Wallace Road,  
Bradley,  
Bilston.  
WV14 8BS

#### Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Wolverhampton

Dates of inspection: December 11<sup>th</sup> 2007

Date of last inspection: March 1<sup>st</sup> 2004

School's unique reference number: 104369

Headteacher: Mrs Lynne Law

Inspector's name and number: Mr David Huw Williams : 348

#### School context

Saint Martin's school is situated on the south east corner of the town of Bilston. A new purpose built children's centre catering for children from birth to four years old has just been officially opened at the school. The school is effectively dealing with academic and behavioural challenges. Many of the families in the area face challenging social, emotional and financial difficulties. The majority of the children are from White British backgrounds.

#### Summary Judgement

##### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Saint Martin's as a Church of England school are good.**

Strong Christian principles underpin all aspects of school life. The creation of a safe and secure community ensures that the children are maturing both spiritually and academically. The caring attitudes of the staff exemplify the way in which the school's Christian principles are the foundation to its drive to be successful. The school's Christian character has a positive impact upon pupils' learning and behaviour.

#### Established strengths

- The strong Christian ethos ensures that all pupils are highly valued.
- The good quality collective worship which impacts on the school's distinctiveness.
- The support for the school and the confidence expressed in it by governors, parents and the wider community.
- The children's good personal, social, moral and spiritual development is consistently supported throughout the school by all staff.

#### Focus for development.

- Adopt and implement a systematic approach to the monitoring and evaluation of worship so as to include Foundation Governors.
- Extend the variety of worship settings and style so that pupils can have greater involvement.

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

The headteacher, ably supported by her staff and governors, has established a positive climate where all pupils are challenged to achieve. From a challenging start, both academically and behaviourally the school has established a firm foundation for success. The school's ethos is underpinned by Christian values. This is evident in the love, care and respect afforded to all. The inclusive nature of the school helps to encourage in the children a sense of identity and security. Pupils, parents and visitors feel welcome, safe and valued. Pupils and parents are confident in the structures for help and support within the school. Parents commented positively that '*children feel valued*' and '*that we all are treated fairly and with respect.*' Pupils' behaviour is good. This is due in the main to a very positive behaviour policy and the excellent support that

is afforded to all the children. The children's *'target folder'* is used as a constant source of encouragement. The schools' dedicated Learning Support mentor positively affirms the school's behaviour policy. The school council is an affirmative influence and ensures pupils are involved in decision making in school. It recently had a constructive discussion on prayer with the result that children will be asked in the future to lead prayer in a number of whole school acts of worship. There is enthusiastic support for charities which has helped the children to look outwards and foster a caring ethos. The staff's good use of the knowledge they have of the individual pupil enables them to provide the support and challenge they need for successful achievement. Children's achievements both academic and non academic are promptly recognised, rewarded and celebrated through a system of appropriate awards. The school's Christian distinctiveness is supported by symbols and displays around the school. The W.W.J.D [What would Jesus do] displays in each classroom, the board relating to collective worship at the school and the school logo at the front of the school are good examples. The Christian logo of the cross on a shield, also adopted by the church, helps to reinforce the schools' distinctiveness. The spiritual development of the children is encouraged through reflection at worship and specific times in the classroom. The learning support room is also used for children to have *'time out'* a *'quiet time.'* A creation of a quiet space in the school grounds is the next step to support the children's spiritual development. Relationships in the school and the wider community are good, reflecting the philosophy and values of the school. The school's new children's centre is a positive benefit to the school and the community. Good use has been made of additional space in the school and a planned upgrading of facilities has already enhanced the teaching and learning environment. All staff are excellent role models for the children. The positive status that religious education is given is in recognition of its importance to the spiritual and cultural well being of the pupils. Appropriate consideration is given to the learning of different faiths.

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

Worship is an important part of the everyday life of the school. A good variety of themes have been delivered by an appropriate number of leaders. This was supported with children commenting that *'they like the different leaders especially Daniel who made it fun which makes you understand the message better.'* The worship programme is supplemented with themes based around Christian festivals. The well planned collective worship is presently informally evaluated. The introduction of a more formal monitoring and evaluation process is the next step to ensure consistently high quality worship. Staff attend worship on a regular basis. They also, on a rotational basis, lead whole school worship which helps to reinforce the family ethos of the school and the worship life of the school. Parents welcome the opportunity to come to be part of the class and achievement assemblies. Pupils are aware of the distinctive nature of worship and enter and exit the hall in a quiet and respectful way. Children speak positively about worship and look forward to the daily act of worship. They are attentive and respond well with thoughts and opinions. Pupils are not at present involved in leading worship and this is an area for development. In the very good worship observed on *'What Christmas is really about'* children supported the leader by responding positively to questions asked. They were also very keen to join in with the presentations. One centred on the television show the X factor [Xmas Factor] and the other on based on Christmas crackers. There was a very clear Christian message delivered. In subsequent conversations with the children it was clearly understood by all. The whole school sang with enthusiasm a favourite Christmas hymn *'Unto us a Child is born'*. Children were very receptive to the lighting of the candle at the start of worship. They commented that *'it makes me think of God'* and that *'the smoke takes my prayers up to God.'* Prayer is recognised by the school as being important and children accept it as a central part of reflection, a child stated *'prayer helps you recap on things you have done and you can ask God to forgive you'*. The church and school come together for special festivals in the church to which the parents are invited. Relevant understanding of Anglican rituals is aided by appropriate prayers and symbols used in worship. This is underpinned by the half-termly family services lead by in the vicar at the school.

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

The creation of a loving, caring environment, based upon a Christian foundation underpins the school's drive for continual improvement. Good relationships between the governors and the school have positively enhanced the educational provision for the children. Governors are supportive of the school's progress which has had a positive impact upon pupil's achievement. Foundation governors support the schools Christian distinctiveness and must keep this as a constant priority in the school's development. Adults in the school provide very good role models. The deputy headteacher has recently taken up the post of worship co-ordinator and is enthusiastic in his support of ensuring that this important dimension of school life is taken forward. The headteacher values the support from the chair and governors. The foundation governor's role in monitoring and evaluating the worship life of the school is limited. The school and the vicar are working

together to provide the children with good experiences of the Anglican rituals and the Christian cycle of festivals. Links have been established with the diocese. The children are eager to share their views with others and play their part in the development of the pastoral and social life of the school. Children are keen to serve others through charity work. Parents consulted during the inspection were very supportive of the school. Parents were also pleased with the school's community involvement and the happiness and the increasing readiness of the children to regularly attend school.

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