

## National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

### **St. Peter's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Reservoir Road  
Hednesford  
Staffordshire  
WS12 1BE

#### **Diocese of Lichfield**

Staffordshire LEA

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2008

Date of last inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2004

School's unique reference number: 124252

Headteacher: Miss Nicola Parkinson

Inspector's name and number: Miss Ruth James No 408

#### **School context**

St. Peter's Church of England (VC) Primary School is a two form entry school with 444 pupils on roll in the town Hednesford. The majority of pupils are from White British families. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs is below average. The church is situated next to the school. The headteacher was appointed in April, 2006.

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

The Christian values of mutual care, respect, forgiveness and responsibility underpin every aspect of the school and its provision. The vision of the headteacher shared and supported by staff, governors, clergy, pupils and parents has created a school where everyone feels valued, their needs are considered and there is a willingness to try new ideas for further improvement.

#### **Established strengths**

- The vision the headteacher has for the school as a church school.
- There are good opportunities for spiritual development, through collective worship, reflection and prayer.
- Happy, articulate and extremely well-mannered children whose spiritual, moral and social development flourishes in an excellent learning environment.

#### **Focus for development**

- Create a systematic approach to the recording and evaluation of worship so as to include all parties and form long term plans.
- Extend opportunities for children to learn aspects of other cultures and faiths.
- Provide within the school grounds a designated area for quiet and reflection.

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

The school provides a caring, secure, happy and colourful environment. Religious objects, symbols and posters in the entrance area, hall and around the school have an impact on learners' spiritual development. These include an eye-catching poster stating '*We are all God's children*'. Christian values and an ethos of inclusion permeate the life of the school. The children feel that everyone in the school community is kind and helpful, that they are listened to and have the opportunity through fund raising to support others who are less fortunate than themselves. The organisations of NCH, Perton Christian Fellowship's Street Children in Romania and Sport Relief have been recent beneficiaries. These activities stimulate the respect, which underpins all school relationships and ensures pupils feel safe, secure and confident and are aware of the value of Christian service. Conflicts are rare, but

when they arise are dealt with compassionately and positively. Even the youngest children can talk about what is right and what is wrong. Forgiveness and a new start are key values. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress through the high quality support and commitment of both the teaching and support staff. Pupil achievement is celebrated by good reward systems and affirmation including 'Reach for the sky' certificates. The enriched curriculum and extra curricular provision offers the learners creative and spiritual experiences. The two year 1 teachers have formed a popular Gospel Choir for children in Years 1 and 2. The Church runs a lunchtime club in school at special times of the Christian year.

The Prayer basket on the worship table is well used by the children. The leaves are taken and hung on the 'Prayer Tree' in church. One child said, *'I like to pray and sit quietly in God's house'*. Religious Education enhances the spiritual development of the learners and has a high profile within the school. Display boards in church show children's work and are regularly updated. Children are familiar with many Bible stories from both the Old and New Testament. Children spoke about the British Council links with schools in Turkey, Cyprus and Austria and the visits last year which extended their understanding of other cultures. Parents are actively involved in all aspects of school life. One parent said, *'To know that Christianity is part of their school life as well as their home life is so important'*.

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

Collective Worship is central to the life of the school. Worship unites the school community. Pupils and staff speak of it as a valuable experience. There is a planned and varied programme, which includes whole school, key stage and class acts of worship. The programme takes full account of festivals in the church calendar, which are celebrated both in school and in church. An appropriate atmosphere is set by the choice of music which is playing as the children enter the school hall. Children respond to this by coming in quietly and reverently. The focal point is a table with a candle, bible, cross and prayer basket. The start of worship is signalled by the lighting of the candle and this is blown out at the end. The staff provide good role models and this encourages the good behaviour exhibited by the children. The foundation group has worked with the headteacher to review worship and the changes have had a positive impact. Children enjoy being together and taking an active part in the whole school worship programme, saying it is fun to do different things, while others prefer worship in a smaller group. They lead their own class worship in school and parents are invited to attend. Year groups also lead services in church at Festival times. The Leavers' service of blessing is held in church. The children speak positively about all types of worship and enjoy singing action songs. Older children can articulate the difference between 'assembly' and 'collective worship'. Planning, recording and evaluation of worship can be extended so that the school can ensure consistently good quality worship, as well as purchasing additional resources to support the programme. Worship leaders include, staff and members of St. Peter's church. Currently worship leaders from other Christian denominations are limited. The use of Anglican rituals and symbolism is being developed, the Lord's Prayer is displayed in every classroom, the headteacher uses the affirmation 'Peace be with you' and the Year 6 children have been taught about the Eucharist. Parents are extremely supportive of services at both school and church.

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

The headteacher has a clear vision 'to see, hear and feel' the distinctiveness of this church school. This vision is based on a belief that the Christian ethos contributes to the academic and personal development of all children. Foundation governors support the ethos and are active in promoting the school's distinctive character. They acknowledge that the head's own Christian commitment and spirituality greatly influence this. There are effective pastoral and spiritual links between the Parish and the school. The church prayer group prays for specific aspects of school life. The vicar attends induction meetings for new parents to speak about the church. The children enjoy his visits to school, particularly when he is leading worship. This encourages positive attitudes to the church. Together with staff members the foundation group meets termly and has been involved in the monitoring and review of school worship. The school community has benefited from high quality professional development opportunities and more are planned as part of the on-going improvement as a church school. Members of the diocesan team have led training for both staff and governors. New staff are

made very aware of the Christian aims and ethos of the school and what it means in practice. Parents confirm that they are positively informed and their views about the school are valued and acted upon. They are supportive of the links made with the church. The children spoke highly of the contribution that the School Council has made to the school and the response of the headteacher and staff to their requests. In this way children are taking responsibility for decision making in school. The headteacher openly shares her Christian faith and her leadership and management style is highly valued by parents, governors and staff.

SIAS report April 2008. St. Peter's, Church of England Primary School, Hednesford.  
WS12 1BE.