

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **St Mary and St Paul's, Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Bryer Road,  
Prescot,  
Merseyside  
L35 5DN

<b>Diocese:</b>	<b>Liverpool</b>
Local authority:	Knowsley
Dates of inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> April, 2008
Date of last inspection:	July 2004
School's unique reference number:	104453
Headteacher:	Mr. Neil Dixon
Inspector's name and number:	Rev'd W Sloan (521)

#### **School context**

St Mary and St Paul's is a smaller than average sized school serving an area of significant disadvantage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is significantly above average as are the number who are eligible for free school meals. There are a small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, but the number is rising.

#### **The distinctiveness and effectiveness of St. Mary and St. Paul's Church of England School are outstanding.**

The school's Christian character permeates all aspects of school life. Christian principles of love and respect are actively promoted making a significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children are caring, concerned and responsible members of their community. They are inspired by the Christian teaching of their headteacher and staff. Positive relationships between pupils, staff, governors and parents also demonstrate the Christian ethos.

#### **Established strengths**

- The headteacher provides very effective leadership which contributes significantly to the promotion of the distinctive Christian ethos.
- The strong relationships established between the school, church and local community.
- All members of the school community feel valued and are able to reach their full potential as individuals.

#### **Focus for development**

- Involve all members of the school community in carrying out an evaluation of the school's distinctiveness and effectiveness as a church school.
- Establish strategies for the evaluation of collective worship which involve pupils, staff and governors.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors reviewed the school's mission statement recently involving members of the school community. They use this as a basis for their strong commitment to an inclusive ethos. All children are encouraged to achieve their best in all aspects of their lives. This is reflected in the outstanding progress made throughout the school. Each child feels valued and special and part of the Christian community. Parents speak very warmly about the level of care which is shown to their children. Relationships -

rooted in love and respect - are outstanding throughout the school. The Headteacher and all staff set excellent examples of working together for a common good. The emotional, spiritual and physical well being of pupils is at the centre of the school's life. Teachers have a very good knowledge of each individual's achievements and learning needs. Diversity is celebrated and valued. All children are enabled to achieve and make progress through good planning and through a range of well attended extra curricular activities. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their enjoyment of these activities and a number commented on how they allowed them to work together well. High expectations for behaviour encourage them to respond positively to all the school offers. Opportunity for children to express their ideas, act upon them and enjoy the impact they have on how the school is run is taken-up ably by pupils on the school council. They have been instrumental in developing the school grounds, suggesting where plants could be put and how the playground could be improved for the benefit of all pupils. This has made a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development and raised awareness of personal responsibility. Pupils are actively involved in helping others less fortunate than themselves. This is particularly noticeable in their response to charities, their interest in linking with a partner school in Africa and the contribution they make to Red Nose Day. Pupils' wider social and cultural development is promoted very well through an excellent range of educational visits and events. The school is outward looking, relates well to its own local community, and supports those in need in a way consistent with its values. Parents are very clear about the positive impact of the school as a church school. The proximity of the church to the school ensures there are many good opportunities for pupils to become familiar with church life and practice.

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

Collective worship has a high profile in the life of the school. It provides a stimulus for the whole school community and is the means by which everyone is invited to reflect on the Christian message and what it inspires. Carefully planned with a good variety of contributions from the vicar, headteacher and staff ensures well integrated experiences are offered to the pupils. The contribution made by pupils and staff is extensive. Pupil's responses to collective worship are good. On the day of the inspection they came into church quietly and ready to participate. A lit candle conveyed that worship had started. The whole event had a positive impact on the pupils' spiritual development and it spilled over into the rest of the school day as witnessed in the very good relationships that exist throughout the school. Collective worship in church was based on Jesus walking on the road to Emmaus with the disciples. Pupils acted out the drama and lead the school in prayer. They talk enthusiastically about their role in delivering collective worship and the enjoyment they experience through this activity. Sufficient attention is given within school to the beliefs and worship of other faiths for all pupils to feel that different backgrounds and beliefs are recognised as important and to be appreciated. The local church is used to allow the whole school and parents to worship together. This encourages the church congregation to identify more closely with the school whilst enabling parents and their children to see the very close links that exist between church and school. On special occasions like Christmas, Lent, Easter, Harvest, and the leaver's service this coming together confirms to pupils that worship is important in the lives of adults as well as their own. Worship gives children a good awareness overall of the Anglican calendar and of the beliefs that Christians hold universally. Prayers that pupils write also reflect this and their awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. The headteacher meets with pupils to discuss collective worship and how they are involved. The vicar also works well with the headteacher in the provision of collective worship. The school is aware of the need to develop established strategies for the evaluation of collective worship and to involve pupils, staff and governors in this exercise.

#### **The effectiveness of the religious education is good.**

Pupils' enjoyment of RE is evident by their responses throughout the school and the subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual and moral development. The quality of teaching is very good. It is planned with care and in the knowledge of each pupil's ability. Exciting and demanding lessons are provided by teachers. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the questions asked and tasks set. They have exceptionally good knowledge and understanding of the language and concepts of Christianity and make very good progress. A class reflecting on some of the women mentioned in the Bible was able to talk informatively and with enthusiasm on the topic. They considered in depth the role of Ruth and Naomi and group

feedback was confident and increased everyone's understanding of the story. The lessons observed not only made a good contribution to pupil's spiritual development but also increased their awareness of the school as a Church school. One class, thinking about special places talked about their special place and were able to explain why a Church is a special place for Christians. All pupils are encouraged to reflect on what they have learnt enabling them to link their understanding of religious education to work covered in other curriculum areas. Drama is used well in lessons and this contributes to the pupils' understanding of the work as well as giving them opportunity to reflect and develop spiritually. Very good use is made of the local church and its personnel to support learning and to promote an understanding of Anglican traditions. Pupils visit various local churches many times during their career in school. The parish church is also used effectively as a resource for other curriculum areas and not just RE. Assessment procedures are used very well. Marking of pupils' work is thorough and rigorous. Very clear pointers are given to help pupils understand how they can improve their work in the future. The outstanding RE subject leader monitors RE provision very well. This has a significant impact on standards and progress. Regular feedback to staff and governors ensures RE remains a curriculum priority area.

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

The Headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Over a period of years his inspirational interpretation of the Christian mission of the school matched by that of the foundation governors has become deeply ingrained in all aspects of school work. This shared Christian vision is evident in the school's documentation and informs all decision making. Leadership and management at every level are effective and have some outstanding features. Monitoring and evaluation, together with a continual emphasis on improvement, ensures that standards in all aspects of school life remain high. This rigour is cemented to the Christian ethos and vision to underpin the way the school is run. The net result is that St Mary and St Paul's is a school with great strength and resilience to cope with difficulties, to solve problems and to face up to change. Governors and school staff welcome and respect the views of all members of the community, particularly children and their parents. Letters from parents, questionnaires and the work of the school council are used extremely well when reviewing the work of the school and informs further development. The school identifies its general strengths well but systematic, whole school evaluation of the distinctive Christian character of the school has not yet been established clearly.

SIAS report April 2008 St Mary and St Paul's, Church of England Primary School, Bryer Road, Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DN